

Kendall Square Mobility Task Force Meeting #11

LOCATION OF MEETING: MIT, Room 3-442

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: April 6, 2017 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

TASK FORCE ATTENDEES:

Kelley Brown, MIT
Joseph Barr, City of Cambridge
Brian Dacey, Kendall Square Association (Co-Chair)
Robert Dorer, Volpe
Melissa Dullea, MBTA
Tom Evans, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority
Jim Gascoigne, Charles River TMA
Patrick Magee, East Cambridge Business Association
Michael O'Hearn, Boston Properties
Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge (Co-Chair)
Jeff Rosenblum
Jen Slesinger, MassDOT (representing Scott Hamwey)

MASSDOT, MBTA, CITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:

Tegin Bennett, City of Cambridge
Bruce Kaplan, CTPS
Adam Shulman, City of Cambridge

PUBLIC:

Sarah Wetmore, VHB

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: Final recommendations/Implementation Plan

Summary

Brian Dacey, CIC, opened the meeting. Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge, presented an overview of the Task Force and the project background. Tegin Bennett, City of Cambridge, presented each of the initiatives from the implementation plans that are the culmination of the Task Force process. Task Force members discussed each initiative. Finally, the Task Force members discussed next steps, including holding another meeting to discuss implementation in more detail.

Discussion

Susanne Rasmussen summarized resources that might possibly be available for implementing some of the Kendall Square Task Force recommendations. These included:

- \$10 million the City has already allocated towards the Grand Junction multi-use path between Binney Street and the City line.
- Mitigation from MIT towards the Grand Junction Park (already complete) as well as money towards transit studies and investments. Additional funds will be required if a certain number of transit trips are exceeded from the NoMa SoMa development.
- Mitigation from Boston Properties, including money toward the Binney Park parcel (including a portion of the Grand Junction Greenway), mitigation money already

partially used towards KSMTF work, and the \$6 million being contributed to the Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP) for transit improvements. Additional funds will be required if a certain number of transit trips are exceeded from the MXD Infill development.

- Both MIT and Boston Properties are contributing toward the reconstruction of MBTA headhouses in Kendall Square
- Mitigation from Alexandria towards improving transit conditions in Kendall Square, and a commitment to convey a strip of land for the Grand Junction Greenway

Task Force members discussion the following points about available resources.

- Task Force members asked for additional details about when and how the headhouses would be replaced. The south headhouse will be reconstructed by MIT when Building 5 is constructed.
- Task Force members asked how much of the \$50,000 contributed by Boston Properties towards the KSMTF work was left and discussed whether it would be good to use towards the development of a graphical executive summary of the work.
- The group talked about the status of the KSTEP MOU with MassDOT and the MBTA. It was reported that it was supposed to be on the Fiscal and Management Control Board agenda soon. [Note, MOU has since been approved]
- A. Shulman pointed out that development projects also include mitigation requirements to improve intersection and signal equipment, which can affect and support transit. In addition, he pointed out that other Transportation Demand Management (TDM) requirements, such as subsidizing MBTA passes, support transit

The initiatives that were presented are listed below, with key discussion points associated with them.

Initiatives

Red Line:

- 1.1 Review results of ABC analysis of anticipated capacity increase from Red Line car purchase and advocate for additional Red Line capacity improvements
- 1.2 Advocate for Kendall Square station improvements
- 1.3 Advocate for repairs to the Red Line portal and including it in the MBTA's vulnerability and resiliency assessment

Discussion

- The A Better City (ABC) analysis (1.1) is not yet underway, but ABC has been working with experts to help scope the work. There has also been some discussion with Boston. The approach to the ABC analysis is sensitive to the fact that the MBTA has done its own expert analysis, and the organization is trying to target or highlight concerns with ensuring capacity improvements.
- The City could begin building in regular conversations about increasing capacity at Kendall Square station (1.2) into the existing and ongoing coordination efforts with the MBTA.
- The money that Boston Properties is contributing towards renovation can be used for the headhouse and/or the station (1.2).

- Task Force members requested including consideration of improvements to other infrastructure in Kendall Square (such as vents for the stations) for resiliency. (1.3, with modifications to 1.2)
- Task Force members discussed the upcoming impact of the VOLPE site development on the headhouses and station capacity. This development might have the most effect on the east headhouse, which is not now funded for renovations.
- Task Force Members requested adding an implementation item related to supporting the Green Line Extension.

