

Transit Advisory Committee

December 2019

Abbreviated meeting summary

Attendance

Members	Present (10) John Attanucci (Chair), Kelly Brown, Devin Chausse, Kristiana Lachiusa, Bill McAvinney, Margaret McKenna, Sylvia Parsons, Katherine Rafferty, Arthur Strang, Saul Tannenbaum, Absent (7) Joseph Beggan, Matthew Coogan, Jim Gascoigne, Jackie Jones, Robert Ricchi, Alex Taylor, Melissa Zampitella
City staff (2)	Andrew Reker (CDD); Adam Shulman (TPT)
Others (2)	2 members of the public

Welcome

Andy Reker (AR) opened the meeting at 5:30 PM. Members of the Transit Advisory Committee (TAC) and public introduced themselves with their name and affiliation.

Public Comment

No public comments.

Presentation: Kendall Square Transportation Enhancements Program (KSTEP)

Tom Evans from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) presented on the Kendall Square Transportation Enhancements Program (KSTEP). He reviewed the history of the CRA and the initial urban renewal and development work. He then reviewed the initial history of the KSTEP process from 2015 to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area plan and Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act plan. In lieu of the standard traffic analysis and engineering,

TAC asked about the following topics:

- *Traffic, parking, and transit counts.* TE clarified about the locations of counts, the types of counts collected and when the CRA began counting people on transit and bicycling.
- *Specifics for counts?* TE offered to follow-up with a meeting specific to the data collection in 2020.

TE continued to present on the different planning work that laid the ground work for KSTEP. With an additional 1,000,000 ft² in commercial and residential space being proposed, the CRA and other stakeholders wanted to capitalize on the value capture mechanism described in the City-led K2/C2

planning process. In addition, during the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act process for the renewal of the Kendall Square urban renewal plan, the EIR proposed funding to mitigate the effects of the development. The formula that was used to create KSTEP was based on the MBTA's per-passenger subsidy multiplied by 15 years multiplied by expected transit trips and was linked to increases in commercial development. Based on this history, TAC members asked about:

- *A definition of the Urban Renewal District*
- *Ownership of the properties included in the urban renewal district*
- *The efficiency of the KSTEP formula capturing all of the economic value*

TE continued to present on how the KSTEP is structured, reviewing that the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Cambridge, CRA, and Massachusetts Department of Transportation/Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MassDOT/MBTA) establishes a working group to govern the KSTEP fund. In the MOU, several planning efforts are identified as informing KSTEP working group's decision-making: Kendall Square Mobility Task Force, MBTA's Red Line Improvements program, transit on the Grand Junction corridor in the MBTA's RailVision process, the MBTA Better Bus Project, etc. In addition, TE highlighted that the MOU envisioned that one-third of the fund would be spent in an initial push for quick improvements to transit in the Kendall area and that the remaining two-thirds would fund longer-term improvements.

TAC asked the following questions:

- *How many projects?* A few projects would be expected to be fully funded through KSTEP alone.
- *Short-term versus longer-term impacts of KSTEP as a funding source.* Some of the initial concepts were that KSTEP could work as a local match to other sources of funding. In addition, the CRA envisions that with all of the development in the area, using the same formula, one could expect that up to \$40 million could be raised using this value-capture funding mechanism.
- *How could TAC assist?* Growing EZRide is one of the targets and objectives, other ideas are welcome
- *Would KSTEP envision a project that is outside of Kendall, perhaps in Cambridge, but would improve transit?* KSTEP funding would have to improve transit to Kendall, if a project is connected to transportation to the Kendall Square area, it could be funded. An example could be if there are opportunities to improve transit from the West of Boston/Cambridge to the Kendall Square area.

Discussion: Transit Advisory Committee 2020 Work Plan

AR presented a Cambridge staff proposal to change the agenda for Transit Advisory Committee meetings in January and February 2020 so as to accommodate further discussion on developing subcommittees as part of the Transit Advisory Committee.

Discussion: Comment letter to MBTA on GLX Bus Bridge

AR then introduced the topic of a comment letter from the TAC to a state agency directing a project. AR reviewed the publicly-available information on the MBTA's plans for a "bus bridge" diversion, including:

- timeline

- potential routing
- upcoming MBTA decision-making opportunities

In addition, AR presented the process that the TAC has used in the past to approve a comment letter to be sent to a state agency.

AR then turned over the presentation to John Attanucci (JA) to present the content of a proposed letter to the MBTA. JA presented an outline of the contents of the draft letter and asked for feedback. TAC members discussed:

- Intended recipients of the letter
- Suggestions on language

TAC members made a motion to approve the submission of the comment letter to the MBTA Fiscal Management and Control Board and Green Line Extension project team with the alterations discussed at the meeting and with additional suggestions sent to JA by e-mail. The motion was unanimously approved.

Note: After the TAC meeting, JA submitted the updated comment letter to the MBTA FMCB and GLX project team on December 6.

Presentation: Updates and announcements

AR presented updates on an upcoming joint Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Advisory committee meeting, the 2020 Transit Advisory Committee meeting calendar and the following local and regional projects:

- Inner Mount Auburn Corridor Safety Improvements
- River Street Reconstruction
- Grand Junction Multi-use Path Design
- MBTA Better Bus Project implementation
- MBTA Bus Network Redesign
- MassDOT Allston I-90 Multimodal
- DCR Memorial Drive Greenway, Phase III

Public Comment

AR then opened the floor to public comment. James Williamson (JW) made several comments about bus service in Cambridge, including the condition of the Story Street bus stop on Mount Auburn, snow clearance at Harvard station, snow clearance at the terminal for Route 83.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM

Version Information

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Approval: Expected on 1/8/2020