

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

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**Date, Time & Place:** May 6, 2015, 5:30-7:30 PM  
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center

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**Attendance**

Committee Members

John Attanucci, Kelley Brown, Charles Fineman, Robert Fitzgerald, Jim Gascoigne, Doug Manz, Katherine Rafferty, Simon Shapiro, Saul Tannenbaum

City of Cambridge

Tegin Bennett and Cleo Stoughton (Community Development Department), Adam Shulman (Traffic, Parking and Transportation)

*9 members of the public were present. Philip Groth (MBTA) and Matt Ciborowski (MassDOT) were present.*

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**Committee Introductions and Approve Notes**

Notes were approved by the Committee.

**Committee Updates**

- Committee members are encouraged to review the draft agenda before the meeting and suggest topics for discussion. The City will aim to provide monthly updates on issues of particular interest to the Committee.
- Committee meetings will now include two public comment periods: one at the start of the meeting, in which the public can raise items to be discussed by the Committee, and another at the end of the meeting, in which the public can add to what was discussed during the meeting, as well as raise additional items of interest. Members of the public can also ask clarifying questions during discussion by the Committee.
- Committee membership: the City has received approximately 17 applications from new applicants who wish to join the Committee. Next, the City will conduct interviews. The Committee must be representative of certain groups, which will affect final composition of the Committee.
- [Transportation Camp New England](#): A member who attended found the event to be useful and informative.
- MASCO M2 Shuttle: The [M2 shuttle](#) runs from Harvard Square to the Longwood Medical Area and is open to the public. Tickets are sold in Harvard Square, but the City is working with MASCO to provide access to tickets elsewhere in the City (e.g., in Central Square). The Committee discussed other options for making the shuttle accessible to the public (e.g., accepting Charlie Cards as payment) and noted that the City should play a stronger role in advocating for better public access to the shuttle.
- [Late-night MBTA service](#) has been extended, but with the removal of service on three bus routes serving Cambridge and increased headways on subway and bus service.
- The draft final Transit Strategic Plan will be sent out to Committee members for comment.

**Initial Public Comments**

- Steve Kaiser called attention to an amendment to the [Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan](#), submitted for environmental review by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA). He also commented on Gov. Baker's special panel report.

**Kendall Square Mobility Task Force Update**

Matt Ciborowski (MassDOT) presented an overview of the [Task Force](#), which is charged with “develop[ing] a transportation strategy to address local and regional mobility needs and mitigate potential future impacts.” The Task Force will develop performance goals, alternatives, and recommendations to ensure that transportation is not a barrier to future growth in Kendall Square. Matt emphasized that a key focus is the performance based goals. The first meeting of the Task Force was April 28, and the next meeting is currently scheduled for June 30 [Update: after this meeting the Task Force date was set for June 23<sup>rd</sup>]. Questions and comments about the Task Force:

- The Committee, City, and public asked who the audience of the Task Force is and how Kendall Square is defined geographically, both of which will be determined during the process. Some task force members had drawn attention to the fact that a study area had already been defined for Kendall Square as part of the [Kendall Square Central Square Planning Study](#) (K2C2).
- A Committee member expressed concern with the current quality of data about Kendall Square—in particular, the number and mode of trips going into and out of Kendall Square. In addition, there are multiple sources of data (and inconsistencies between sources), as well as multiple planning processes in the area which may have reached different conclusions and will need to be reconciled.
- A Committee member encouraged the Task Force to consider how internet access will affect travel into Kendall. Ciborowski said that, ideally, the Task Force will look at these kinds of issues, including how policies that allow employees to flex work hours would affect travel behavior.

### **Gov. Baker's Special Panel Report and Legislation**

Tegin Bennett presented [key findings and recommendations](#) released by the special panel established by Gov. Baker to evaluate the MBTA. She also gave an overview of topics that were proposed to be included in a letter from the City Manager in response to the panel's findings and recommendations. She asked for input into these topics, which include the importance of transit to economic development; the importance of investing in transit, which should not be subjected to unrealistic standards of self-sufficiency (in terms of revenue and costs); the support of creative revenue strategies; the need for better municipal representation; the need for better communication; the consideration of vulnerability to climate change; and equity implications of recommendations: if fare increases are proposed, the needs of all age and income groups must be considered.

- Some members of the Committee commented that the report focused too much on issues of governance and fiscal control, when there are other important issues that deserve attention, such as service effectiveness.
- Some members commented on issues with the analytical methodology used in the report.
- Some members of the Committee argued that the City's response letter should focus more on advocating that the MBTA remain funded at the current level or better; that the system be brought up to a state of good repair and core capacity be increased; and that equity be emphasized to an even greater degree.
- Other comments voiced included the need for more and better performance measures; the need for experienced transportation professionals (rather than political appointees) to run the MBTA; the need for the MBTA to rebuild trust; and the need for discussions about how individual developers and communities can contribute increased funds in return for increases in service.

### **Other Items**

- Members of the Committee would like to discuss transit access in the Alewife area at a future meeting.
- Once new Committee members are officially appointed, the Committee will discuss structure and leadership options moving forward.

### **Final Public Comments**

- Susan Ringler advocated for more discussion of climate change; suggested that interested parties read the materials that Transportation for Massachusetts releases; noted the importance of increased funding for the MBTA and fare equity; and urged members of the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force to think about what Kendall Square will look like in the future (e.g., walkable environments, carbon taxes).
- Marcus Goodwin suggested that taxing private ridesharing services be added to the list of creative revenue options to be considered.
- Eric Johnson suggested that the marketing of air rights be added to the list of creative revenue options to be considered.
- Arthur Strang urged the City to consider in these and other discussions what the vision for the City in the future is.
- Steve Kaiser discussed the ways in which Massport and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) function well and could serve as examples to the MBTA. He also noted that a number of study efforts taking place in Cambridge (and specifically Kendall Square) should be coordinated, and the City, Committee, and public should be involved.

### **Adjourned at 7:30pm**