

# Transit Advisory Committee

## April 2026

### Abbreviated meeting summary

#### Attendance

##### Members

##### **Present** (12)

In-person (3): Bill McAvinney, Andrew Zhou, Matthew Kramer

Remote (9): Devin Chausse, Ian Hatch, Katherine Rafferty, Matt Martin, Matthew Mccominskey, Melissa Zampitella, Nick Lessin, Patrick Delaney, Pete Septoff

**Absent** (8): Analisa Bhatia, Arthur Strang, Clyde Lawrence, Craig Tateronis, Jim Gascoigne, Miles Robinson, Sandhya Ramakrishnan, Jackson Moore-Otto

##### City staff (3)

Andrew Reker, Fernando Aguiluz, Marcella Cannatti

##### Others (4)

4 members of the public

##### Notes

DOT = Cambridge Department of Transportation

#### Welcome and Committee Introductions

Matthew Kramer (MK) opened the meeting at 5:59 PM by welcoming members and presenters to the meeting. MK went over the meeting etiquette, gave an overview of the physical room and space, and gave instructions for members of the public joining remotely and in-person. MK reviewed the purpose of the meeting, the code of conduct, and read through the agenda for the meeting.

Andrew Zhou (AZ) took roll - 10 were present, 10 were absent during roll call.

Since quorum was not reached, the meeting minutes for March 2026 were not approved.

#### Discussion: Healthpeak PUD Planning Board Submissions

MK gave the floor to Andrew Reker (AR) to discuss the Healthpeak Development in Alewife. MK mentioned that Healthpeak has submitted plans to the Planning Board. He asked members to read more about the plan on the Planning Board websites. AR explained that the Healthpeak project is a large, planned unit development in the Alewife Quadrangle. Healthpeak is seeking a special permit from the Planning Board, and due to the size of the project they are required to complete and submit a Transportation Impact Study and Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan.

AR gave a high-level overview of the proposed development, noting a relatively equal split between planned office and residential buildings by building counts. "Neighborhood scale" retail

will be part of this mixed-use development. Parking will be included in some buildings, and new standalone parking garages are planned, too. Overall, approximately 4,578 new parking spaces will be added. The development will be built in phases over the next 20-30 years, and includes construction of a pedestrian/bike bridge that crosses the Fitchburg Line tracks. AR also made noted the proximity of the Fitchburg Line to the new development, as well as the ¼ and ½ mile radius circles from the center of the development. These illustrations showed that most of Concord Ave near the development is within a 5-7 minute walk. In addition, the Fresh Pond Reservoir, the Alewife Red Line station, and Fresh Pond Mall are within a 10+ minute walk.

AR noted that the committee might be interested in Healthpeak's Transportation Impact Study. The study includes estimates of the number of trips generated by the new development through different modes, studies on how nearby intersections will operate, and an estimate of the impact on traffic. The Planning Board has identified more than 100 instances where specific criteria have been exceeded and may have a negative impact on city traffic. These criteria include trips generated, vehicle level of service, traffic on residential streets, queues at intersections, pedestrian level of service at intersections.

AR explained to the committee that with developments like this, there are typically at least two Planning Board meetings. Healthpeak has already held the pre-planning meeting, and April 28<sup>th</sup> will be the first hearing for the development. If there are a lot of changes that need to be made to the HealthPeak plan, there may be another meeting scheduled to discuss the transit implications of the HealthPeak development. AR states that it might be prudent for the TAC to draft a letter to the Planning Board early, since the implications of the Healthpeak development have already been discussed in prior meetings and the TAC has already taken a walking tour of the development site, last year.

AR noted that the PUD might affect areas of TAC interest such as improvements to bus stops and service (notably the 74 and 78) and to local shuttles (notably the Alewife TMA), and management of parking supply. AR noted that an oversupply of parking typically correlates with higher rates of driving alone. AR added that the pedestrian/bike connection to the Red Line Station and the potential future commuter rail station in Alewife are also related areas of TAC interest.

