



Town of Sudbury

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

Sudbury Transportation Committee

Minutes

Friday, December 15, 2023

10:30 AM

Via Town Zoom Conference Call

Core Members Present: Daniel Carty, Alice Sapienza, Debra Galloway (arrived late), Bob Lieberman

Core Members Absent:

Advisory Group Present:

Advisory Group Absent: Dani Marini-King Town of Sudbury Sustainability Coordinator, Martha Welsh, Dan Nason, Chief Scott Nix, Carmine Gentile, Silvia Nersessian and Mary Warzynski

Guests: Ana Cristina Oliveira, Linda Faust, Kay Bell, Town Planner Adam Burney, Commission on Disability Cheryl Wallace

Confirmation of Quorum: The statutory requirements as to notice having been complied with, Dan Carty as Chair convened the meeting at 10:31 AM. Dan Carty made an announcement that this was a public meeting, and the meeting was being broadcast live via Zoom and recorded by Sudbury TV. He took roll call, noted a quorum was present, and announced that he was making Ana Cristina co-host of the Zoom session.

Selection of Clerk: Alice volunteered to take meeting minutes.

Administrative topics: Dan announced that, at the Select Board meeting on Tuesday, December 19, he had requested a "Discussion on Transportation Committee" item on the agenda. His goal was to bring the Board up to date on transportation initiatives and pose the question: What next? What is the role of transportation vis-a-vis housing and economic development? How is transportation (especially scenario 3 in the business plan) related to goals in the Master Plan for the Town?

The Committee was established by the Select Board, and the approved charter states:

It is envisioned that the Committee's purpose and tasks will become part of the responsibilities of town departments or bodies at some future date. The Transportation Committee, in cooperation with the Town Manager or their designee, will provide recommendations on how to integrate these responsibilities within Town Government [emphasis added].

In short, Dan will be asking the Board to comment on the desired future role and responsibility of the group, given the latter *sunset clause*. He has notified the Board that there may be a quorum of Committee members at the Tuesday meeting. Kay Bell stated that she has followed the work of the Committee since its inception and has begun hearing from residents the question as to why transportation is not part of town staff. She wondered if the “message” were clear to people that we need to get transportation into the town budget.

Dan then noted the following topics for review and discussion:

- 495 Partnership meeting
- New members
- Finances (updated spreadsheet)
- Grant updates
- Future tasks
- Minutes for approval.

495 Partnership: Dan described his attendance at the 495 Partnership annual conference and its theme of the “future of transportation in 495/MetroWest.” At the meeting were Jim Nee (MWRTA), Kate Hogan (State representative for Stow, Bolton, Hudson, and Maynard), David Linsky (representative for Wayland and Natick), and the featured speaker, Monica Tibbits-Nutt, Secretary and CEO of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. Hogan commented on the number of RTAs serving the area and operating “in silos.” She noted the high concentration of educated workforce and stated: “You cannot get something [i.e., transportation service] without asking for it.” Tibbits-Nutt warned about the loss of population in the Commonwealth and stated that housing and transportation must be developed together, as in the MBTA community housing initiative (the challenge: “transportation, transportation, transportation”). Nee spoke about the necessity of moving people out of their cars, and the lack of good north-south connections, as well as the MWRTA microtransit pilots (Catch Connect). In all, this visibility of transportation and acknowledgement of its importance were encouraging.

New members: The Committee will soon be back to a core membership of six. Town planner Adam Burney and Commission on Disability Cheryl Wallace are up for approval by the Select Board on Tuesday.

Finances: Based on a recent meeting with Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, Dan reported that there is no line item in the next fiscal year budget for transportation. Thus, if there were a need for continued funding, the Committee would have to make a request at Town Meeting for funds. Bob asked whether that meant there is no town employee responsible for transportation in the budget (cf/ the Committee sunset clause, above) and Dan answered in the affirmative. However, Dan continued and shared the spreadsheet, given an extension requested of MassDevelopment to continue to use the taxi funds (likely through February 2024) and the amount left from the prior Town Meeting allocation, we would be in good shape for the upcoming fiscal year. Adam will file for an extension for Sudbury; he will also find out the status of Stow and Bolton (Acton has already filed for an extension). There is still the MAGIC allocation of \$10,000 to be addressed (i.e., how allocate among the towns formerly partnered in Making the Connections). Dan will follow up on this.

