



Town of Sudbury

<https://sudbury.ma.us/transportation/>

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, June 12, 2019

9:30 AM

Police Department Conference Room, 75 Hudson Road, Sudbury, MA

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Beth Suedmeyer, Bethany Hadvab, Doug Frey

Advisory Group Members Present: Debra Galloway, Adam Duchesneau

Absent: Charlie Dunn, Dan Nason, Scott Nix

Guest: Sudbury resident Linda Faust

Confirmation of Quorum

The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Carty as acting chair convened the meeting at 9:36 AM.

Selection of Clerk

Bethany Hadvab agreed to take minutes.

Welcome new member Doug Frey (Commission on Disability)

The Committee officially welcomes new member Doug Frey

Update and Discussion - Community Compact Grant / "Making the Connection"

Duchesneau: Conference call with Travis Pollock from Metropolitan planning counsel and Franny Osmond from Acton last week.

Sapienza: grant money deposited on May 24th. Fund needs to be in 3 separate funds for: program manager, matching subsidies, marketing and outreach. Prepared FAQ on community compact best practices initiative. Grant allows for creative experiments to develop best practices through continuous quality improvement. Grant funds program manager whose responsibility is to oversee and manage many projects across the collaborating municipalities. Steering committee identifies issues and determines what might be appropriate and needed. One of the innovations in the grant is to pay on the ground residents who have transportation needs in the community to be advocates (who have experienced this first hand). Money in the grant to provide matching funds for communities who have additional financial needs for ride subsidies.

Duchesneau will attend the MAGIC meeting tomorrow.

Sapienza reports that this is not a significant time commitment for communities and the grant does not set specific directives, but allows municipalities to identify and work toward own needs. According to contract

documents, the deadline for spending the grant money is June 2020, but we will apply for extension for 1 year. Grant is for 2 years, including 1 year of evaluation and write up after a year of pilot implementation. There is a maximum of 1 year to spend funding, but municipalities can request an extension. Grant requires an evaluation write up at the end of the 2nd year.

Linda asked about more details of the program. Sapienza, Carty and Duchesneau explained program is called "Making the Connections" with a purpose to develop on demand and accessible transportation options. There is a need to continue to explore and identify gaps in transportation such as evenings, weekends, and on demand and using existing transportation services more effectively. There is also a need to identify the current trends in existing transportation usage.

Sapienza discussed the use of microtransit and the need for additional information in regards to usage and needs. She noted that microtransit providers are not burdened by fixed costs, unlike the regional transit authorities that own and operate shuttles and buses.

Sapienza and Carty and Duchesneau have talked with JFK taxi, and Sapienza and Carty will talk with Tommy's Taxi tomorrow. Tommy's has some accessible vehicles. Also the committee would like to continue working with Uber/Lyft so that the latter companies can begin developing a Sudbury "fleet" of on demand vehicles. Discussion ensued with theme that taxis may be a preferable vehicle source due to consistency of employee availability and access to accessible vehicles on demand. Committee also discussed the need to identify the fee rate for taxis. Sapienza discussed how other towns have used geo-fencing to identify a fee structure based on the zone that a rider is transported within and noted an issue with taxis is the "dead zone" between where the taxis are stored and where the ride is hailed. This could possibly be solved by taxis docking at particular areas in town and JFK was open to this plan once the drivers can be assured of demand. As noted in the program title "Making the Connections," Sapienza emphasized the need for microtransit, taxis, RTAs and other existing transportation structure to work fluidly together.

Linda noted the limited ADA transportation options currently for Sudbury residents, noting some of her transportation needs both within town and in surrounding communities.

Carty inquired about next steps and priorities. Sapienza acknowledged that Sudbury has taken significant steps already toward understanding the data and needs and expressed a hope to have a steering committee and moving toward identifying a program manager by September, acknowledging that movement during the summer months can be challenging.

Carty noted the identified need for transportation to and from Emerson and inquired how it fits into the Community Compact grant. Sapienza noted that there is the need to collect additional data on specific Sudbury transportation needs, and then the hope is to utilize ride sharing companies to facilitate a pilot program to provide Emerson transportation. Sapienza discussed collecting a minimum consistent data set from all entities. Duchesneau clarified that communities are already collecting data and this can be utilized and incorporated into the pilot data.

