

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES**

Date, Time & Place: June 5, 2013, 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center

Committee Members

Present: Jeffrey Lockwood, Joseph Beggan, Kelley Brown, Brian Dacey, John DiGiovanni, Randa Ghattas, Jim Gascoigne, Doug Manz, George Metzger, Susan Pacheco, Katherine Rafferty, Zachary Spitz, Simon Shapiro, Terrence Smith, Rev. Leslie K. Sterling, Charles Fineman, Robert Fitzgerald, Eric Hoke, Ritesh Warade

Absent: John Attanucci, Jackie Douglas, Miriam Cooper, Saul Tannenbaum

City of Cambridge

Susanne Rasmussen, Jeff Rosenblum, Chaoqun “Charlie” Guo (Community Development Department)

About 5 members of the public were present.

Welcome by Jeff Rosenblum

Review of notes from last committee meeting

Handout: Notes from the May 8 committee meeting.

Some comments from committee members: Under “strengths,” the second to last item referred to comparing affordability of the MBTA transit system with other transit systems in the country. Under “opportunities,” We need to not restrict discussion to transit, but understand roadway design for all users. There are opportunities to better coordinate with private shuttles. We should be mindful of actions that Cambridge can take to improve transit and actions that are required by the MBTA or state. U-Pass program and MIT parking/transit pilot program should be included as “opportunities.”

Workshop: Transit and Demographics Data, led by Jeff Rosenblum

The goal of this workshop is to get feedback from the committee on what transit and demographics data and analysis would be useful to the committee to help better understand who uses transit, how it is used, its impact on other urban planning and development issues, and identify opportunities for transit expansion. We do not have the capacity to conduct analysis on all of the suggestions given by the committee. Instead, the results from this exercise will be used to help our transit planning staff develop a workplan that prioritizes the data analyses that will conduct.

Using the Transit Data Exercise worksheet as a guide, committee members brainstormed data that they would be interested in. *A compiled list of comments, including comments from committee members who were not present but submitted comments, is attached.*

Short films: “Open Data” initiatives for transit arrival information.

These short films show how the "Open Data" movement, the publishing of information on-line in real time, has allowed software developers to produce a myriad of tools (for free) that have changed how we interact with our transit system. The following two videos were shown:

1. StreetFilms: “A Case for Open Data in Transit” (July 29, 2010)

<http://www.streetfilms.org/a-case-for-open-data-in-transit/>

2. “Where's The Bus,” Chris Dempsey, former Director of Innovation, MassDOT (March 31,

2010) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-UAujyy45k>

Presentation: Preliminary transit data analysis

Chaoqun “Charlie” Guo, an intern with the City of Cambridge, is a recent Masters graduate from Northeastern University’s Civil Engineering program. He presented some preliminary draft results from our origin/destination study to give committee members a sense of how we plan to use data to help understand transit and travel behavior.

Public comments

Steve Kaiser passed out a copy of his analysis, “A Progress Report on Independent Field Measurements to Improve Red Line Service.” He indicated that 10 years ago, the MBTA conducted a capacity analysis of the red line. Kaiser’s recent analysis indicates that there is significant unused capacity of the Red Line today but because the system currently operates unbalanced it leaves some trains virtually empty while others are full. He attributes this to a management problem at the MBTA. He feels the MBTA is enlightened at the top, and encourages Cambridge to integrate the committee’s work with MBTA planning activities and work of independent groups. An appendix of his report points to videos of operations in Japan that he feels demonstrates optimized capacity. *A copy of his report can be found here:*

<https://www.box.com/s/yf2t2ak4y0lcmrny499>

John Hawkinson complimented Charlie for showing maps that used gradated shading rather than traditional color differentiation. He encouraged Cambridge to support the use of LED bus arrival countdown timers by commercial establishments similar to what is done at JP Licks in Jamaica Plain.

Adjourned at 7:35pm