CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ORIENTATION
MEETING NOTES

Date, Time & Place:
MIT building E25, room 117
December 6, 2017, 4:00-5:30

Attendance
Committee Members
Miles Taylor, Mark Jensen, Neil Rodriguez, Daniel Schofield-Bodt, Melissa Zampitella
City of Cambridge
Tegin Teich and Greg Hanafin (Community Development)

Presenters, official entities, and members of the public
None

Brief Introductions and Review of Agenda
The new Committee members were given a packet with useful information about the Committee and Transit-related outreach materials. Tegin Teich reviewed the agenda and gave a brief description of the Committee. Melissa Zampitella asked about the reason for the formation of the Committee, Tegin responded that the Committee was originally created to provide input into the Transit Strategic Planning process and spent the first two years of its existence primarily developing the Plan. Since then efforts have been more focused on advocacy and strategizing implementation. The Committee has had consistent MBTA participation throughout its existence.

Context of Committee
Tegin reviewed the policies listed in the back of the Transit Strategic Plan. She explained to the Committee that the Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance is the foundation for the work the Committee does. Vision Zero and Complete Streets are the newest major policies that are being used to inform the City’s Transportation Planning, but that are not in the current version of the Strategic Plan.

City Government Structure, State Government, and Role of the Committee
Tegin explained that the City of Cambridge is structured with a strong City Manager, and staff report to the City Manager, not the City Council. The Committee is intended to advise the City Manager. Tegin instructed the Committee members to be clear about who they are representing when speaking publicly, and not to speak for the Committee unless it is a standpoint the entire Committee has agreed they want to take.

Tegin informed the Committee members that, as part of a City body, they are responsible for undergoing ethics training every two years. Tegin described the Open Meeting Laws, which state that, outside of official Committee meetings, a member cannot discuss Committee business with more than one other member at a time.

Committee Logistics
Tegin went over the Committee bylaws and explained the general layout of the Committee meetings. She included that each meeting has a designated period at the beginning and end of the meeting for members of the public to make comments or announcements but that meetings are geared primarily toward Committee member participation.

Major Categories of Work
Tegin explained the Department of Public Works’ 5-Year Plan for infrastructure projects, and how some of what the Committee chooses to focus on at a given time depends on the timeline of that plan. In the case of large infrastructure projects, separate sub-committee meetings can be held to have a more in-depth discussion about that project. She noted that Committee member Alex Taylor leads a sub-committee on development projects that will probably become more active in the beginning of 2018.
TEGIN added that promotional and education activities will be important for the Committee going forward, and that is important for Committee members to speak at public meetings, whether on behalf of themselves or on behalf of the Committee. She stated that representatives from different City departments often come and give presentations to the Committee about current projects that are related to Committee work or could benefit from Committee feedback.

MARK JENSEN asked if there was time available for the Committee to spend on more focused work, referring to the September service planning sub-committee meeting. He said that he feels these extra efforts are worth spending extra time. TEGIN responded that the Committee can form sub-committees to spend more time on specific efforts, and that Committee members are also allowed to work on their own on issues that interest them, and can then take their findings and ideas to the Committee meetings for input. TEGIN said in some cases the City will hire consultants to do additional analysis when City staff do not have the resources.

**Committee Work Plans**

TEGIN showed the Committee members the Committee’s working implementation plan. DANIEL SCHOFIELD-BODT asked what is the most helpful thing for new members to do. TEGIN replied that in addition to providing input to the City Manager and speaking in support of transit initiatives, it is helpful for new members to ask questions if they don’t understand something or need more information. She said that it is helpful for new members to provide a fresh viewpoint to the conversation, even if they feel they are not as well versed in the topic as other members.

Adjourned at 5:30