

Transit Advisory Committee

March 2020

Abbreviated meeting summary

Attendance

Members	Present (11) John Attanucci, Kelly Brown, Devin Chausse, Jim Gascoigne, Bill McAvinney, Sylvia Parsons, Katherine Rafferty, Arthur Strang, Saul Tannenbaum, Alexander Taylor, Melissa Zampitella
	Absent (6) Joseph Beggan, Mathew Coogan, Jackie Jones, Kristiana Lachiusa, Margaret McKenna, Robert Ricchi
City staff (3)	Stephanie Groll, PTDM Planning Officer; Andrew Reker (CDD); Adam Shulman (TPT)
Others (4)	Andrew Smith (MBTA); 3 members of the public

Committee introductions and vote on meeting summary

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. Quorum was not reached and therefore the TAC did not hold a vote on approving meeting summaries. *Note: the summary for this meeting is heavily abbreviated due to the lack of a dedicated note-taker.*

Presentation: Parking and Transportation Demand Management

AR introduced the City of Cambridge's Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Planning Officer, Stephanie Groll (SG). SG introduced the PTDM program and facilitated a discussion with TAC members. First, SG presented a set of slides that covered the following points:

- Cambridge's history in mode-shift policy and the PTDM program
- How the PTDM program works
- Recent results from PTDM monitoring including multi-year trends
- Evaluation of the PTDM ordinance

During the presentation members of the TAC asked the following questions or made the following statements, a summary of the response is in italics.

- A concern with residential properties falling outside of the PTDM program scope and suggestion to eliminate all minimum parking requirements. *The City requires TDM measures and, in some cases, monitoring at multi-family residential buildings through the Article 19 Special Permit process. Minimum parking requirements vary between base zoning and special zoning districts.*
- Does the city have inventories of other parking? *The City has parking inventories for non-residential parking through the PTDM program, city-owned off-street parking, on-street metered*

parking, and some information on residential parking for developments that went through the development special permit process. The TP+T Department maintains information on registered off-street non-residential parking spaces. There was a brief discussion about how “registered” parking spaces is related to parking spaces that fall under a PTDM Plan.

- Is there more information on how the different neighborhoods do with respect to the PTDM ordinance and monitoring? *We can see from the data that areas that are located closer to high-frequency transit tend to have lower SOV rates. But we don’t have enough data points to draw statistically significant conclusions about this yet.*

SG then facilitated a discussion on questions or concerns that the TAC could think about including asking, what other practices should the City consider, what are policies that other places have to further reduce single-occupancy vehicle rates, and what do other places do to make it easier to get around using transit?

The TAC unanimously moved to continue the conversation about PTDM into the next agenda item without breaking into separate breakout groups by subcommittee.

During the conversation members of the TAC asked questions to further clarify how the PTDM program works and made statements on other practices and policies to consider. A synthesis of the questions and statements is below:

- Applying this policy to a broader set of organizations
 - Employers in place of or in addition to property owners
 - Residential properties in addition to non-residential properties
 - Lowering thresholds that trigger PTDM ordinance
- PTDM measures that the City should consider as requirements or used throughout the city regardless of triggering a PTDM plan
- Creation of progressive rather than fixed single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) goals or a cap-and-trade system for SOV goals
- Addressing parking citywide, including demand-based pricing for on-street parking or construction of commercial parking
- Subsidizing use or trips on sustainable transportation modes
- Consideration of how new mobility like app-based ride-hail, electric scooters would be evaluated in the PTDM program. *These modes have been included the annual survey since 2017 and policy is being addressed in the New Mobility Blueprint.*
- Need to think about statewide or regionwide PTDM program, instead of Cambridge-only.
- Need to look at shuttle equity—people who request them get an express bus, while other employees do not get one.
- Would it be possible to create a Cambridge tax on parking?
- Regularly raise cost of residential parking permit cost in small increments, to avoid occasional large increases.
- Motion: It is the opinion of the transit advisory committee that the city should make an online submission process for annual reports. *The City is in the process of preparing a Bid to hire a vendor to create an online transportation reporting portal.*

John Attanucci (JA) also shared an update from recent policy enactments from Washington DC, which has created a “transportation benefits equity act” which equalizes all transportation benefits within the District of Columbia. This means that the same dollar amount of transportation benefits is available to all employers.

Presentation: Local and regional updates

AR presented a brief update on a change in MBTA service planning policy. The remainder of the presentation on local and regional updates was posted to the TAC website.

JA also presented the response from the MBTA Green Line Extension project team to the TAC’s letter. JA presented an outline of a response to the MBTA GLX team.

Public comment

A member of the public made the following comments:

- Extremely upset about the change of the MBTA Route 1 to be implemented on 3/15 that include several stop eliminations
- Opportunities to improve shuttles for weekend Red Line shutdowns are to improve service on Route 1, Route 83, and clarity on how much longer the work will continue.
- Small things that matter – loud sounds, Transit application causes confusion, MBTA’s courtesy messages are condescending and patronizing

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 PM

Version Information

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