



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: December 8, 2021.

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:30 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Bill Copithorne (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise, Tycho Nightingale, Scott Smith, Corey Rateau (APD), Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members of Public in Attendance: Jo Anne Preston, Paul Schlichtman, Petru Sofio, and Joe Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled "Governor Charles Baker's 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law". The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. TAC Chair Status

TAC observed a moment of silence.

C. Approval of September 8, 2021, and October 13, 2021 Meeting Notes.

Minutes of the September 8, 2021, meeting were approved. (Corey Rateau abstained as he was not present at the meeting.)

Minutes of the October 13, 2021, meeting were approved, subject to clarifying changes provided by Howard Muise related to Section 1 D: TAC Rules of Governance. (Corey Rateau abstained as he was not present at the meeting.)

D. Correspondence (Requests from Select Board November 9, 2021: Traffic Calming Measures on Overlook Rd; and Pavement Markings on Everett St)

- Overlook Rd Petition for Traffic Calming Measures: Shoji Takahashi will contact the citizen and discuss next steps.
- Everett St is one-way from Broadway to Mass Ave, and the citizen is requesting the Town add turn arrows near the intersection with Mass Ave to improve vehicle flow. Jeff Maxtutis recommended that TAC refer the matter to DPW to receive input on whether the location meets standards for such markings.

E. Liaison for Council on Aging.

Laura Swan asked for a volunteer to be the TAC liaison to the Council on Aging.

F. TAC Rules of Governance.

Laura Swan, Howard Muise, and Scott Smith worked on revising the TAC Rules of Governance to reflect how the TAC operates presently. "Citizen" was changed to "Volunteer", as certain members might work in Arlington but live elsewhere. Volunteers are classified as "special municipal employees", who are subject to ethics rules and open meeting law. Clarifications are proposed on TAC liaisons to outside committees including positions on Ad Hoc Committees.

In the October Meeting, TAC Members decided to revisit the Bylaws and precinct representation in November when there is clarity in the Town precinct map. Scott Smith and Len Diggins confirmed that the Precinct Map is now final with 21 Precincts. There are some changes in the boundaries.

TAC will vote on adopting the proposed changes to the TAC Rules of Governance in the January Meeting.

2. Public Comments.

There were no public comments.

3. Town Issues/Activities.

A. Corey Rateau provided an update from the Police Department (APD).

APD has received complaints of speeding on Elmhurst Rd, which is a private way. Under the Town Betterment Program, ~70' of roadway was repaved recently. APD will place traffic counters to obtain data.

Traffic Supervisor has requested radar trailer be placed on River St. Radar trailer also will be placed on Eastern Ave.

B. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

Stratton School Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Sidewalk Project. This grant was awarded in 2019 and is scheduled for MassDOT funding for construction along Hemlock St and Dickson Ave in spring, 2024. A well-attended, online public engagement meeting was held on November 10, and community feedback for the pre-25%-design will be submitted to MassDOT. Public hearing for the 25% design is scheduled for the spring.

Minuteman Bikeway Project. November survey was completed with ~1,600 responses. Existing conditions report has been submitted by the consultant, Kittelson, and is under review by the Town.

MassTrails Grant. Toole Design was selected and the contract has been signed to begin work. MassTrails requires the project be completed by the end of June.

DPCD Staffing. David Morgan was hired as the Town's Environmental Planner.

Mass Ave/Appleton Long-Term Safety Project. Town is recruiting a design consultant for a long-term safety project of the Mass Ave corridor between Forest St/Burton St, Appleton St/Appleton Pl, and Lowell St.

In response to a question from Tycho Nightingale, Dan Amstutz responded that the design consultant responsibilities include public engagement.

In response to a question from Len Diggins regarding the Mass Ave and Appleton St project, Dan Amstutz responded that parking survey data were collected in October before the new pavement markings were installed. He is presently working on analyzing the data and preparing a report, and he and the Town Manager are discussing whether to bring the report to the Design Review Committee or directly to the Select Board.

Petru Sofio opined that Mass Ave and Appleton St have been improved, and the Traffic Supervisors at the intersection think that traffic has been calmed. He inquired about the timing for long-term improvements. Dan Amstutz responded

that a MassWorks funding application is due in June, which would be for design. (This funding is for public works related to economic development arising from 1165R Mass Ave and the hotel projects.) The Town is not in a position to request construction funding at this time. The goal would be submitting for the 2023 application for direct construction in 2024.

C. Bill Copithorne provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Foundations for RRFBs to-be installed at (1) Quincy St and Gray St and (2) Lowell St at the Reservoir were completed before Thanksgiving. RRFBs should be operational around Christmas.

Bollard installation has been completed for Mass Ave and Appleton St.

Pavement markings are now done for season. The contract is in place and pavement markings will restart in the spring to complete the pavement markings of sharrows and bike symbols on Lake St.