AR turns it back to Matthew Kramer (MK) for questions and discussion. AR also noted that Bill McAvinney and Pete Septoff have joined, allowing the meeting to be at quorum

Bill McAvinney said that the pedestrian bridge is super important, and should be done earlier if possible. He also noted his support for the Alewife TMA shuttle, particularly in expanding its hours. Finally, he said that 4000+ parking spaces is a lot, and the number of spots should be reduced.

Ian Hatch said that the TAC often puts itself in the position of requesting things from developers, and asked if there is a way to be certain that higher capacity mass transit will be available with a new Commuter Rail station? If there is a way we can be helpful in moving the MBTA's commitment to higher service to the commuter rail line, that may impact HealthPeak's planning quite a bit.

- AR reflect on the MBTA's study of a Commuter Rail station in Alewife and noted that the reason why the study came about in the first place was due to a legislative earmark from the State. If the TAC wants to push action in this regard, state and local elected officials

might be the best place to do that. MBTA staff members also indicated that these kinds of things move with political pressure. The TAC could engage with the MBTA's exploration of transforming Commuter Rail to Regional Rail, and push the MBTA to include a link to Alewife as a part of those plans.

Devin Chausse said the TAC should advocate for the development and acceleration of the project.

MK notes that there seems to be enthusiasm from the committee with regards to the HealthPeak development, and motioned that the TAC should write a letter to the Cambridge Planning Board. Ian Hatch offered to be the letter writer. AR, MK, and Andrew Zhou (AZ) reiterated comments that the committee made that should be included in such a letter, and AR added that Jackson Moore-Otto (JMO) was also very interested in helping to draft such a letter.

Andrew Zhou ran a roll-call vote – 11 voted yes, 1 abstained due to potential conflict of interest.

## Presentation: Bus Network Redesign Progress Report

MK gave the floor back to Andrew Reker and Marcella Cannatti to present about the Bus Network Redesign.

AR started by saying that much of the Bus Network Redesign Vision map has been implemented in Cambridge:

- Frequent bus routes, which run every 15 minutes from 5 AM to 1 AM every day of the week (except for Sunday, where they start at 6 AM):
  - o For Cambridge, most routes have been implemented (1, 66, 71, 73, 77, 109) and the 47, 70, and 101 have yet to be completed
  - o The 96 will also be upgraded to frequent status, but it no longer serves Cambridge (but it gets very close to Porter).
- Some routes have been brought to 30-minute headways:
  - o AR says that the 64 has reached this standard. AR notes that the buses sometimes do not meet the standard on late nights and the weekend, but those are the times where there is more flexibility in the strictness of the schedule
  - o AR notes the 74 and 75 are in progress, but they are not done. The 67 route has not been improved yet.
- The 68 Route would transition from every 60 minutes to peak-only, this change has also not been done yet.
- AR points out the CT2 and 85 have been consolidated into what is mostly the CT2 route from Assembly to Ruggles, but under the 85 moniker. It still is running hourly.
- AR mentions multiple routes are planned to be removed but not completed, such as the 80 88, 91, 96, and 350

AR turns it over to MC to discuss the analysis of the recent changes to the Bus Network Redesign.

MC notes that the Route 1 ridership chart shows boardings in 2019, 2023, and 2025. While ridership is still overall lower than their 2019 values, there have been increases in boardings between 2023 and 2025, both in the direction towards Boston and towards Harvard.

In comparison, for the 47, which has had not had changes from the Bus Network Redesign implemented yet, MC has noted that boardings have remained relatively stagnant between 2023 and 2025, with stops showing more and less ridership

MC also shows that while data reflecting BNR updates is not part of the chart for Route 69, ridership on the 69 is slowly approaching pre-Covid levels

MC then indicated that further analysis needs to be done on Harvard Area bus stops, due to routes using both the 109 and 86.