Grand Junction:

- 2.1 Create a working group to collaborate on implementing the Grand Junction multi-use path
- 2.2 Survey Grand Junction Right-of-Way
- 2.3 Develop transit conceptual or 25% designs for the Grand Junction corridor
- 2.4 Produce new Grand Junction transit demand estimations

Discussion

- J. Slesinger (MassDOT), reported that Focus40 will be carrying out a Rail Vision exercise to look at different ways of operating the Commuter Rail system. The Focus40 recommendations will be more programmatic rather than a list of specific projects.
- Task Force members thought it was important to be explicit about the need to improve the Grand Junction Railway Bridge, since it isn't included in any other major infrastructure project like the I-90 Allston Interchange project.
- There was discussion about combining 2.3 and 2.4, or whether the order should be changed. Some felt there was a problem coming up with a design before demand estimates are known, and some felt the design for two-track service was needed no matter what the demand estimate shows.
- Task Force members roughly estimated the scale of this effort as being under \$1 million, whereas the demand estimation would be a much smaller effort.
- Task Force members discussed the tradeoff between using resources for planning versus implementation.

Bus:

- 3.1 Further study bus priority treatments on First/Binney
- 3.2 Implement stop consolidation and signal priority for the common CT2/85 corridor from Union to Kendall
- 3.3 Extend 64/70/70A into Kendall Square
- 3.4 Increase EZRide shuttle service
- 3.5 Implement new CT4 service

Discussion

- M. Dullea from the MBTA reported that the Fiscal and Management Control Board is considering various options for the service plan update, with different timeframes and resources required to carry it out. They are considering a tiered approach to service planning with packages of changes that may be cost neutral

as well as those that would require more resources. The FMCB also is interested in considering municipal partnerships.

- Members asked whether Charles River TMA do something demand based. They also asked whether service be run on behalf of the MBTA, privately contracted out through the MBTA.
- Some members raised the idea of rerouting buses onto Land Boulevard, which may work for direct service into Kendall Square from North Station.
- Task Force members asked to add an item related to examining origins and destinations when Red Line service is interrupted during construction or other events and the MBTA must offer shuttle buses.

Ride-hailing services and shuttles:

- 4.1 Collect data to better understand ride-hailing services
- 4.2 Develop policy recommendations related to ride-hailing services
- 4.3 Explore opportunities for consolidating shuttles

Discussion

- The group discussed ride-hailing policy and how some decisions may need to be made regionally, and some locally. Cambridge staff is interested in having a discussion with the Licensing Commission
- Members suggested using the Kendall Square area as a test bed for how to get ride-hailing vehicles to stop in better locations (i.e. not blocking bicycle lanes). For example, some developers are considering building special pick-up and drop-off areas for ride hailing services into their site plans. Institutional partnerships could be critical in exploring and evaluating such efforts.
- Members asked whether a study about shuttle consolidation should be addressed by a regional entity like Central Transportation Planning Staff, or whether these services should be thought of as divided into longer haul (more regional and harder to consolidate) and short haul (more local and easier to consolidate).
- The City should play a leadership role in attracting new membership and retaining current membership in the EZRide shuttle. Task Force members thought that the new Automatic Fare Payment system being implemented by the MBTA would be easier to integrate into services like EZRide and therefore support the service.
- 4.3 is really a joint effort, perhaps best led by a group like Kendall Square Association (KSA). This would include staff time, and a partnership with KSA.

Next Steps

S. Rasmussen discussed the importance of prioritizing these initiatives and identifying supporters or champions for each one. Task Force members expressed a preference for prioritizing within a category, rather than between categories, and associating priority with timelines (e.g. a high priority initiative might still take a long time to complete, and a lower priority initiative might be relatively easy to implement in the short-term). Task Force members also again discussed the importance of having a very legible and graphical executive summary that can be shared with elected officials and other leaders.

The Task Force was particularly interested in identifying what would be happening over the next four years, who would be leading those initiatives, and potential resources for supporting those initiatives.

One Task Force member suggested that a planning student intern might be able to coordinate this work and help with logistics, and could be supported by an organization like the KSA.

The Task Force agreed to hold another meeting to discuss the work plan for carrying out these initiatives in more detail as well as a graphical approach to an executive summary. They agreed to submit any additional comments on the draft initiatives and implementation plans by April 30th.