



Access Advisory Committee to the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

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Wednesday, June 23, 2010

AACT Meeting Minutes (Revised)

NOTABLES

- The AACT has a page on the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organizations' website at www.bostonmpo.org. Links can be found there for the following items: agendas, upcoming meetings, past meeting minutes, the memorandum of understanding between the MBTA and the AACT, and the AACT bylaws, the AACT brochure, and ADA regulations. There are also links to the MPO's newsletter, *TRANSREPORT*, the MBTA's Office for Transportation Access, and the AACT Coordinator.
- Comments and questions concerning AACT should be directed to Chairman Haynes by contacting the AACT Coordinator, Ms. Janie Guion, at 617-973-7507 (voice), 617-973-7089 (TTY), 617-973-8855 (fax), or at AACT@ctps.org (e-mail)
- Chairman Haynes recommends that AACT members needing information or wanting to inquire about MBTA services, do so through the Customer Support Services Center at 617-222-3200 (voice), 800-392-6100 (voice, toll-free), 617-222-5146 (TTY), or the MBTA website at www.mbtacom/customer_support/feedback/
- Please sign in at all meetings.
- Announcements are always welcome. Please be prepared to give as many details as possible: date, time, location, contact person, and phone number. A written notice would be appreciated.

ATTENDANCE

Ben Haynes, Lillian Haynes, Philip Beaulieu, Paul Barresi, Angela Manerson, Beverly Rock, Esther Minar, Nancy Darr, Brian Coppola, Reggie Clark, Cheryl Ravalli, Bill McCarthy, Kevin Goodwin, Marilyn MacNab, Mary Murray, Hiang Lee, Kathryn Piccard, Sears Cummings, Ellen Frith, Thomas Gilbert

MassDOT /MBTA Representatives

Lt. Chris Maynard, Scott Darling, Mike Festa, Laura Brelsford, Frank Oglesby, Dottie Winn, Michael Hulak, Paul Strobis, Carol Joyce-Harrington, Kathy Cox, Ian Perault

Vendor Representatives

M. Claire DiPillo and Victor Herrera—Joint Venture of Thompson Transit Inc. and YCN.

Jackie Dunlop—Greater Lynn Senior Services, Inc

Kevin MacDonald—Veterans Transportation LLC

Other Attendees

Eric Moskowitz—The Boston Globe

Michael Mehue—Cambridge Commission on Disabilities

Lisa Weber—Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission

Kathy Devin—Massachusetts Office on Disability

Sharon Harrison—Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)/ Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS)

Walter Bennett and Janie Guion

MEETING

Chairman Haynes called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM

Members, friends and guests introduced themselves.

Approval of the AACT Meeting Minutes

The AACT minutes from the May 26 meeting were approved as written, with two abstentions.

Chairman's Report (No written report was submitted)

The Chairman Haynes reported the following:

- A special meeting today with Secretary Mullan's chief-of-staff, staff intern and the AACT Executive Board to discuss issues regarding illegal parking in bus stops.
- The chief-of-staff was given a briefing on the seriousness of vehicles blocking bus stops. She also commented that she would be briefing Secretary Mullan on this issue and promised to take action to correct the problem.
- The following items were discussed:
 - Better enforcement of the bus stop law
 - Increasing the fee of the ticket
 - Whether transit police are allowing state and municipal police to park in bus stops as a "professional courtesy"
 - Whether the law is being selectively enforced
 - The group observed photos of many parking violators
 - The harassment of those who monitor illegal vehicles
 - The casual attitude of delivery truck drivers, state police, and others who illegally park

- The safety hazard presented to persons who board and disembark from buses by illegally parked vehicles
- A meeting with the MBTA General Manager Richard Davey with discussions on the following:
 - MBTA staff implementation of changes without AACT's participation
 - The sense that AACT is being dismissed by actions taken by MBTA staff
 - Unified training of AACT and MBTA
 - The sense of encouragement that the new General Manager is making strides for change and taking action to improve the MBTA's cooperation with the disability community
- The Code of Federal Regulations Title 49 Part 37 Section 37.173 states, "each public or private entity which operates a fixed route or demand responsive system shall ensure that personnel are trained to proficiency, as appropriate to their duties, so that they operate vehicles and equipment safely and properly assist and treat individuals with disabilities who use the service in a respectful and courteous way, with appropriate attention to the difference among individuals with disabilities."
- Members were asked for suggestions or comments to share with General Manager Richard Davey or the MBTA Board of Directors. Suggestions and comments should not be personal but for the general benefit of all.

