

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES

Date, Time & Place:
November 2, 2016, 5:30-7:30
MIT building E25, room 117

Attendance

Committee Members

John Attanucci, Kelley Brown, Devin Chausse, Karen Dumaine, Charlie Fineman, Jim Gascoigne, Katherine Rafferty, Robert Ricchi, Simon Shapiro, Arthur Strang, Saul Tannenbaum, and Alex Taylor

City of Cambridge

Tegin Bennett, Gary Chan, and Cleo Stoughton (Community Development); Adam Shulman (Traffic, Parking, and Transportation)

Presenters, official entities, and members of the public

One member of the public was present. Philip Groth (MBTA) was present.

Committee Introductions, Administrative Business, and Updates

September and October notes were approved.

Public Comment

There were no public comments at this time.

Envision Cambridge

City staff presented an overview of the citywide plan and an update on issues and opportunities in the Alewife area. As part of the Alewife district planning effort, in January and February 2017, the Alewife working group will meet and there will be a workshop on scenarios. In March and April, recommendations based on scenarios will be developed. For more information about Envision Cambridge, please visit: <http://envision.cambridgema.gov/>.

Discussion:

- Committee members are encouraged to apply to be part of the Mobility Working Group (or other topic-specific groups).
- The Committee would like to see the Envision process include a plan for implementing the citywide plan, to ensure the plan is used. Year three of the Envision process is intended to include development of an implementation plan.
- The Mass Ave corridor will also be a focus area of Envision Cambridge.
- The Committee asked whether there are any early action items that could be implemented before the citywide planning process is complete. City staff noted that planning and implementation are not on hold during the Envision process since it is a lengthy process. Rather, activities taking place in the meantime are coordinated with the Envision process as best as possible.
- The Committee and City staff discussed the challenges of planning ahead to 2030. The Committee stressed the importance of establishing robust planning assumptions (e.g., regarding autonomous vehicles). The Envision Cambridge consultants, working groups, and others will be responsible for developing assumptions.

Bus Priority and Service Planning

The Committee reviewed and approved (pending small modifications described below) two letters drafted based on discussions at the October Committee meeting:

- Overnight MBTA service:
 - The Committee expressed concern (e.g., regarding equity and viability) about the overnight service proposal presented by Bridj to the Fiscal and Management Control Board of the MBTA. While it is recognized that Bridj's model, in some contexts, has some advantages over traditional transit service (e.g., is flexible, more comfortable), the Committee generally agreed that a more appropriate and equitable overnight service would be fixed-route, fixed-schedule service using MBTA-branded vehicles. The service should also accept cash and be accessible without the use of a smartphone. The Committee voted to add this content to the draft letter.

- The Committee discussed how best to assess overnight service needs. (Note: since the November meeting, the MBTA has released a survey of potential users of the service. The survey can be accessed at www.mbta.com/nightbus; paper copies of the survey can be requested.)
- DCR Mt Auburn Street Corridor Study: The Committee supported this letter as drafted.

The Committee discussed bus service planning ideas, originally generated during the March 2016 Transit Advisory Committee meeting and other meetings. Ideas discussed included:

- Bus priority on Mt Auburn Street: Is being discussed as part of the DCR Mt Auburn study.
- Bus priority for the Route 77: Will be added to the ongoing list of service planning ideas.
- Bus priority on Route 2: Routing down Acorn Park Drive eliminates some of the need to provide bus priority on Route 2, though buses still experience congestion on the off ramp to Alewife station. CTPS is also conducting a first-mile/last-mile study at Alewife.
- Bus priority on Mass Ave: The City is engaged in the Transit Program Accelerator with NACTO and will be developing ideas for Mass Ave. Mass Ave will also be a focus area in Envision Cambridge.
- Routes 72 and 75: The Committee discussed combining the two services, routing the service down Huron Ave (instead of deviating along Concord Ave to Fresh Pond Parkway, as the current Route 75 does), and eliminating the Aberdeen spur of the Route 72. John Attanucci offered to perform further analysis of this option.
- Alewife service: The Committee talked about the need for better service, especially from the areas rapidly developing, to Alewife station.
- MASCO shuttles: The Committee emphasized that it is important to improve public access to this service.
- City staff also noted that the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force is exploring bus routing improvements.

Announcements, Events, and Updates

- *Mass+Main project review*: The Committee discussed the project (PB 320 and 321), which will be presented at the November 15 Planning Board meeting. The development review subcommittee of the Transit Committee plans to meet in late November and draft a letter for review by the Transit Committee at the December meeting.
- *Kendall Square Mobility Task Force*: Committee members are encouraged to attend KSMTF meetings, especially the public meeting. (Note: the public meeting is now scheduled for January 2017.)

Final Public Comment

There were no further public comments.

Adjourned at 7:30 pm