

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING NOTES

Date, Time & Place:
September 7, 2016, 5:30-7:30
MIT building E25, room 117

Attendance

Committee Members

John Attanucci, Kelley Brown, Devin Chausse, Karen Dumaine, Charlie Fineman, Robert Fitzgerald, Jim Gascoigne, Doug Manz, Katherine Rafferty, Robert Ricchi, Simon Shapiro, Arthur Strang, Saul Tannenbaum, and Alex Taylor

City of Cambridge

Tegin Bennett and Cleo Stoughton (Community Development); Joe Barr and Adam Shulman (Traffic, Parking, and Transportation)

Presenters, official entities, and members of the public

Five members of the public were present. Philip Groth (MBTA) was present.

Committee Introductions, Administrative Business, and Updates

June and August notes were approved.

Public Comment

- Michael Charney spoke about the “Dutch” method of opening car doors, in which car users open the door with the far hand, which positions them to more readily notice approaching cyclists so as not to “door” them. He also called attention to a [safety training video](#) by Vision Zero San Francisco about operating large vehicles in urban areas.
- Mike Stanley of TransitX described a proposal for a car-free Cambridge, a plan to do a test run at the beginning of next year, and recent cost estimates for TransitX service.

Camera Usage Policy

Joe Barr (Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department) discussed ideas for a policy regarding camera use in transportation planning and operations.

Discussion:

- General principles: the City’s policy regarding transportation-related camera use should be open and transparent, and the City should record and retain as little video data as possible and “abstract” data as quickly as possible.
- Proposed transportation-related uses of cameras include: data collection, traffic signal control, and research.
- The policy would not address, for example, use of cameras on private property, attended cameras, or use of cameras by law enforcement.
- Outstanding questions include: access to data, notification, public records retention, and indemnification.
- In general, the Committee supported appropriate transportation-related use of cameras in order to collect data in a more cost-effective way and take advantage of new technologies.
- The Committee and members of the public urged the City to continue to do outreach on this topic, especially to those who are most concerned about camera use, so that the community ultimately supports the policy that is developed.

Bus Priority Outreach Materials

This discussion was pushed to the October 2016 Transit Committee meeting in order to spend adequate time discussing more time-sensitive topics.

Kendall Center MXD Infill Development Concept Plan

Boston Properties is seeking approval from the Planning Board for its Kendall Center Mixed Use Development (MXD) Infill Development Concept Plan (PB 315). The Committee discussed what should be included in a letter to the Planning Board regarding this project. After discussion, the Committee voted (unanimously—member Doug Manz abstained) to submit the letter, with changes made as discussed during this meeting, to the Planning Board ahead of the September 20 hearing.

Discussion:

- The Development Review Subcommittee met recently to discuss the project and draft a letter to the Planning Board, to be reviewed by the full Committee at today's meeting. The draft letter voices support for the project and for the proposed contribution from Boston Properties to the Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP); recommends that the KSTEP funds be used for substantial enhancements to transit capacity, reliability, and connectivity; urges Boston Properties to set stronger expectations for transit support by its employer tenants; recommends that Boston Properties support existing public bus services when possible, rather than supporting new private shuttle service; and requests that the timeline for the outlay of the funds through KSTEP be revisited.
- City staff presented the main findings from the transportation impact study (TIS) for the project. The Committee discussed limitations of the methodologies used in TIS studies. It was suggested that a special meeting be set up for those who are interested to discuss TIS methodologies.
- There are some remaining questions about the KSTEP MOU. Some comments in the draft letter include requests that are not within the purview of the Planning Board; the Committee may wish to submit further comments on the draft MOU as well. The Committee is interested in being involved with the KSTEP Working Group and generally participating in discussions about how KSTEP funds are used.
- The Committee discussed ways in which any pilot bus service funded initially by KSTEP could be made permanent using either long term KSTEP funding or other sources of funds.
- The Committee and members of the public discussed parking policies at large developments like these, as well as differences in how parking is usually allocated to residents versus employees. The draft letter to the Planning Board advocates for flexible allocation of parking spaces and charging employees daily for parking to encourage employees to choose more sustainable modes of transportation when possible. There was also discussion about what can and should be included in the project's Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan.

Final Public Comment

There were no additional comments.

Announcements, Events, and Updates

(Note that these updates were announced following the camera usage policy discussion.)

- *Inman Square:* The City plans, in the next few weeks, to test out banning left turns from Hampshire Street onto Cambridge Street. The project consultant will consider transit needs when developing the design for this intersection. Construction is planned for next summer.
- *Porter Square:* As the City moves forward with plans for Porter Square, staff will be sure to review comments from the August 2016 Transit Committee meeting.

Adjourned at 7:30 pm