Petru Sofio inquired about installing “Bike Lane” or “Bikes May Use Full Lane” signs on Lake St as pavement markings were not installed. He also noted Mass Ave and Appleton St project was missing certain signs (Bikes May Use Full Lane; Yield to Bikes) and delineators have not been installed for eastbound traffic.

Corey Rateau asked whether MUTCD permits pavement marking and sign together. Bill Copithorne will check on compliance with MUTCD. Dan Amstutz asked to have the signs added to the DPW Sign Shop queue in order to move it forward if adding them would comply with MUTCD. Tycho Nightingale expressed his support for the signs being added.

4. Discussion: MBTA Bus Stop Changes on Park Ave and Wachusett Ave.

Dan Amstutz presented MBTA-proposed changes to bus stops along Park Ave and Wachusett Ave as part of the MBTA Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) Program. Goals of PATI Program include improving bus stop accessibility and improving service. This might include removing stops. The presentation is available on the calendar page of Town website.

As part of public engagement process, more than 200 letters were sent to abutters. There is a December 13 meeting and online survey that will be open until December 24. Following analysis of the feedback from the meeting and survey, a recommendation will be made to the Select Board in January or February for implementation in 2022.

In response to questions from Laura Swan and Jeff Maxtutis, Dan Amstutz noted that MBTA will not be changing service, and the location of bus shelters is being reviewed. MBTA needs to make the bus stops accessible, but some of the existing stops might be difficult and/or costly to make accessible.

Boarding counts at each stop were recorded in 2018 and factored into the MBTA analysis of which stops to retain. Len Diggins countered that small ridership in itself is not enough of a reason to consolidate/eliminate stops. He, Laura Swan, Scott Smith, and Joe Solomon remarked on the steep gradient of Park Ave and the challenge to pedestrian movement. Joe Solomon added that he takes Bus 62/76 to Alewife Station because of the new Bus-Only Lane near the station. The ridership data at Park Ave and Florence Ave; and Park Ave and Appleton St look similar and wonders where the passenger volume will consolidate.

Scott Smith suggested that public engagement include outreach to Dallin and Brackett communities. He emphasized that it is difficult to cross Park Ave, and the Town needs to consider how people get to bus stops if they need to cross Park Ave.

Jeff Maxtutis, Corey Rateau, Scott Smith, and Petru Sofio discussed the Park Ave and Park Circle pedestrian signal and crossing noting that it is not comfortable crossing Park Ave at that location; automobile compliance with the traffic light can be poor, and the bus stop is not ADA compliant at this time.

5. Discussion: Parking Benefit District Funds

Dan Amstutz provided background on the Parking Benefits District, which emerged from the 2014 Arlington Center Parking Study. Revenue from parking fees is available for use in the Parking Benefits District of Arlington Center for “improvements to the public realm, and transportation improvements, including, but not limited to, the operations of mass transit and facilities for biking and walking”.

Funds of ~\$170,000 are available, although Corey Rateau noted that fees from PayByPhone reduce the total amount of funds. Julia Mirak Kew, representing the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, has proposed ideas on beautification of the District. TAC may decide to propose uses for the funds.

Paul Schlichtman observed that Mystic Street is a gateway to the Town, and repairs to the Russell Common Parking Lot and beautification along Mystic Street would be valuable. He recommended Chestnut St pedestrian safety improvements to-be funded through the Parking Benefits District, which would require the Select Board to modify the Parking Benefits District Map to include the north_side of Chestnut St.

Howard Muise recommended extending the Parking Benefits District Map to include the west_side of Mystic St in order to use the funding for improving the

Mystic St and Chestnut St intersection and traffic signal. Corey Rateau cautioned that the costs of a traffic signal are high, and Parking Benefits District funds would not go far. Tycho Nightingale advocated for funds to-be spent for projects along Mass Ave as higher bang-for-the-buck.

Howard Muise inquired if Parking Benefit District Funds were being used for rebuilding Broadway Plaza. Dan Amstutz responded that DPW is using Chapter 90 or similar funds, and 70% of the cost is being paid for by the MWRA.

Scott Smith suggested allocating Parking Benefit District Funds for snow clearance on sidewalks and ramps. He also noted that changes to the Broadway/Franklin St and Mass Ave/Franklin St intersections could be investigated. In particular, is the traffic signal at Broadway and Franklin St necessary, or could it be replaced with a four-way stop. Petru Sofio added that an all-red interval for the traffic signals would be a safety improvement for pedestrians.

Dan Amstutz concluded this topic by noting a Parking Advisory Committee Meeting on December 17 to continue the discussion. It will not vote to recommend any projects at this date.

6. Update: Pedestrian Flags

Jeff Maxtutis commented that multiple pedestrian-flag locations have only a single flag remaining. Corey Rateau, Jeff Maxtutis, and Tycho Nightingale will coordinate on distributing the flags to appropriate locations.

