

City of Cambridge

Transit Advisory Committee

Abbreviated Meeting Notes

Thursday, April 3, 2018

Ballroom, Citywide Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Avenue

Attendance (15 people)

Members (8) John Attanucci (Chair); Joseph Beggan; Kelly Brown; Devin Chausse; Robert Fitzgerald; Kristiana Lachiusa; Katherine Rafferty; Saul Tannenbaum

City Staff (3) Andrew Reker (CDD); Patrick Baxter, Adam Shulman (TPT)

Others (8) Andy Smith (MBTA); 7 members of the public

This meeting of the Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) began at approximately 5:35 PM. Andrew Reker (AR) introduced changes to the meeting agenda and shared an update on a future call for applications for this committee. TAC members did self-introductions.

Public comment

No members of the public made a comment.

Presentation: Transit signal priority

Patrick Baxter (PB) from the Traffic Parking and Transportation Department presented on the status of Cambridge's implementation of transit signal priority. He reviewed the locations where TSP currently exists and detailed the different conceptual transit signal priority systems that the City can implement in the future: decentralized and autonomous, centralized, and centralized service and connected vehicle. TAC members asked several questions related to the following, general responses are in the sub-bullets:

- How has this technology impacted bus travel times so far in the places where it has been installed?

- MBTA is able to look at bus travel time data for presentation at a future meeting
- What has been the cause of the extended length of implementation for this initiative?
 - A lot of the process has involved coordination with many stakeholders including the MBTA, internal City departments
 - Another aspect of the process is the maturity of the technology available to the City

Presentation: Realtime signage

Andy Reker (CDD) presented an update on the real-time signage pilot with information on the latest thinking from the City of Cambridge staff on pilot feedback, potential locations of a signage expansion, and potential numbers of additional locations. Members of the TAC asked questions for clarification, including the following answers.

- Who will be installing these additional signage?
 - Cambridge, with the selected vendors/contractors
- How useful have these signs been for people who already have access to realtime transit information?
 - Almost 75% of user survey respondents found these signs useful, examples given were in winter time or at times or locations where pulling out a smartphone wasn't convenient

Members of the TAC also requested potentially integrating EZRide shuttle information and suggestions on additional locations for consideration including the Mount Auburn Hospital, Porter Square area, and mid-route locations.

Discussion: Communicating service changes in the neighborhoods

AR presented a proposal for the City to better communicate service changes to Cambridge neighborhoods. To summarize, the proposal is for the City to participate in existing neighborhood groups' activities as soon as the City hears about potential minor service changes, like small or minor bus route changes or bus stop location changes well in advance of the MBTA's service change notice. This could be one or two months in advance of a planned minor service change. The members of the TAC had no major comments.

Discussion: City comments on Better Bus Project

AR presented on the contents of the City's comments to the MBTA on the MBTA's Better Bus Project proposals. These comments focused on proposals for Route 1, Route 64, and Routes 72/75/74. Members of the Transit Advisory Committee expressed the following:

- City continues to express concerns about the proposals where warranted and works with the MBTA on further analyzing the proposals

Discussion: Transit Strategic Plan

AR then opened up the beginning of a discussion on an update to the Transit Strategic Plan that City staff are looking to do in 2019. AR presented a document that describes the goals, objectives, and a summary of the progress by the City since 2015. The main question posed to the members of the TAC for discussion is if there are goals that are not accounted for in the current Transit Strategic Plan. Additionally, city staff are also curious to know about if the objectives and strategies still seem applicable or if additional adjustment may be necessary. Members of the TAC expressed the following:

- One goal that is not found in this document is equity for transit riders
- One potential change in strategy for the TAC would be to lay out quarterly focuses
- Additionally, the TAC could strategize on what areas could provide more impact
- TAC and city staff may be missing some tools to help breakdown the objectives into smaller work plans

Public comment

A member of the public made a comment about the MBTA's recent focus on the bus network and to not forget about the rapid transit network. In addition, the member of the public also shared that the MBTA has shut down many bus facilities that could house a larger fleet.

Version Information

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