

Kendall Square Mobility Task Force: Public Meeting

LOCATION OF MEETING: Kennedy-Longfellow School, 158 Spring St, Cambridge

DATE/TIME OF MEETING: October 15, 2015, Open House: 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM,
Presentation: 6:15 PM

TASK FORCE ATTENDEES:

Joe Barr, City of Cambridge – Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department
Brian Dacey, Kendall Square Association (Co-Chair)
Scott Hamwey, MassDOT
Patrick Magee -East Cambridge Business Association
John Sanzone, Friends of the Grand Junction Path

MASSDOT AND PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES:

Matthew Ciborowski, MassDOT (Facilitator)
Erin Kinahan, MassDOT D6
Pete Sutton, MassDOT
Christi Apicella, McMahon Associates
Joanne Haracz, McMahon Associates
Natalie Raffol, McMahon Associates
Duncan Allen, IBI Group
Farah Machlab, IBI Group
Regan Checchio, RVA
Sarah Paritsky, RVA

PUBLIC:

Carole Bellew
Tegin Bennett, City of Cambridge
Caroline [no last name given]
Peter Crawley
Alfred D'Isidoro
Alex Epstein, Volpe
Sam Feigenbaum
Rep. John Hecht, MA House of Representatives, 29th Middlesex District
John Hurley, HYM Investments
Andrew Joseph, Boston Globe
Steve Kaiser
Jeremy Mendelson, Transit Matters
Matt Mowell
Rick Patoski, HUD
Allison Quach
Chris Southwick
Anson Stewart, MIT
Arthur Strang
Rob Tassinari, Trans Action Network
Barry Zevin

PURPOSE/SUBJECT: Public Meeting/Community Open House #1

MEETING MATERIALS:

- PowerPoint presentation (posted on project website)
- 7 display boards (posted on project website)

FORMAT:

The meeting was arranged in an open house format with informational boards set up around the room. Meeting attendees were encouraged to review the materials, talk to project staff, and write comments on post-it notes or note cards. See “DISPLAY BOARDS & WRITTEN COMMENTS” for more details, below. Upon entering the meeting, attendees were asked, “How do you usually get to and from Kendall Square?” and asked to place a dot on a board representing various modes of transportation. The Task Force and project team delivered a brief presentation at 6:15 PM. The open house format resumed after the presentation.

SUMMARY OF PRESENTATION:

Introductions

Brian Dacey, Kendall Square Association and co-chair of the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force, began the presentation at 6:15 PM. He welcomed attendees and reviewed the agenda for the presentation, which includes an overview of the Task Force and a discussion of study details and schedule, study coordination, work completed to date, and next steps.

Task Force

Mr. Dacey said the purpose of the Task Force is to think holistically about mobility issues in Kendall Square. He noted the regional importance of Kendall Square and mentioned other planning studies occurring in key adjacent corridors.

The Task Force will support the sustainability goal of the City of Cambridge, which is tied to transportation choices. Members of the Task Force include representatives from local businesses, agencies, and residents. Mr. Dacey identified some of the Task Force members present at the meeting.

Study Details and Schedule

Susanne Rasmussen, Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning, City of Cambridge Community Development Department and co-chair of the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force, introduced herself and reviewed the study goals and outcomes. The study will gather data to better understand the current mobility conditions and future needs for transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and the streets. The study is planning for the future year of 2040 and will recommend policies and projects to meet these goals. Ms. Rasmussen said the study will consider investment scenarios and what is involved in creating each possible solution from time and financial perspectives.

Ms. Rasmussen said the Task Force has already convened three times and has meetings scheduled about every two months (dates subject to change). She encouraged attendees to

check the study website for finalized dates and to arrive early since there is security at the Cambridge Innovation Center.

Ms. Rasmussen reviewed the study elements and schedule. The goal of this meeting is to review performance-based goals. Two more public meetings will be scheduled; one after alternatives development and one after the final report is released.

Study Coordination

Ms. Rasmussen described the many ways the Task Force is coordinating with the Kendall Square Central Square (K2C2) Planning Study, developments in progress, the Cambridge Advisory Committees, and other strategic plans, including a city wide plan.

Matthew Ciborowski, MassDOT Office of Transportation Planning and facilitator of the Task Force, said this study is related to MassDOT's Capital Conversations, a series of public meetings on the Commonwealth's spending span, and the Program for Mass Transportation – Focus40, a long-range MBTA plan that is also looking at the future year of 2040.

Work to Date

Since the Task Force was created last winter, Mr. Ciborowski said the Task Force has conducted existing conditions research on how people make transportation choices in Kendall Square. Before this presentation, meeting attendees had the opportunity to speak with the project team and share their thoughts on the roadway network, transit conditions, and problems that can be improved. Mr. Ciborowski explained that the city and state have limited time and resources, so the public can weigh in on the prioritization of issues.

