

MINUTES  
TOWN OF CONCORD  
CITIZENS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
Thursday October 11,2012  
7:00 – 9:30 Clock Tower Room  
Harvey Wheeler Center

**Present:**

Lisa Bergen, presiding  
Kate Damon  
Abe Fisher  
Louise Haldeman

**Absent:** Ray Bruttomesso, Rick Anderson, Mark Hanson

**Also present** (for a portion of the meeting) Ray Hanselman

**1. Call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:20 by Chair, Lisa Bergen, as one member was unexpectedly absent and another was (expectedly) late, much of the pre-meeting discussion was devoted to the outwitting of the squirrel population.

**2. The Minutes:**

The minutes of the meetings of October 11 were approved with a correction to last paragraph of the first section. No actual recording was done at the Sept 19<sup>th</sup> hearing, all was done at the taping session.

**3. Correspondence:** None

**4. Chairs Report:** Ms. Bergen reported that Mr. Hanson informed her that the Town of Acton had or was going to issue a cease and desist order to the owner of the site in Acton where the school administration intends to temporarily park the buses. Apparently, the owner has been spreading fill on the unpaved area without the necessary permit. The Acton police remain concerned about Concord's use of the site for security and traffic reasons. It is not known whether the administration has made any arrangements for the Acton police to check the site.

Ms. Haldeman reported that she had driven by the proposed Acton site twice at relatively non busy times of the day and found the traffic on Rt. 27 quite busy. Mr. Hanson has traveled it several times at rush hour and questioned the amount of time it will take for the buses to reach the intersection of 2A.

Ms. Bergen and Ms. Damon reported that in recent contact with Representative Atkins, Ms. Atkins indicated her continued commitment to the Walden Woods project which still wishes to put conservation restrictions on the old Landfill site and would not want to have buses there. It was remarked that if they succeed in their fund raising they would pay the Town of Concord a considerable sum which would be of use in other projects.

A discussion of the new high school building schedule and its impact on the current bus depot, led to a broader discussion of the project's status and the MSBA's suspension of funding. This in turn led to a discussion of the changes to the building design, the cost of the overall project, and when changes were first made. Ms. Bergen reported that she first became aware of the extent of the changes at the August 29, 2012 presentation to the MSBA of the Design Development information. At that meeting, there was reference to the mismatch between the building's design and budget from the Schematic Design (SD) timeframe in August 2011. This was clear in a VE (value engineering) document dated from August 2011. Although the VE list of August 2011 is not posted on the building website, Mr. Durlacher provided it to Ms. Bergen in September. It is not clear as to whether the changes reflected in the VE list of that time were known to the whole school committee, administration, or building committee but the fact remains that it was not presented at Town meeting. Review of the August 2011 SD drawings shows the transportation depot being

demolished, indicating this was the plan from the beginning despite subsequent statements prior to and at the November town meeting.

**Reports and Issues for Discussion.**

A. *Review of CTC recording*- postponed.

B. *Format, content for October 23 presentation:*

TAC and CTC will each be given 20 minutes for their presentations, slide show not required. It was decided the Ms. Bergen would give an overview of the report and allow time for questions. We will ask that the TAC go first. The school committee had asked that the report be sent to the school committee members on Thursday the 18th but as the CTC committee will not be able to finalize it until that evening we will ask that the "pony" ride a day later or alternatively members will deliver it to the school committee members and administration.

Mr. Fisher warned that the report, not yet complete, is over 30 pages and is expected to be longer as some material is still "out". Mr. Fisher will send a copy to each member by Monday the 15<sup>th</sup> and asks that they be returned promptly with edits. This must be done individually to conform to the OML. Deliberations will be done at the meeting on the 18th.

C. *Recommendations for buses .*

1. Keep the depot where it is. This is the least expensive solution as it keeps the buses close to home bases minimizes extra travel time and provides maintenance and staff in close proximity.

2. Find another place on the high school property for the same reasons.

3. Locate a bus terminal on the Ripley School Property. This is school land and there is a great deal of it. It should be possible to locate the buses in such a way that they are not immediately up against neighbors and it would be possible to locate the gas tank and maintenance building there. It is fairly close to home and while morning and afternoon traffic will be a problem it would not be nearly as bad as some of the other possibilities ( see not -recommended)

4. The old landfill: Should the Walden Woods project not come to fruition, that would be an excellent site. There are no near neighbors, locating fuel tanks and maintenance building would be possible. Crossing Rt. 2 is a problem but there is a traffic light and would be close to the high school.

**Not recommended:** The CTC has considered the possibility of locating the buses at the Municipal Light Plant but feels that this would not be desirable. Although the land is there and "free", there will be a very difficult traffic problem as it would be necessary to navigate the rotary at rush hours and our buses would add considerably to the traffic back-ups on Rt. 2A. In addition, it appears that reconstruction of the rotary may actually happen which will add to the suffering although it is possible that many years hence the traffic could improve.

Furthermore, the site is isolated and close to both Rt. 2 and 2A. if it is used, great attention must be given to the security of the buses as the municipal light plant has experienced theft.

D. Executive Summary: it was agreed that the executive summary would cover the above pros and cons, a complete draft will be sent to the committee before the meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

There was some discussion of alternatives to school owned busing. A suggestion was made that perhaps it would be better to bring the buses under the control of the Town of Concord as serious questions have been raised as to whether the SC/SA intends to outsource the service. Perhaps the high school could then essentially lease from the Town of Concord. There was agreement that this is an out-of-the-box idea that is worth exploring, however it will take time and careful review.

5. **Citizens Comments:** None.

6. **Adjourned:** The meeting adjourned at 9:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise S. Haldeman, Clerk