Deb inquired about next steps with ride sharing partnership. Sapienza noted that ride sharing companies set the rate and then Sudbury decides on the subsidy. Duchesneau noted that subsidies are coming from the mitigation funds which are allocated for transportation and the Board of Selectmen will have to vote on any use of funds. Carty noted that this committee will need to develop a one page write up of the plan regarding partnering with microtransit, who will be served and funds needed.

Duchesneau inquired about parameters, noting that existing fixed transportation should be utilized first before microtransit, and inquired how to communicate this to residents and how to collect that data. Sapienza noted that the grant will not collect RTA data usage, only microtransit and on demand usage. Discussion ensue as to whether microtransit options should be limited to times when the COA van is not in operation, but several members of the committee agreed not to restrict, but rather to encourage COA shuttle/van first. Concerns were expressed about the COA van having decreased ridership. Committee discussed a goal of moving the COA van closer to the structure of on demand or having smaller fuel efficient vehicles to the fleet, especially for non-accessible transportation needs.

Duchesneau inquired if the Sudbury community can begin developing plans and policies before the steering committee convenes. Deb inquired if beginning to collect data and implement planning might not be in line with the steering committee's expectations. Sapienza noted that there are basic questions that the committee can begin addressing in advance of the steering committee, including: What is the agreement with microtransit and taxi companies? How do we set fees? What types of communication do we need to have with RTA and other transportation structures?

Continue discussion of 3/6/12 month action plan, Future Agenda Items

Carty noted the need to set 3, 6, and 12 month goals as well as a short term goal for the next meeting. Sapienza noted identifying one small step that will be successful that can be built upon. Committee members suggested medical transportation. Sapienza noted that medical transportation would support a cross section of constituents, including seniors, veterans, persons with disabilities and those who are financially vulnerable. Bethany explained the role of Neighbor Brigade in volunteers providing transportation. Duchesneau inquired if their data can be rolled into the data set. Bethany will reach out to Neighbor Brigade. Duchesneau and Sapienza addressed the need for a minimum established data set.

Sapienza noted that there are data on other pilots which provide estimates of the average cost of rides. Duchesneau inquired about setting an annual budget and the need for data on the demand for rides. Sapienza suggested that the funds are allocated and available until they run out, and data will be collected during the pilot regarding demand.

Carty noted that Town Manager, Board of Selectmen and Council on Aging will need to be presented with any plan. Sapienza suggested that each committee member compile a list of questions regarding a pilot, with the question in mind "If you are moving forward with this pilot, what would you want to know, based on your current role?" and noted that we do not want to ask questions that have already been answered.

Deb noted that Concord, Carlisle and Lexington include both social and medical transportation in their pilots, and inquired if Sudbury can take a direction from these communities. Deb and Bethany will call Concord and Carlisle to get additional information on their process and decision making.

Committee decided that the focus would initially be on health related transportation, including mental health and substance abuse service transportation.

Committee Membership and Structure

Carty reported that at the most recent Board of Selectmen meeting he shared the mission statement for the Transportation Committee, to be reevaluated in Spring 2020, and provided an overview of committee's achievements since September 2018. Carty discussed membership changes for the committee, including changing Deb to a core member as the MWRTA Representative, getting a new member from the Council on Aging to replace Carmine Gentile, to add Carmine Gentile as our State Representative, and to modify Sapienza's role to reflect her role as Livable Sudbury ambassador. He also mentioned possibly adding members of the LS and SPS School Committees as advisory members.

Member Updates, Administrative updates, Upcoming Events

Discussion ensued regarding the MWRTA Route 20 commuter shuttle stops. Duchesneau will contact appropriate personnel to request a bus shelter at Meadow Walk. Per Deb other stops will have signs posted. Shaw's will likely allow parking next to route 20 and Shaw's will host the ribbon cutting. Duchesneau will reach out to the Shaw's Landlord to confirm parking availability for shuttle users. Deb distributed a ribbon cutting announcement, the shuttle schedule, and a general shuttle announcement. Carty distributed copies of the MetroWest Daily News story about the shuttle.

Discuss and Schedule Upcoming Meetings

Committee agreed to meet again on Thursday June 27 at 3pm. Carty will secure a location for the meeting.

Review of Action Items

Tabled to the June 27th meeting.

Review and approval of April 18, May 21 2019 Meeting Minutes

Committee reviewed them unanimously approved the minutes from April 18 2019 with minor edits. Review and approval of the May 21 minutes were tabled to the June 27th meeting.

Adjournment

Upon motion and unanimous approval meeting was adjourned at 11:04am