

Cambridge Joint Transportation Committee
February 28, 2024
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Cara Seiderman (CDD); Mike Mantello (CDD); Stephanie Groll (Parking and Transportation Demand Management Planning Officer, CDD); Andy Reker (CDD); Jerry Friedman (DPW); Melissa Miguel (DPW); Stephen Meuse (TP&T); Andreas Wolfe (TP&T); Xander Mitchell (Pedestrian); Denise Haynes (Bicycle); Richard Freierman (Bicycle); Scott Kilcoyne (Bicycle); Janet Stein (Pedestrian); Debby Galef (Pedestrian); Bernhard Nickel (Pedestrian); Mike Burke (Bicycle); John Leo (Pedestrian); Thomas Marsh (Pedestrian); Jenine Turner-Trauring (Pedestrian); Kevin Leckey (Pedestrian); Bill McAvinney (Transit); David de Chaves (Pedestrian); Carola Voelker (Bicycle); Randy Stern (Bicycle); Muna El Taha (Bicycle); Eitan Normand (Bicycle); Logan Read (Pedestrian); Worth Smith (Bicycle); Ling Zeng (Bicycle); Tara Kamal Ahmadi (MBTA)

Guests: Matthew Glidden; Nahid Chowdhury; Catiana Jean-Pierre; Julia Levine; Marc Levy; John Pitkin

Introductions - some new bike and ped committee members

Minutes: December Joint Meeting Minutes approved.

Net Zero Transportation Plan (Stephanie Groll)

- Pilot program, take time to get community on board
- Goal—eliminate all greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, per City Council
 - Buildings, Waste, Transportation
- Transportation is 2nd largest source in Cambridge after buildings – 94% from cars and trucks
- Method
 - Advisory Group – 13 people, diverse group, including member from Cambridge bike give back
 - Community meetings, surveys, small groups (let Stefanie know if you have ideas)
 - Work with technical consultants
- Goals
 - Improve mobility – make it easier to get around w/o greenhouse gas emissions
 - Remove greenhouse gas emissions
 - Facilitate a just transition
 - Strengthen community connection
- With existing policies and electrification trends for vehicles, emissions will decrease by 2050 to about 1/3 of current levels – we need to get to zero
- How to get there
 - E.g., Make trips shorter, or change how people take trips to use less gas

- 8 categories of action – all ideas are tentative and on the table for discussion and prioritization
 - Active transportation – make it easier to walk or bike, e.g., more Bluebikes stations, existing goal 2 ½ minute walk to a Bluebikes station
 - Community engagement – e.g., education on available options for people
 - Electric vehicles
 - Land use – e.g., could increase density near transit, without removing parks/trees
 - Parking – e.g., could increase fees to reduce ease of parking
 - Driving alone less – e.g., could require companies to incentivize employees not to drive
 - Buses and trains – e.g., discounted T fares
 - Vehicle ownership – incentive people to not own a car
- How does the Cambridge plan relate to things like MBTA efficiency, more buses, etc.?
 - Can advocate for certain things, work with neighboring municipalities
- Need to go at a speed and process to get the community on board, and try to avoid lawsuits, nimby, etc.
- From consultants, we know if we build out the bike network == 7% reduction in GHG emissions!

Comments

- Reducing free parking could be a focus
- Electrify Cambridge – info will be shared [*see notes at end of the minutes*]
- Add more shuttles, and publicize availability of e.g., Harvard Shuttles
- What about delivery vehicles? – encourage more ebikes, etc.
- Comment – Focus more on built environment, such as more trees, wider sidewalks, as well as better bike lanes would help. Speed bumps, assure retail next to housing,
- Outlaw gas stations?? – but probably need to reduce demand, rather than regulate supply
- Minimize truck trips (which bring items to local stores) – or single use cars – which would have bigger impact?
- Give Bluebikes and T pass with parking pass – charge more, but give people better options that are immediately available

Community Meetings: 3/6 virtual, 3/7 in person, advisory group meeting 3/27

See Net Zero Transportation plan website – <https://www.cambridgema.gov/nztransportation>

** [Follow Up] Here is some more information to address the question about clean energy sources and being sure they are not a scam.

- The Community Electricity Program is a City electricity aggregation program that offers the potential for savings compared with Eversource Basic Service prices and it provides

3 pricing options--100% renewable, standard green, and economy green options:
<https://www.masspowerchoice.com/cambridge>

- Electrify Cambridge is a program to support residents with green, clean, electric home energy upgrades. <https://abodeem.com/homeowners/community-programs/cambridge/>
- The Cambridge Energy Alliance has everything you need to know about living carbon-free in Cambridge: <https://cambridgeenergyalliance.org/> or call (617) 430-6230

There was no public comment.

Announcements

- Winter bike ride, 3/16: please sign up for tasks
- People should send mini bios to Cara by 2/29
- Mass Ave planning study meeting 2/29 – related to Net Zero planning too