The State earmark (\$125,000) is a promising source of funds for transportation. Bob had met with Carmine Gentile at a CoA meeting and discussed the earmark and its importance. Dan said there is a process whereby we can request an extension, and Carmine stated he would spearhead the effort (working with Dan) to roll over the amount into the next fiscal year. Adam agreed to file the paperwork needed. With both the MassDev and earmark funding extended, the near-term finances for transportation look good. We then have to determine how to continue over the longer term.

Dan brought up enrollment, which is now 250 residents enrolled for taxi, 214 for Uber, and 105 of the latter total enrolled for both GoSudbury programs. He then turned over the grant updates to Alice.

Grant updates—Community Transit: Alice reviewed the Community Transit grant award for running a Catch Connect/MWRTA shuttle in Sudbury for 12 months. The award was announced in November 2023; funding should be available by July 2024. This grant will finance weekday shuttle service to residents in the age-restricted and accessible developments along Route 20 as well as to residents in similar developments within a selected zone. The staging area for the shuttle route will be the Coolidge development (two buildings), close to the Wayland town line. Pickup and drop-off locations will include but not be limited to additional residences, along with grocery and other shopping options, restaurants, hair salon, library, post office, dental and medical offices. The Wayside Country Store provides riders with connection to MWRTA fixed route service 7C, and the shuttle continues to Target, in Marlborough. The Transit grant funds 50% of the total requested; the remainder is termed the “local match” and will be met by MWRTA and Sudbury. Fortunately, 70% of Sudbury’s local match is offset by the in-kind contribution of staff and volunteers who manage the GoSudbury programs. If transportation were the responsibility of Town staff, that salary would constitute a similar offset to a local match requirement of other grants, as noted in the next grant update.

Grant updates—Transit Innovation: Currently in-process, the Transit Innovation application involves a partnership among Sudbury, Wayland, MWRTA, Uber, and other vendors (taxi, dispatch) for a Boston Hospital MWRTA shuttle with a Sudbury-Wayland *Emergency Ride in/from Boston* option. The shuttle is modeled on a similar program operated by the MWRTA in Framingham, Natick, and Wellesley. The *Emergency Ride in/from Boston*, its complement, is designed to meet the need for a physical safety net and reassurance for transit-dependent residents, in circumstances in which they are likely to be anxious about their health and mobility. No person will be left struggling to avoid a stressful and lengthy wait between shuttles. The *Emergency Ride in/from Boston* option is restricted to eligible Sudbury or Wayland riders who have arrived at their destination via the MWRTA Boston Hospital shuttle and subsequently face a potentially lengthy wait for continued shuttle service under the following circumstances: (1) medically-necessary travel beyond walking distance from the destination healthcare facility to another healthcare facility; (2) a missed “next” shuttle; or (3) a missed last shuttle. In case (2), TNC-taxi transportation will be provided to the next west bound shuttle, if a further stop is available; otherwise, as in case (3), TNC-taxi transportation will be provided to the rider’s home in Sudbury or Wayland. The grant application is due 19 January 2024.

Like the Community Transit grant, a local match is required. Per the funding website:

The maximum federal share of project costs under the ICAM Pilot Program is 80 percent. The applicant provides a local share of at least 20 percent of the net project cost and must document the source of the local match in the grant application. Eligible local-match sources include:

- cash from non-government sources other than revenues from providing public transportation services;
- revenues derived from the sale of advertising and concessions;
- revenues generated from value capture financing mechanisms;
- funds from an undistributed cash surplus;
- replacement or depreciation cash fund or reserve;
- new capital; or
- in-kind contributions [cf/ Town staff salary constituting in-kind for local match].

Future tasks: Dan and Deb will meet with Annex. Dan will draft the annual report on the Committee for the Select Board and distribute to the Committee for input. Dan will find out the price for continued CTC dispatch of taxis.

Minutes: The minutes of December 1 were reviewed. Bob moved to approve with emendations noted; Debra seconded the move; approval on roll call was unanimous. The minutes of November 16 are still outstanding.

Next Meeting: The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, January 5, at 10:30 AM via Zoom.

Adjournment: Dan asked for a motion to adjourn. Alice moved to adjourn this meeting, Debra seconded, approval on roll call was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 11: 38 AM.