



## HARVARD TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

### MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 30, 2021

Gabriel Medianis called the meeting to order at 7:30pm virtually in accordance with the Governor's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, under M.G.L. Chapter 40A and Code of the Town of Harvard Chapter 125

**Members Present:** Stacia Donahue, Bruce Leicher, Beth Williams, Pam Marston, Gabriel Medianis, Jim Lee, Rene Turnheim, Suzie Allen

**Others Present:** Christopher Ryan (Director of Community and Economic Development)

#### Discussion of Recent and Ongoing Transportation Initiatives

Ryan quickly reviewed 2016 Master Plan items and where to find them. All members agreed that they knew where to find the information and could access the Drop Box of files.

#### Discussion of MRPC's DLTA Project on Updating Transportation Plan

MRPC's Transportation planning group will be using the DLTA fund (District Local Technical Assistance grant) to update Harvard's Transportation plan chapter. The first meeting with MRPC is tomorrow morning (7/1) at 10:00am to review the scope. With short notice, there's not many people that can make the meeting tomorrow. However, MRPC will be recording it so we can watch it later. Chris will take notes that he will circulate to the group for us to review and respond. Chris reminded the group to reply to ONLY Chris so as not to violate open meeting law.

Suzie Allen asked if Chris Ryan needed any input from us now prior to the meeting. Chris noted that he would be looking for trail and bicycle route upgrades plus the addition of a park and ride so we could access the MART services.

Chris Ryan also hopes that they can help with walkability and pedestrian access in various parts of town. This would be more of a land use function. Beth Williams noted that COA was looking at the Lancaster County Road building location because there was walking paths available by Bower's Brook and Foxglove Apartments and with the building of the new shared use plan when the Ayer Road TIP project.

Bruce Leicher noted that the Harvard Energy Action Committee (HEAC) has grant money available for electric car charging station if we could just find a location. Chris Ryan noted that he would love to see these at the new park and ride lot when it's established. There might be some access made available as a project starts to move forward on Ayer Road. Bruce suggested that Chris talk with HEAC to see if there is a timeline for grant use. Suzie Allen asked if Kara Minar's question from last meeting about who could use the park and ride lot. Chris noted that if it's on DOT land, then we might not have the ability to restrict people from out of town. If the land is in Harvard's jurisdiction, then we could have a permit process for residents. MRPC/MART has noted that there is money available for us to develop a park & ride lot and have the shuttle service to the MBTA locations.

Chris asked how to get community engagement and comment. Bruce noted that it's a bit early to think about this as we don't formally have the plan.

Suzie Allen asked if the plan from MRPC would include SPECIFIC trails such as the trail connecting Devens to Lancaster County Road via the Mill Road interchange. Chris Ryan said yes it would be specific and it would be the work of the TAC to keep these in the public view and specifically make sure that everyone is aware of the goal of the plan.

### **Discussion Meeting Frequency and Charge**

Opened the discussion for meeting frequency. Going once every 2 months instead of quarterly seemed to be amenable to the group. Donahue asked if we needed to meet more frequently while MRPC is framing out the transportation plan. Ryan noted that he could handle the day to day with looping in the committee as it moved along as those meetings would be during the day. If we need special meetings to discuss the scope, then those can be added as needed. Chris noted that the draft charge would need to be updated if we formally move to Jim Lee moved to change to bi-monthly (every 2 months), Pam Marston 2<sup>nd</sup>. Passed by role call vote unanimously.

### **Update on Ayer Road TIP Project**

Ryan reviewed the project briefly, noting that the Shared Use Plan (SUP) will be a 10' wide 2-way path stretching from Dunkin' Donuts to the Ayer Town Line. The project is currently slated for funding in 2026. Harvard is currently at the 25% design phase which included the 150 +/- comments from the 10% design review phase. DOT has now reviewed and sent over 200 comments back to our project engineers and DPW. Jim Lee asked if our group could be involved in responding to the 200+ comments from DOT. It would help for public involvement and input if we were allowed to be included in this process. Donahue noted that engineering and technical items should be answered by Tim Kilhart and the consultants, but the TAC should at least get to review all the questions to see where public input could be added. Chris Ryan will work to get a .pdf of the DOT comments to the full TAC board. The formal public hearing looks like it will be in August.

### **Discussion of Site Plan Review**

Ryan noted that when a new project goes into the design review process

### **Other Business**

Nashoba Regional Greenway discussion lead by Bruce Leicher. Bruce shared a presentation from NRG that they suggested we shared with the Select Board. The project is to identify non-motorized connections between 14 communities throughout the region. It is also looking to identify areas that might be dangerous and find an alternate path. NRG is moving forward with their first project by trying to find the best route. Then the next step is to share that information with bike and walking/trail apps. This can help with Complete Streets grant applications and funding. Bruce noted the old Goddard trail that parallels Route 2 is also a potential trail that could connect Harvard, Devens, and the Oxbow.

General question from Chris Ryan to the board: Should we have public comment section on the TAC part of the Town's website or during our meetings? Would need to be a very structured to keep it from devolving to just complaints if it was done during meetings. The group discussed maybe just keeping a list of dangerous intersections for actions by others who have power to make the change. No formal vote was taken to move forward with this item at this time.

**Adjournment:**

The Chair moved to adjourn at 8:50pm.

Next meeting will be September 1, 2021.

Signed: *Stacia Donahue*  
Stacia Donahue, Clerk