Mr. Ciborowski reviewed the five major focus areas, which were determined at the September Task Force meeting:

- Increasing direct transit access (fewest transfers)
- MBTA service reliability and capacity
- Local street network challenges for all modes
- Policy and outreach
- Financing

Mr. Ciborowski encouraged attendees to respond to the key issues and identify anything that may be missing:

- Ensuring the transportation network continues to support Kendall Square's growth
- Reducing "drive alone" automobile trips to Kendall from:
 - Urban residential areas
 - Suburban communities
 - Urban commercial and transportation nodes
- Improving MBTA service: more reliable, better able to serve demand, more options for non-work trips
- Understanding needs for transportation investments in Kendall Square

Next Steps

Mr. Ciborowski said the study team will refine its understanding of future mobility needs, MBTA Red Line capacity and reliability, and new development impacts. Other next steps include imagining new or modified bus corridors, studying alternatives to better use

underutilized corridors, and looking at the role of transportation demand management and parking. The Task Force welcomes input from the public on the goals that will influence the study recommendations.

Conclusion

Mr. Ciborowski encouraged attendees to contact him and visit the website to review the presentation and meeting summary. The next Task Force meeting, which is open to the public, is scheduled for Monday, November 16 at 4:00 PM at the Cambridge Innovation Center. The next public meeting on the study goals and alternatives will be scheduled in December 2015 or January 2016. Study staff will be available to answer questions and take comments at the stations around the room until the meeting is adjourned at 7:30 PM.

DISPLAY BOARDS & WRITTEN/VERBAL COMMENTS:

The below comments were submitted verbally or written on post-it notes by meeting attendees during the Open House portion of the meeting.

Title of Board / Question for Feedback	Written/Verbal Comments
Kendall Square Employee Origins Where do you start your day?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MIT West Campus (biking to transit if using transit - CT2 unreliable etc.) • South End, Boston
Travel Time by Transit to Kendall Square How long does it take you to get to Kendall Square? Where are you coming from?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 minutes from Alewife
Roadway Network and Bus Delay Where do you think congestion is a problem?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bus priority (segregated lanes and transit signal priority) should be incorporated to boost bus capacity and reliability in Kendall • O'Brien Highway between First & Third is scary for bikes due to traffic congestion; Longfellow may help but unlikely • Lack of crosstown circumferential transit (slow infrequent CT2 doesn't count) makes Kendall Square hard to access from most places • Regional modes (Route 28, Memorial Drive, etc.) • Third/Cambridge intersection congestion • CT2 helps carry people who would drive • Grand Junction connection to N Station important • Level of Service for intersections should include Third St corridor • The ride through Kendall Square is the best part of my commute by bike. Good infrastructure.
Transit Trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a shuttle on First St between Lechmere & Kendall • Red Line; CT2 but runs too rarely

<p>What transit do you use to get to Kendall Square? Are there any that you want to use but don't? Why or why not?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buses too infrequent, especially to Somerville/Allston • Red Line; CT2 - Frequency • Run a Green line spur down First St to Kendall; Buses don't work • Use the Grand Junction for Commuter Rail or Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs) • Look at DMUs using the Grand Junction from West Station to Kendall Square and then continuing up the commuter rail line to connect with the Orange Line • Use the Grand Junction to provide a connection between North Station and Kendall Square • Water shuttle – Charles River serving Newton, Watertown, Brighton, Allston, Kenmore Square • What about arranging for Brij or Uber to have 'rights' to carry passengers between communities? (Commenter seemed to feel that crossing municipal boundaries was an obstacle to more services being offered) • Is there a way to get commuters' cars in and out of the Alewife garage faster? • There is a need for better circumferential transit from Kendall to places outside of downtown Boston • Look at the possibility of privatizing some MBTA routes, like the 1; it would be run more efficiently and make a profit if run by a private company
<p>Red Line System Capacity What are your experiences on the Red Line?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random days/times. Define capacity issues at rush hour. Frequency problems off peak. Weekend crowds underserved at late night. • Mechanical failures are the worst and most frequent problem • Too many delays
<p>Mode Share and Forecasted Trips What mode do you use today? Might this change in the future?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Line – Live in Davis Square • I walk most of the time. I take either the CT2 or the 85 if one comes along during my walk. The significant increase in walk mode share will only be possible if there is a significant amount of housing built in Eastern Cambridge. • Bike - 2/3; Red Line 1/3; Bus doesn't serve me well with a 1 seat ride. • Bike then T (Red Line) • Drive; not many options to change trip from Woburn • Bike & walk; no plans to change; I live in East Cambridge • 1/3 walk; 1/3 transit; 1/3 Uber • Bike, then red line then a few bus lines; walking in between & everywhere • What of percent commuters (or population) in nearby towns work in Kendall? • Discussion of UberPool and how some developing countries have some version of it implemented informally <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It might be a competitor to the T or replacement for The Ride ○ Discussed start-ups like Bridj and Leap