

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

Tuesday, March 12, 2002 7:15 PM

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

Minutes from 2/12/02

The minutes of this meeting were approved unanimously.

Future Meeting Dates

Ed Starr reported that some committee members are having conflicts on Tuesday nights, and that he would begin exploring other days of the week for future meeting dates.

Town Transportation News

Rich Bento announced that, in preparation for resurfacing, the Department of Public Works had begun clearing a 10' high by 10' wide canopy around the Marquis/Minuteman Bikeway. The Bikeway resurfacing project will also include tree root barriers and scarification, new plantings, re-stripping and removal of cobblestones.

Lt. Jim McHugh reported that the fines for disability space parking violations had been raised from \$50 to \$100 throughout Arlington.

Working Groups for Magnolia Street and Cleveland Street

Lt. Jim McHugh announced that the measurement program was underway on Cleveland Street and that a meeting with Cleveland Street residents has been scheduled by Scott Smith for the morning of Tuesday March 19th at the Fox Branch Library.

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that a meeting with Magnolia Street residents has been scheduled for the morning of Friday March 15th at the Community Safety Building.

Ed Starr announced that a Special Meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee to discuss and vote on the recommendations of the Magnolia Street and Cleveland Street Working Groups will be held on Tuesday April 2nd at 7:15 PM in the First Floor Conference Room in the Town Hall Annex.

Warrant Article 66 Planning

Ed Starr reported that the TAC Warrant Article would be addressed by a joint meeting of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee to be held on the evening of Wednesday March 20th, and a meeting of the Board of Selectmen on the evening of Monday March 25th. Ed distributed copies of the draft presentation that will accompany the TAC Warrant Article at these meetings.

The Committee discussed the content and approach of its presentation, with many comments being directed toward the Town's recent economic realities. Committee members discussed low-cost ideas to continue building on the momentum it has begun. Suggestions included forming specialized volunteer Working Groups, hiring a co-op student, and adjusting signal timings at intersections which require more thorough solutions.

Rich Bento announced that although all of the DPW's funds for next year have already been committed, some Chapter 90 funding might be available, but that the state's budget crisis could cut off that source of revenue for next year.

Mass Ave Corridor Meetings

Elisabeth Carr-Jones and Rich Bento reported on the briefing for Town Meeting members on the Mass Ave Corridor Study held on the evening of Tuesday March 5th. The briefing consisted of introductions and background by Rich Bento and Alan McClennen, a presentation by Louis Berger Group of the lane configuration and intersection options, followed by general questions and discussion.

Rich Bento announced that he would request a more informative presentation from Louis Berger Group for the Public Meeting on the Mass Ave Corridor to be held on Tuesday March 26th at 7:30 PM at the Fox Branch Library. Publicity for the Public Meeting is planned for the Advocate, various web sites, e-mail lists, flyers and the Town Hall sign.

Jason Street Neighborhood

Lt. Jim McHugh reported that the Traffic and Parking Unit of Police Services would be conducting measurements of traffic volume and speed in the area of Spring Street and upper Jason Street as soon as the weather permits. Rich Bento distributed copies of a report prepared by Louis Berger Group detailing the scope of design work for Option 1: a raised crosswalk on Jason north of Brantwood, and for Option 2: raised crosswalks at Jason north of Brantwood, on Brantwood, on Hillside and on Jason south of Hillside. The estimated cost of design services was \$9,196 for Option 1 and \$18,272 for Option 2.

The Committee discussed other options for addressing the traffic speed and volume in this neighborhood. These options included simple speed humps, increased enforcement, rumble strips, stop signs, increasing traffic flow on Pleasant Street and removing existing restrictions on other streets. A Working Group of David Walkinshaw (Chair), Ralph Elwell, Lt. Jim McHugh and Rich Bento (or Ron Santosuosso) was appointed to study and make recommendations to the Committee on the Jason Street Neighborhood.

On motion, the Committee voted unanimously to place a freestanding pedestrian crossing sign on Jason north of Brantwood. Rich Bento distributed copies of a report from the City of Cambridge titled "Berkshire and York Streets Traffic Calming Project Evaluation" and a section of the Portland Pedestrian Design Guide titled "Guidelines for Crosswalks" to the Committee as reference materials.

