

## Minutes

Transportation Advisory Committee, January 28, 2010

Meeting commenced at 7:40 pm

Present: Franny Osman, Jim Citro, Bengt Muten, Michael Fisher  
Visiting Citizen and Prospective Member: Nancy Shaw

Next meeting: Room 121, Town Hall, Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>. Possible added meeting Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> if needed.

We reviewed minutes of last meeting. She will amend them and re-circulate the revised version.

Minutes accepted as amended.

Brief discussion of Transaction contract. We will ask them to incorporate the language of the Suburban Mobility grant in their draft contract when it comes time for that. This will be a good way to make sure their contract matches the grant. This refers to the suggestion brought up at Minute Van a few weeks to make sure the bid of Transaction matches the grant.

Franny visited Transaction: a storefront on Main near Moody in Waltham, a very small operation. They do a lot of homeless transportation. Franny spoke with Rob and owner Cindy. Rob does rural and tribal transportation. Ed Weiner (who lives in Acton) doesn't work there anymore. He might return if they get busier.

Franny says she is still confident in them.

Asked them who keeps track of budget. Was told that they would keep contract.

Franny will set up a meeting of David Sharfarz with Michelle and Rob. We want David Sharfarz to be comfortable with the service.

Minute van wanted to know how it would raise cost of program if we add Boxborough. There won't be a cost if we locate parking lot closer to Acton than to 495. If another van were required the added cost would be \$100,000. So what should Boxborough put in. \$10,000 plus \$5,000 for coordination, Transaction suggested. Franny shared this suggestion with Minute Van group, including Selina Shaw, Town Administrator of Boxborough.

Third reason for meeting with them was that they said they could help with grant she is writing. They were very helpful. They identified what we should apply for: ask for a coordinated plan. The grant is supposed to extend work that was done at Institute in October. Proposed budget for transportation coordinator would be \$20,000. Rob gave Franny a document that she is finding incredibly helpful.

Transaction sounds very flexible.

The group working on the grant application is called "Minute Van." If we do get the grant (for a coordinated regional transportation plan), it would be a "feather in Acton's cap." Grant will be decided on February 23. The application is due on February 9. The grant will mention Littleton as well as Boxborough, Maynard, Concord and Acton. Stow might be in it too, Franny vaguely remembers from Minute Van meeting. Jim Citro agrees to read and comment on draft of grant proposal. Other members also can look at it so Franny will send a draft out by Monday Feb. 1.

Clean Air and Mobility Information session. Franny attended on 1/27. They want to support any program that makes air cleaner. Don't want to have a burdensome application process. The area now includes Newton and Brookline. You can see it all on line, how it's been streamlined.

MAPC meeting. Franny attended. Met executive director, Mark Draisen. Met again the Littleton town administrator.

Globe on Sunday reported that Littleton, Westford and Boxborough are trying to form a business district.

Jim Citro went to MassDOT meeting on Tuesday, 1/26, in Framingham. First there was a Mass DOT update. Commuter rail group said they've signed agreement with CSX who will work to improve freight movement on Framingham line and other lines. Supposedly will be completed by 2012. There are three commuter rail stops in Framingham. There was a discussion of possible bike trail alongside tracks. Probably about 25 to 35 people attended.

It's now five years since United Way committee started working on public shuttle project for Acton.

Warrant article: Hopefully we'll be asking only for \$38,000 if Boxborough puts in \$10,000. Or maybe it will be even less if we count parking fees. It would also be nice if we could go to businesses and ask for help between time they print the warrant and the actual meeting itself. (Franny volunteers to go to United Way to try to raise money.) It also would be good if we could say that the shuttle system is already operational. We're just asking the town to provide a match to other funding. We should ask Lauren how to phrase the article.

Sustainability: Public transit cannot support itself just on fares. We have to be working on town changing its attitude about providing transit. We need really good marketing and pr at the beginning. Also, we will get other towns to participate.

5-minute video: Franny went to the tv station which is now going to be managed by Acton, with Verizon and Comcast both providing financial support. They really want Acton people to develop programming. Studio is in high school. Franny will get footage of people talking about why they want transportation program. She will put

this footage together into a 4 or 5 minute film. Anecdotal evidence really makes a big difference. We will get 12 minutes at Town Meeting if it's like last year.

Discussion of proposal to add seats to lunch place in bowling alley: need zoning variance. We will advise that this proposal is acceptable.

Next proposal is a site plan for changes to West Acton village. Changes will include moving some older buildings and building new buildings. TAC will report "concern" about proposed perpendicular parking on south side of Mass Ave. We see possible traffic congestion at times when theater lets out, but the tradeoff is worth it. We like widening of sidewalks. We like traffic calming. We want a possible shuttle stop included in their parking plan. We like the improvement of parking around Sweet Bites.

Franny will send a draft of the UMass grant for input from members and from visiting citizen Nancy Shaw.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20.

Notes taken by Mike Fisher and touched up by Franny Osman.