The Chair asked for questions.

R. Clark: I will support your efforts and hope that others will also.
Chairman Haynes: Thank you.

Michael Muehe, Executive Director of Cambridge Commission on Disabilities

Mr. Muehe explained that he became involved in advocacy; thirty years ago as a member of the Special Needs Advocacy Committee, which is now AACT. He continues to be an advocate in his position as the Executive Director of the Cambridge Commission on Disabilities.

He talked about the Cambridge Commission on Disabilities, which was established by Cambridge City Workers in 1979; its mission is to make things more welcoming and accessible to all people with disabilities. He asked that, if you are ever in the city of Cambridge and see an accessibility problem to, please phone 617-349-4672 and report it.

He then asked for questions.

B. Coppola: When will the elevators at Harvard Square be completed?

M. Festa: The estimate for the Harvard Square elevators is probably 2011.

H. Lee: Will cameras be installed in the Harvard Square station elevators?

M. Festa: Yes, there will be cameras installed.

M. MacNab: Will you consider including in the “Cambridge in Motion” program the concept that bike safety must also consider the safety of pedestrians?

M. Muehe: I can tell you that a number of bike officers are monitoring pedestrian safety.

T. Gilbert: There is big a problem of bikes on sidewalks that injure pedestrians.

M. Muehe: Cambridge has now increased the number of bike lanes to make it safe for all. Persons who ride their bikes on the sidewalk are violating a city ordinance.

B. Coppola: Will Cambridge be getting audible signals that would not only help the hearing or the visually impaired; but also would help so many others?

M. Muehe: We do have audible signals in Cambridge, not all areas are equipped. We make accommodations in certain areas of the city, when requested.

E. Frith: Can you help with some ideas, such as public service announcements, to get the message out to police officers who are working a “detail” that they are not to park their vehicles at bus stops. Also police officers often refuse to ticket and tow.

M. Muehe: I agree with you that there needs to be better enforcement. We have the Cambridge Police Department and the Traffic Department. The Traffic Department has 33 patrol officers who routinely patrol the entire city and issue parking tickets to violators.

Chairman Haynes: Would you recommend someone from the Cambridge Police Department to attend an AACT meeting regarding parking violations?

M. Muehe: I will be glad to take your request to the Cambridge Police Department. Cambridge was pleased to host the signing of the new parking (\$100) bill last April 2009. The Cambridge Police Commissioner takes the issue of illegal parking in bus stops very seriously.

Chairman Haynes: Thank you for your time, and we would like to invite you back to speak in the future.

Kathy Cox, MBTA System-Wide Accessibility, (report attached)

She reported the following:

- Judge Patrick King's update meeting on the settlement agreement between the MBTA and the Boston Center for Independent Living was well attended.
- An event to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act will be held on the Boston Common on July 26th, with a march planned to begin from the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets. *(flyer attached)*

She then asked for questions.

E. Minar: The attitude of bus operators is lackadaisical when it comes to passenger safety. An operator told me that my safety was not his concern. I find it hard to believe that safety is not a priority.

K. Cox: Safety is our #1 priority. When you witness good or bad behavior please report it immediately to the Customer Support Services Center at 617-222-3200 or toll-free at 800-392-6100.

B. Coppola: I notice that the commuter rail trains now have audio station announcements. Will there be visual messages as well for those persons who are hearing impaired on board commuter rail trains?

K. Cox: My department discussed the need for visual announcements on the trains with commuter rail officials. I will follow up to see if there have been any developments regarding visual announcements.

