



TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

November 20, 2019

7:30 pm

Acton Town Hall, Rm 121, 472 Main St.

Present: Franny Osman (Chairperson), Jim Citro, Julia Day, R Luke Evans, Paula Walsh

Joan Gardner (Liaison, Board of Selectman)

Austin Cyganiewicz (Director of Intergovernmental Affairs)

Absent: James Yarin

Opening

Franny Osman opened the meeting at 7:35 PM

I. Regular Business

1. Public Concerns – None
2. Chairperson Report – Franny attended Gateway Cities Awards event at MassINC . Keynote speaker shared interesting initiatives regarding dedicated or exclusive pedestrian/cyclist zones, how to encourage building of parks and use of walking and biking.
3. Board of Selectmen Update – Joan apprised members of the following:
 - Dec 3 – Special Town Meeting (Citizen Petition)
 - Dec 10 – Special Town Meeting (School, Fire Station Sewers)
 - Dec 17 – Town Elections
4. Committee Liaison Updates – Luke (also a member of South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee – SATSAC) informed members of topics on which SATSAC was working: Potential use of Gordon Richard’s property, Station traffic, Martin St access along track).

5. Approval of Minutes – Meeting minutes from October 23, 2019 were reviewed. Franny moved to approve with changes. Paula seconded. Members voted and motion passed unanimously.
6. CrossTown Connect and Acton Transportation Updates – Austin Cyganiewicz:
 - Provided shuttle ridership data.
 - Discussed possibility of using large blank MBTA signage at the train station for town transportation services.
 - Informed members that Town of Acton was elected member of Boston’s Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Minuteman. Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination (MAGIC) area.
 - CrossTown Connect transportation services will be included on Google Maps platform.
7. Sidewalk Update – None

II. New/Special Business

1. Sidewalk Charges – Julia and Luke expressed interest in addressing sidewalk issues. A map of sidewalks at all tiers of priority and already built or not, was studied.
2. Train Station Property – Franny thought that TAC should ask the Town and SATSAC for a public discussion on some of the station issues mentioned under point 4 above. One idea proposed pertained to adding an entrance into the station from the Gordon Richard’s parking lot. Jim moved that TAC write a letter. Franny seconded. Members voted and motion passed unanimously. The letter will include a request to explore the following in addition to parking: 1) Use of the buildings on Gordon Richards’ property, considering bathrooms and refreshment. Keep bike trail in mind as well. 2) Use of the Richards land as part of new traffic plans. 3) Work with MBTA to make a ramp and walkway from west end of station to Martin St.
3. Making the Connections Community Compact Grant with Sudbury and Metropolitan Area Planning Council “MAGIC” subregion -- The Steering Committee has been meeting, creating an intermunicipal agreement and a job posting for program manager. The grant will help fill unmet needs with pilot of using transportation network companies and taxis.
4. Community Transit Grant Application—still await word on grant that will fund dispatch at approximately the same level as last year.
5. Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Workforce Transportation Grant Application—Application submitted by CrossTown Connect for Concord Shuttle.

6. Mass. Trails and “Landline” bike trail ideas-- Littleton is interested in improving bike connectivity despite lack of bike trails that actually touch their town. Ms. Osman spoke to Mass. Trails staff about use of Railroad right of ways for trails. That effort is ongoing in the state. Ms. Osman will invite both Mass. Trails and Littleton Transportation Committee to a meeting.
7. 2021 Budget- changes to transportation program being considered--In this year of large potential expenses (Schools, Fire Station, Sewers possible) the Town Manager is looking for ways to reduce spending on the transportation program. Adding uses of technology to offer more on-demand transportation and less fixed route CAT bus (which has had low ridership) is being considered. TAC agreed that a reduction in CAT and an increase in a microtransit “Roving CAT” was worth consideration. Mr. Cyganiewicz and the committee all agreed that the goal of making all rides fare-free was a worthy one. All agreed with a plan to have a “Yes-only” system, with all-out efforts to meet needs. Ideas discussed:

- use “geofencing” in pilot

- Have townwide effort for collecting data by having everyone register for the Taxi/Uber/Lyft pilot and even if trips aren’t subsidized we can still learn from where they were going. They could be rewarded for signing up.

- Get an Uber account so dispatchers can be concierge

- Look into concierge services

- Install tablets in locations around town so users can “ping” the driver and a van comes or the Roving Cat comes

- Make service stops at the Sr. Center and High School

- Use tablets on vehicles to collect reasons for trip (to help with federal data collection)

- Do a fundraising appeal, where people donate money to help the transportation program, tax deductible because Acton is non-profit, Finance Director Steve Barrett explained to Ms. Osman at a recent meeting with Town Manager, Mr. Cyganiewicz, Mike Gowing, and Mr. Barrett. Mr. Cyganiewicz explained that the transportation revolving fund and enterprise fund are separate from budget, thus donations ok.

- Consider name YesBus.

- TAC agreed that introducing new names would be confusing as always, so consider calling the pilot by the name CrossTown Connect.

III. Closing Items

1. Future Meetings – Franny suggested that Julia, Luke, and her meet to begin work on sidewalks issues. There will be no meeting at Town Hall of TAC in December but there will be a meeting at the Senior Center. Franny will set up a bike trail meeting as mentioned above.
2. Adjournment – At 9:12 PM Jim C. moved to adjourn. Luke seconded. Members voted and motion passed unanimously.

Materials distributed at this meeting:

1. Map of sidewalks looked at.

ADA= Americans with Disability Act

CMAQ= Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality

MAGIC= Minuteman Advisory Group on Interlocal Coordination

MAPC= Metropolitan Area Planning Council

MassDOT=Massachusetts Department of Transportation

TAC= Transportation Advisory Committee