Measurement Program

Lt. Jim McHugh reported that the Traffic and Parking Unit had purchased three new counters, bringing the Town's total to four. Beginning in the Spring, they plan to build on the measurements on the DPW's GIS data and the recent measurements conducted by Louis Berger Group.

Tracking Implementation of BOS Votes

Ed Starr posed the question of how the Committee should track the implementation of the BOS transportation votes in order to schedule follow-up measurements. Jack Hurd and Rich Bento explained the current process and it was decided that the Committee should be notified, along with the BOS, when transportation-specific votes are implemented.

Bikeway Intersection Planning

Rich Bento reported that his office is continuing to gather standards and would have more to present at the next TAC meeting.

Vision 2020 Survey Results

Ed Starr distributed the updated results of the transportation portion of this year's Vision 2020 survey. The latest tabulation includes 1,400 responses, and ranks pedestrian safety (64.9%), school zone safety (57.0%), congestion/bottlenecks (53.7%) and roadway physical condition (52.9%) as the issues of most concern to Arlingtonians. It was pointed out that although some of the issues (such as curb cuts) were not of great importance to a large number of respondents, they were of great importance to a certain segment of respondents. It was also acknowledged that none of the issues included in the survey were considered unimportant by Arlingtonians, since the lowest percentage any issue received was 23.1%.

Co-op Student

Larry Englisher reported that a coop student could be hired by the Town for either three months (for \$6,000-\$8,000) or six months (for \$12,000-\$14,000). Committee members discussed the merits of this proposal and concluded that it would be a cost-efficient means of accomplishing some of the more pressing transportation projects in the short term.

Additional Volunteer Working Groups

Ed Starr suggested the development of TAC Working Groups for addressing issues such as: artery/collector street review, signaling, pedestrian safety, measurements, databases, transit services, signage, interaction with the Arlington Redevelopment Board, quality control and business environment. These Working Groups could be led by a TAC member, but would consist primarily of outside volunteers, thereby expanding our labor base and creating an opportunity to recruit new members. Committee members agreed to consider which of the Working Groups should be developed first and report at the next meeting.

Board of Selectmen Process

Jack Hurd reviewed the draft steps that he had previously outlined regarding the procedure the BOS uses to address transportation issues. The Committee decided to review and finalize the procedures with the BOS, and Elisabeth Carr-Jones agreed to retrieve the draft and redistribute it to the Committee.

TAC Web Site

Elisabeth Carr-Jones reported that the TAC web site is up to date and that, if anyone would like to add anything to it they should contact her. Rich Bento said that he would ask Louis Berger Group for an electronic copy of their presentation for the Mass Ave Corridor Public Meeting to post on the web site.

Vice Chair Position

Ed Starr pointed out that, in his absence, no one was officially in charge of the Committee. Since Scott Smith has been filling that role, as well as that of Secretary, the Committee nominated Scott to fill the position of Vice Chair.

Potential Invited Speakers

Ed Starr opened the floor to suggestions for possible speakers on transportation issues, either for our Committee or for a larger audience. Senator Robert Havern, the Senate Transportation Committee Chair, as well a resident of Arlington, was suggested. Luisa Paiewonsky, Director of the Bureau of Transportation Planning and Development for Mass Highway, and also a resident of Arlington, was also suggested. Jack Hurd agreed to contact Luisa and invite her to attend a TAC meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 PM.

Handouts:

Agenda packet including Agenda, Draft Outline of Handout for Finance Committee on 3/20, Review of Jason Street Issues, Transportation Survey Preliminary Results, printout of e-mail from Ed Starr to Richard Bento and Alan McClennen regarding the hiring of a co-op student, and Strawman Working Groups for TAC - from Ed Starr

Minutes from 2/12/02 - from Scott Smith

Scope of Work, Raised Crosswalk at Jason, Brantwood and Hillside Streets, Town of Arlington, Massachusetts, prepared by The Louis Berger Group, Inc. February 5, 2002 - from Rich Bento

Guidelines for Crosswalks, reprinted from the Portland Pedestrian Design Guide, June 1998 - from Rich Bento

Berkshire and York Streets Traffic Calming Project Evaluation, reprinted from the City of Cambridge Community Development Department, Environmental & Transportation Planning Division - from Rich Bento

Printout of e-mail from Paolo Marinelli regarding Estimate of International Crosswalk Costs - from Elisabeth Carr-Jones