P. Barresi: Will the MBTA offer travel training on the fixed route system for persons who are not "legally" blind?

K. Cox: Currently, we do not offer this training and do not have plans to offer training; however, it is possible that this issue could be revisited in the future.

K. Piccard: I have a flyer that states the march will begin from the corner of Tremont and Boylston streets. What is the purpose of the Americans with Disabilities Act celebration?

K. Cox: The Americans with Disabilities Act event on the Boston Common and the march are not MBTA-planned events. Some of the people in this room are involved in the event planning and may be able to provide more information. Both the event and the march are in celebration of the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

T. Gilbert: Are there any future plans for System-Wide Accessibility to have the “Transit Master” as part of the bus operator training?

K. Cox: I believe that the “Transit Master” is covered in the training now, but I will check. Thank you for your suggestion.

E. Minar: I recently had a problem getting on the train. I had no help from the customer service agent.

K. Cox: A special order is going out reminding train operators to be more aware of persons in mobility devices on the platform, and to offer assistance with the portable bridgeplate in the absence of station personnel.

Frank Oglesby, MBTA Deputy Director of Paratransit Operations – The Office Of Transportation Access, THE RIDE (reports attached)

He reported that there is no new information since the report was updated.

He then asked for questions.

M. MacNab: Would you explain the roundtable meeting?

F. Oglesby: A member of our staff represents the Office for Transportation Access on the panel.

P. Barresi: Do you have any details on the coordination for THE RIDE to the Fourth of July concert on the Esplanade?

F. Oglesby: The details are still being worked out.

E. Frith: Who is in charge of the Customer Support Service Center? There is a lack of customer friendly service.

F. Oglesby: That would be Ms. Carla Howze.

K. Roach: When will the plans be finalized for the celebration on the Esplanade for the Fourth of July?

F. Oglesby/C.J. Harrington: We have not yet received approval of the plans. There are plenty of logistics that need to be worked out. We are waiting to hear from public relations. The information will be on the web and in the media.

M. MacNab: When you find out information concerning this event would you send AACT a copy of the flyer? This will give us notice on how we should make plans?

F. Oglesby: Yes.

Lt. Chris Maynard, Transit Police (report attached)

The Lt. Maynard discussed the following:

- The increased fine (to \$100) in 2009 for illegally parking in bus stop law
- The expanded jurisdiction of Transit police is now greater
- The monitoring of reports from "Transit Master" for violations
- A statistical comparison of ticketing violations between 2009 to the present

He then asked for questions.

M. MacNab: Why can't the fines for parking illegally be increased to \$500.00 statewide? The \$100.00 fee is not hurting anyone. How can we get new legislation?

Lt. C. Maynard: New legislation is a difficult issue to address. Our focus is mainly on enforcement. We take the information from the "Transit Master" monthly. We then patrol those areas.

E. Frith: I'm concerned with who has jurisdiction over the bus stops. Is it the transit police or the individual municipality?

Lt. C. Maynard: I will do research.

Chairman Haynes: Does the MBTA police track vehicles by their license number so that they can identify repeated parking violators?

Lt. C. Maynard: We can track on locations. There are no self-generated reports on repeat offenders.

Chairman Haynes: Thank you for coming and thank you for your report.

Open Discussion

N. Darr: I recently filed a complaint regarding a horrible ride. I would like to share some of the facts with AACT.

Chairman Haynes: Your first step is to contact the Office for Transportation Access staff with your written request. Until this has been done AACT will not make comments. Please speak with the OTA representatives that are here.

Chairman Haynes: Are fixed-route training schedules published so that the public can attend?

K. Cox: Upcoming trainings are listed in my monthly report.

Announcements:

Victor Herrera, General Manager for the Joint Venture of Thompson Transit, Inc., and YCN Transportation invited AACT members to participate in the company “Appreciation Day” for their staff on Sunday, June 27 10 AM to 5 PM at the Readville facility.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:00 PM.