

**Town of Arlington  
Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)**

Tuesday, March 23, 2004 7:15 PM

Committee members present: Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Ralph Elwell, Larry Englisher, Jeff Maxtutis, Lt. Jim McHugh, Ed Starr, David Walkinshaw

Also present: Sandy Bourgeois, Terry Dash, Erik Moore, Paul Morrison, Gary Pigg

**Administration**

The minutes of 2/24/04 were approved unanimously.

**Symmes Development and Transportation**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones redistributed the Symmes Redevelopment Associates Proposal Overview and reported that the developer team had held their first community meeting. She stated that some statements made by team members at the community meeting were troubling. Sandy Bourgeois, Terry Dash, Erik Moore and Paul Morrison voiced concerns over the Symmes site's access to Woodside Lane, modifications to the approved reconstruction plans for the Summer Street, Hospital Road, Brattle Street and Hemlock Street intersection and the installation of sidewalks on Hospital Road and Summer Street. David Walkinshaw noted that the process is ongoing and the project would require modification before approval. It was recognized that the official role of the TAC with regard to the Symmes project was not clear, although the Committee will likely be expected to review and comment on the project.

**Redirection of CDBG Mass Ave Corridor RFP**

Ed Starr distributed a draft of the modified Mass Ave Corridor RFP. He explained that John Sanchez had proposed what he believed to be a more effective approach to the project, involving hiring a consultant to define the project, prepare the materials and position Arlington to be in line for state or federal funds when they become available. Ed reported that Kevin O'Brien had put the original RFP on hold and was prepared to request additional CDBG funds to support the modified project. Jeff Maxtutis and Larry Englisher voiced that it would be helpful if the RFP included overall budget numbers. Ed reported that the pool of potential recipients was being reevaluated to fit the modified RFP. TAC members were invited to make additional suggestions for RFP recipients.

**Downing Square**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that the Downing Square Working Group had met to review the materials collected and to begin the process of defining the problems, testing ideas for solutions and planning for the public meeting. Ralph Elwell recounted the history of the Park Avenue bridge sidewalk. Ed Starr reported that he had letters from 1997 and 2000 estimating the cost of adding a sidewalk to the east side of the bridge.

**Hutchinson Road**

Larry Englisher reported that he had circulated the full draft report to the Committee and that he had been in contact with Arlington's Tree Warden, who was in the process of measuring and was expected to report back regarding the ownership of the trees along Hutchinson Road. Ed Starr distributed photos of the roadway and options for signage to increase the safety of pedestrians on the road. The Committee discussed the signage options and expressed a preference for yellow-green diamond-shaped pedestrian signs (MUTCD W11-2) to be erected along the road, at least one in each direction in advance of the most dangerous pedestrian areas. Yellow-green SHARE THE ROAD signs (MUTCD W16-1) were also considered appropriate

to be used in conjunction with the pedestrian signs. Larry agreed to coordinate with the Tree Warden and Public Works to establish the Town's right of way boundaries for sign placement and tree pruning.

### **Right Turn on Red**

David Walkinshaw reported that Lt. McHugh had provided a complete list of the traffic signals in Arlington, which he had begun reviewing with respect to elimination of NO TURN ON RED signs. Using the guidelines adopted by the TAC, David proposed a plan whereby he would identify those intersections where conditions are most favorable to right turns on red and recommend the elimination of two signs to the Committee each month. This process would continue until all of the Town's intersections have been addressed. Lt. McHugh pointed out that since the initial request for this evaluation came from the Town Manager, our recommendations should be reported to the Town Manager as well as the Board of Selectmen. Ed Starr reported that he had contacted Town Counsel about any possible liability for removing the NO TURN ON RED signs, but had not yet received any definitive comment back. David invited all TAC members to suggest intersections for evaluation.

### **Fairmont Street**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones explained the difficulties that the Board of Selectmen experienced at one of their recent meetings regarding a parking restriction request in East Arlington. Two reports of the TAC, on Magnolia Street and Cleveland Street, suggested a comprehensive study be conducted of parking in the area. The Selectmen were in a position of wanting to grant the request of a Fairmont Street resident to install 2-hour parking signs, yet wanting to wait until the suggested study to make any changes. Ed Starr distributed a draft letter to the Selectmen addressing this issue. After discussing the regional problems involving Alewife Station, the Committee agreed to look into the possibility of CDBG funding for a study and to send the correspondence to the Selectmen via e-mail after giving Scott Smith an opportunity to review it after his return.