MC notes that the MBTA will be seeking feedback on certain parts of the Bus Network Redesign vision map in summer 2026. AR said that the MBTA has heard quite a few points of feedback from city officials and public groups, many asking for changes that the MBTA would consider a major service change. As a result, the MBTA is holding a feedback period to potentially amend the BNR. AR notes that this is welcome, especially since the BNR was largely designed in 2022, and that there have definitely been changes in how people move since then that should be reflected in an updated BNR. AR walked through the timeline to amend the BNR.

AR recommended that the TAC immediately submit feedback to the MBTA via committee letter, and then request a presentation from the MBTA in a future meeting. AR noted that many asks of the previous TAC and Cambridge city staff feedback were not acted upon in the initial BNR:

- TAC suggested running 47 to Sullivan to preserve the Orange Line connection
- TAC opposed the Route 68 modification to peak-only, as did the city manager, mayor, and school superintendent
- TAC suggested that the 109 should continue to Boston Landing and Allston
- The city recommended improvements to frequency on the 69, 74, 75, 78, and 83

Bill McAvinney also noted that shortening the 47 also impacts connections to the Green Line Extension. AR noted that the prior TAC expressed frustration with regards to the lack of a connection to Sullivan. AR said that residents had noted some bus service issues.

Matthew Kramer also echoed the importance of extending the 47 to connect to Sullivan and the GLX.

No other members had comment.

Bill McAvinney asked if the letter with relation to the Reid Overpass had been sent. AR said that it has, and that the city has had conversations with other advocacy groups about the project.

## City, MBTA, and TAC Updates

Matthew Kramer: When can the TAC get an update on the Cambridge St Safety Improvements?

- AR: The Bike and Pedestrian committees are currently being re-impaneled, so those committees don't currently exist. TAC members should attend the next public meeting for the Cambridge St working group. May might be the next best time for an update, but it also may be too late for feedback to be particularly useful.

AR asked if there are any updates on the Charles River Crossings and the Alewife Station Access Road?

- MK: We have been speaking with city officials, Devin and I found that now is probably not the most opportune time to write a letter with relation to the Alewife Station Access Road, but there are upcoming developments with a contractor so we may be able to get them here for a meeting. Work continues with the Charles River Crossing letter.

AR then went over the next TAC committee meetings, suggesting that the TAC re-review the Implementation Plan and also take time to consider MBTA BNR amendments. There is no planned joint meeting for April, but future meetings could go over the Cycling Safety Ordinance projects, the HealthPeak Planned Unit Development (PUD), and Mass Ave Partial Construction.

AR also stated that all TAC members are invited to the Civic Leadership Celebration on April 29<sup>th</sup> to celebrate and recognize members of Cambridge's boards and commissions.

## Public comment

MK opened up the floor to public comment. MC also noted multiple members of the public had questions in the Zoom Q&A.

Q&A: Where should any Service Equity Analysis best come within the BNR schedule, and when and how will that be provided to the public for consideration and review?

- AR: The question is probably best directed towards the MBTA, but these analyses are usually open to the public

Q&A: Will fixing potholes on North Mass Ave have to wait for Partial Reconstruction?

- Fernando Aguiluz: A lot of work in that road have been due to Eversource work, will have to check with them
- AR: There are some city maintenances happening, but much of the significant road reconstruction will be coming with the Partial Reconstruction project.

Q&A: Is the committee okay with the decrease of service on the 87 and adjustments to the 69 bus stops?

- AR: The prior committee had issues with the decrease in service to the 87, and the committee will review the Route 69 bus stops when that project is discussed.

Member of the public: It is concerning to me that when the public bring up concern, AR states that the city would take it up with the MBTA. Is it not the role of the TAC to advocate for the public to the MBTA? It is offensive to me that ideas worth considering by the committee are dismissed back to the public. I feel insulted by it.

MK ends the meeting at 7:21 PM.

## Version Information

Draft: 4/29/26

Approval: \_