7. Discussion: Bates Rd left turn

Bill Copithorne conducted additional observations of motor-vehicle traffic on Mass Ave at Bates Rd. From approximately 8 am, he observed 31 cycles and no left-turning vehicles were stuck at the light. The longest queue was two vehicles, which were able to make the turn. From approximately 3 pm, he observed 39 cycles, and no left-turning vehicles were stuck at the light. The longest queue was three vehicles, which were able to make the turn. No evening observations have been conducted.

8. Discussion: Park Ave Pedestrian Improvements

Bill Copithorne summarized that DPW has been considering pedestrian safety improvements to Park Ave near the complicated intersection of Wollaston Ave and Paul Revere Rd. In particular, draft concepts have been drawn to shorten the crossing distance for pedestrians by adding curb extensions/bump outs. This will narrow the roadway, thereby slowing motor-vehicle speeds.

Notably, the Park Ave and Wollaston Ave MBTA bus stop will be improved by MBTA as discussed earlier in Agenda Item 4. Changes to the location might be complicated by the number of underground utilities in the area.

DPW is seeking public comments and how to proceed with community engagement. Joe Solomon suggested reaching out to the Park Ave neighborhood group; A Place To Grow Child Care Center; Growing Up Childcare; and the Dallin PTO. He also offered to help engage people in the community.

9. Update: Mt. Gilboa Traffic Concerns

Ray Jones updated TAC about a neighbor complaint of speeding on Westminster Ave. He inquired about obtaining speed measurements on Westminster, and Dan Amstutz responded that that TAC has funding available to pay for traffic data collection.

10. Discussion: Washington St One Way

Melissa Laube said that the Washington Street Working Group Memo is nearly ready to send to TAC. The Working Group is recommending two options for consideration to the abutters of the private way: (1) Two-way traffic with southbound traffic yielding; and (2) One-way traffic northbound. The Working Group Memo will be circulated for substantive TAC Review at the January meeting.

11. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming

Scott Smith said that Thompson Area traffic has not been bad as the weather has been fairly mild and many students continue to walk to school. He noted that School Zone signs are missing on Everett St, and he will send an inventory to Bill Copithorne. Laura Swan added that the River St Traffic Supervisor has been observing aggressive drivers.

12. Update: Newland Rd/Summer St Crosswalk

In response to a letter to the Select Board, Shoji Takahashi and Ray Jones observed pedestrian movements across Summer St near Peirce Elementary School. A neighbor with children attending Peirce is seeking pedestrian crosswalk markings to facilitate crossing Summer St at or near Newland Rd.

On a school morning, they observed many students (with and without guardians), dog walkers, and cyclists crossing Summer St. The crossing location varied between Newland Rd and Sunset St, and even further east. On a school

afternoon, similar crossings were observed and quantified. Ray Jones added that the rate of crossings exceeds the warrant for adding a marked crosswalk.

The intersection of Summer St and Newland Rd is less than 200' from the signalized intersection of Summer St and Park Ave Ext. On several occasions, they observed the automobile queue waiting at the traffic signal extending through the Newland Rd intersection. The guidelines provide that the distance between marked crosswalks should be at least 200'. As many pedestrians were observed to cross near Sunset St, a marked crosswalk could be useful in that location and would adhere to guidelines.

Jeff Maxtutis inquired about sight distance to the proposed crosswalk. He and Dan Amstutz will provide guidelines to the Working Group.

The Working Group will provide a draft Memo on recommendations.

13. Discussion: Eastern Ave Traffic Calming

Jeff Maxtutis observed existing conditions on Eastern Ave near Brackett Elementary School. During the observation period during school drop off, he did not observe pedestrians crossing Eastern Ave outside of the marked crosswalks. He noted that School Zone signage could be improved and added that the Town can consider it a Safety Zone due as Robbins Farm Park is also located there.

14. Update: Chestnut Street Traffic Calming

Bill Copithorne noted that DPW has received the MassDOT review of the TAC Chestnut Street Traffic Calming recommendations. MassDOT is open to the changes under the Traffic Control Agreement, which will need to be revised such that the Town is responsible for maintaining the proposed RRFB. A MassDOT surveyor will measure the Chestnut St roadway to ensure the recommended layout will fit. Bollards may be installed as curb extensions. Pavement contractor hired for minor repair of the sidewalk at Russell Lot.

MassDOT review and approval is required for any change to the islands in the Mystic St and Chestnut St intersection.

Jo Anne Preston observed that the Chestnut St / Chestnut Terr crosswalk is faded and needs repainting. She urged for speed on installing the recommended improvements as little has been done, and she inquired about funding for the Chestnut St improvements. Dan Amstutz responded that funding could be available under the Parking Benefits District and the Commonwealth's Shared Streets and Spaces Grant.

Paul Schlichtman concurred with Jo Anne Preston. He informed TAC that he had submitted a public records request to understand the delay. MassDOT ultimately

received the Town's proposed changes and provided 2-week turnaround. He urges DPW install all of the recommended changes by the next Select Board meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.