### **Crosswalk Working Group**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones distributed a draft Crosswalk Standard that she had developed through the Crosswalk Working Group. The TAC discussed the safety implications of crosswalk width options. A narrower standard (10' or 12') would allow more crosswalks to be converted to thermoplastic this year; a wider standard (15') would make the crosswalks more visible. The Committee agreed to request that DPW tally how many crosswalks could be converted this year with the \$8,000 allocated for each of the different width options. Larry Englisher agreed to send the priority list developed by the Working Group to Ron Santosuosso for the tally.

Elisabeth reported that she had repeated two of the Arlington Center pedestrian, cyclist and bus ridership counts performed in March of 2003, before the Mass Ave crosswalks were converted to thermoplastic. Recounts in the vicinity of the Library Way crosswalk showed a 20% increase in compliance (pedestrians using the crosswalk) from 2003.

### **Route 60/Mass Ave**

Ed Starr distributed crash data summary materials for the Mass Ave & Route 60 study area, extending on Mass Ave from Jason Street/Mill Street to Broadway and on Mystic Street from Mass Ave to Summer Street. The data included all crashes from 2001 through 2003 in which there was personal injury and/or damage of \$1,000 or more. The data was sorted as to type of crash and location. Ed reported that he would further focus on the crashes at the Mass Ave/Route 60 intersection as the study continues. Jeff Maxtutis offered to make the Arlington crash data from the State for the years 1999-2002 available to the Committee.

## **Warrant Articles**

Ed Starr reported that he had spoken with Peter Szealag, the author of Town Meeting Warrant Articles 77 (which proposes a traffic signal be installed at the intersection of Library Way & Mass Ave) and 79 (which proposes a pedestrian sidewalk be added to the east side of the Park Avenue bridge). Ed also reported that he had provided Peter with cost estimates for adding a sidewalk to the Park Avenue bridge supplied by Ron Santosuosso, and that Peter had made his presentation of the Warrant Articles to the Finance Committee.

## **Alternative Transportation Day**

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that planning for the event was moving forward, but that funding had not yet been secured. Ed Starr pointed out that the Selectmen were requesting CDBG funding, presumably for the 2005 event.

## **Draft Policy for Revisiting Projects**

Ed Starr distributed a draft policy statement describing when the TAC should revisit projects that have been completed. Committee members were asked to review the draft for approval at the April meeting.

## **Tufts University**

Ed Starr requested that Committee members continue to suggest ideas for assistance from Tufts University's Civil Engineering Department. Possible projects include investigating exclusive bus lanes to Alewife and adding a sidewalk on the Park Avenue bridge.

## **Actions in Process/Status**

Lt. McHugh reported that there were two people currently working in the Town's sign shop and recommended contacting John Sanchez regarding when signs on the list would be installed.

## **DPW Update**

Ralph Elwell reported that the Town's street light replacement project had begun, with new high-pressure sodium fixtures being installed in East Arlington. The project is expected to take four months to complete.

## **Traffic Division Update**

Lt. McHugh reported that one of Arlington's Police Officers had resigned to take a position in the private sector.

## **The meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.**

## **Handouts:**

Agenda packet including Meeting Agenda of 3/23/04, Hutchinson Road reference materials, correspondence to Board of Selectmen, Crash Data Summary materials for Mass Ave & Route 60 study area, draft Re-examine Policy statement, and Status of Actions TBD - from Ed Starr

Meeting Minutes of 2/24/04, Guidelines for the Removal of Existing No Turn on Red Signs in Arlington, and Decision Criteria - from Scott Smith (through Ed Starr)

draft Crosswalk Standard for Town of Arlington and Symmes Redevelopment Associates Proposal Overview - from Elisabeth Carr-Jones

revised Request for Proposals for the Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Project - from Kevin O'Brien (through Ed Starr)