

# Transit Advisory Committee

## April 2023

### Abbreviated meeting summary

#### Attendance

##### Members

**Present** (5) Bill McAvinney, Carl Rothenhaus, Jim Gascoigne, Katherine Rafferty, Peter Septoff.

**Absent** (6) Arthur Strang, Melissa Zampitella, Jackson Moore-Otto, Sylvia Parsons, Devin Chausse, Matthew Coogan

##### City staff (2)

Andrew Reker (CDD); Adam Shulman (TPT)

##### Others (5)

5 members of the public

**Note:** CDD = Community Development Department; TPT = Traffic Parking and Transportation Department; MBTA = Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, BNRD = Bus Network Redesign.

#### Welcome and committee introductions

Andy Reker (AR) began the virtual meeting at 5:31 PM by welcoming members of the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC), members of the public and presenters. AR gave a tour of the virtual space for people joining by application and telephone and shared ground rules for virtual meeting participation.

Carl Rothenhaus (RA) then conducted a roll call of the members of the TAC – 5 members were present, 6 were absent. The committee conducted a roll call vote to approve the meeting minutes for the April 2022 meeting. The committee voted all in favor to approve the meeting minutes.

#### Report: MBTA Project Subcommittee

AR then introduced the MBTA Project Subcommittee to report on their upcoming meeting and activities. These activities are: Writing a letter to the MBTA to stress the importance of transparency and surveying Central Square Station on the conditions and quality of the station following a drafted station condition survey template. This meeting was scheduled by the subcommittee for 4/20 at 5:30PM ET and will be gathering in Carl Baron Plaza in front of the Cambridge Savings Bank.

#### Report: City Project Subcommittee

AR then introduced the City Project Subcommittee to report on their activities. The subcommittee is looking into studies on how on-demand delivery services and ride share services impact the MBTA. Members may also collect and supply data on tickets issued at bus stops and in bus lanes.

## Presentation: City and MBTA Project Updates

AR then presented project updates for City and MBTA planning and construction projects

City Updates:

AR Introduced a section of the MassAve4 CSO project that focuses on the reconfiguration of the bus stops and roadway of Massachusetts Avenue in Harvard Square. The design challenge on this section of street is the difficulty of designing a safe cycling route through the square due to the large volume of buses and cyclists travelling through it, and the constant complicated interaction between these two modes. AR put this design challenge to the TAC providing three different design treatment proposals that would allow cyclists to get from the Harvard Science Center area through to Church Street. These proposed treatments included possible routes of travel through the square, and the introduction of physical structures that could be installed to separate cyclists from pedestrians and from vehicles.

AR asked:

- What details should the city be considering?
- Have you experienced the two stops?
- Are there other places that have this sort of design challenge and infrastructure where Cambridge could look to do research.

Members preferred treatments that provided one way travel for cyclists on opposite sides of Massachusetts Avenue in order to provide room for pedestrians and bus passengers waiting at stops. Members stressed the concern about pedestrians waiting in the bike lane.

One member brought his concern that the placement of street furniture and possible physical structures that could be installed to separate cyclists from pedestrians could inadvertently hide younger and smaller residents from being able to be seen by bikers, pedestrians, or worse motor vehicles.

One member mentioned a bus stop in DC as a place that Cambridge could examine as a what not to do. The stop in question in DC is a thin island platform where, due to its small size and lack of physical infrastructure and street furniture, encourages passengers to wait in the adjacent carriageway, similar to how lack of space for passengers in Harvard square could force passengers to wait in the roadway of Massachusetts Ave or in the cycle lane if not provided adequate space.

AR then introduced further updates:

- Inman Square: Work there is not complete yet, there is still some work in the pedestrian plaza, but the project will be completed later in the year.
- Phase 2 of the Brattle Street CSO implementation (Sparks St. to Mt. Auburn) is beginning.
- Belmont Street work: is beginning and should finish later this year
- On Huron Ave and River Street builders are beginning work.
- Real time transit signage will go out to bid and be implemented later this summer.
- Transit Signal Priority: Hopefully end of last year.
- Main street will be having public comment on protected bike lanes.

Finally, AR announced that recruitment for the 2023-25 TAC has begun. Interested Cantabridgians and parties are encouraged to apply.

## TAC Updates

AR presented upcoming meetings for the TAC, including:

- The MBTA subcommittee will be meeting April 20<sup>th</sup> at 5:30
- The next TAC meeting will be MAY 4th
- Next joint meeting will be Wednesday the 19<sup>th</sup> 2023.

## Public comment

There were no public comments during this comment period.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:53 PM

## Version Information

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Approval: