



Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes January 18, 2022

Members in Attendance: Nick Pappas (Chair), Michele Cardinal; Dan Schragger; Kathleen Fasser; Laura Davis; Phil Posner (Clerk), **Absent:** Norman Abbott

- MEETING CALLED TO ORDER at 7:02 PM
- The meeting was called to order with a roll-call vote.
- Members discussed status of the minutes and members agreed to postpone review and approval of the minutes to the next meeting

- Chair Nick Pappas commenced a discussion of the Open Meeting Law protocols and how the committee must address the requirements of the law. Mr. Posner advised that he would send a contact to the State Ethics Commission legal counsel (who is available to answer questions regarding the law and its application). Ms. Davis and Ms. Cardinal continued the discussion regarding various means to communicate among the committee which comply with the law.
- Chair Pappas made note that Town staff person Chris Carmody had obtained a copy of a memorandum drafted by Planning Director Rasmussen regarding grants or projects relating to transportation underway. He mentioned that he would attempt to have that circulated prior to the next meeting of the Transportation Committee. The memo was contained in an email to the SelectBoard Chair.
- Chair Pappas related that emails to the Committee have commenced arriving through the website. The first three emails related to public safety connected with pending improvements to Barretts Mill Road. The inquiries have been forwarded to CPW.

Proposals to be forwarded to the SelectBoard for ARPA Funded Projects

- A discussion was commenced regarding proposals (projects) that the committee may recommend to the SelectBoard that may be funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds received by the town.
- Chair Pappas displayed a slide show describing various potential projects:
 - Shuttle Bus Service (based on an approved grant proposal from 2018). Ms. Davis asked if this proposal was distinct from 'CrossTown Connect'. Chair Pappas indicated that the shuttle bus proposal was different but that the details were not clear to him. Mr. Posner asked about a program in another part of the state that used 'underutilized rolling stock' to provide a multipassenger transportation service. An example could be the use of the Council on Aging vehicles. Mr. Pappas mentioned that it was his understanding that the use of the CoA vehicle was restricted to eligible persons and could not be used for a more general purpose. Mr. Posner suggested that the use of a smaller, more fuel efficient or electric vehicle would be consistent with the Town's sustainability goals. Ms. Davis suggested that a micro-transit program might be

reconceived to target populations that would not be served by CrossTown Connect [e.g. helping students to return home to school from after-school activities, getting workers to work in town]. Chair Pappas suggested that recommending a project that has already been approved for a grant (even though the grant was withdrawn) would avoid having to re-visit ideas that had already been accepted (or rejected) based on policy or legal considerations already vetted. Committee members discussed when the ARPA funds had to be expended, what ideas should be proposed at the January 31 SelectBoard meeting, and as a group decide which ideas to propose. Ms. Davis suggested that the micro-transit busing idea be proposed, utilizing an electric vehicle, targeting workers, students, business folks, low income people, non-car drivers, and disabled people, which could feature drop-off in the downtown shopping districts to support tourism and businesses, afterschool activity locations, the library, and places of work. The purpose is to serve places not well served by other proposals (on-demand, service areas in town not well served by a defined route shuttle). Newton may be a good place to look to as a model. Chair Pappas suggested that committee members should coordinate with the planning department staff so that inquiries are not duplicative or confusing for third parties.

- Mr. Schrage asked about the proposed bike share program. Members discussed the parameters of the program. Mr. Posner mentioned that Erin Stevens related at a prior meeting that the town was working on a bike share program. [Ms. Stevens was not present at the meeting.] Mr. Posner mentioned that the Tourist Office had a strong demand for bike rentals. There are no bike rentals available in Concord at present.
- Ms. Fasser mentioned that she sent various ideas that should be discussed by the Committee that are *unrelated* to ARPA but should be considered for funding. The ideas are:
 - Committee position on Historical Commission's proposal for a Scenic Roads bylaw
 - Committee position on funding for a feasibility study for the Reformatory Branch Trail
- Ms. Fasser then mentioned ideas which relate to the ARPA funding:
 - Using the ARPA funds for transportation planner (supports Envision and supports the TAC)
 - Try to fund the Complete Streets work (focus on safety)
 - Ms. Fasser related that she reviewed the Priority List and created a ranking. She suggested that the first project to consider is safety improvements at Monument Square, second: Main Street (from Sudbury Road to Monument Square – fund planning study to 25% design for safety improvements. Mr. Posner proposed that the project area be from Thoreau Street to Monument Square. Chair Pappas suggested 'Elm Street to Monument Square.' Ms. Davis suggested cross referencing the paving program list with the Complete Streets list to determine if projects on the paving program list could be made "more complete" (e.g. Barretts Mill Road; Commonwealth Avenue; access roads to the High School (Walden Street) and the area near Emerson Hospital).
 - Ms. Fasser then mentioned that the language of ARPA is broad if a case is made that there has been a loss of revenue, a project may be eligible for ARPA funds.
 - Mr. Posner suggested that Ms. Davis' list of roads include Thoreau Street. He then mentioned that Thoreau Street could be modified using a 'tactical urbanism' approach. The tactical urbanism idea is to create streetscapes through quickly implemented, low-cost projects. Chair Pappas mentioned that the slide bullet (Complete Streets) brings into focus where the tourists are, where the businesses are, where the high school and how the complete streets approach can tie all those places together. Mr. Schrage mentioned that Route 62 from the Bedford Line to Monument Square should be considered. Ms. Davis suggested that the study area be extended to West Concord.
- Mr. Posner then talked about his "moon shot project" idea. He stated that the Complete Streets Priority List contains many sidewalk projects. Mr. Posner suggested that Committee recommend a sidewalk be constructed from the intersection of Sudbury, Seven Star, Garfield Road to just past the bridge over the

Sudbury River [where it would connect with an existing sidewalk that extends over Rt 2 then continues to Thoreau Street]. Students could then ride their bikes from Conantum and the neighborhood near the Willard School to Thoreau Street and then to CCHS. A second moon shot project would be to install a sidewalk along Rt 2A to the Affordable Housing Neighborhood [Lalli Woods and private development] and to Commerford Road. Providing sidewalks would provide pedestrian and bike access that has been requested by the residents living in those neighborhoods. Ms. Davis then suggested that a sidewalk could be extended, as well, south from the Seven Star/Garfield intersection to 9 Acre Corner and then east to the Lincoln line at the bridge over the Sudbury River. Lincoln has good trails in that area. Chair Pappas asked that the committee defer discussion of the impact on the Scenic Roads bylaw on potential sidewalk construction to another time. Members discussed how to get access from this housing project to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

- Members then briefly discussed the use of trails in Conservation land beyond Commerford Road. Chair Pappas suggested that the NRC had policies regarding the use of the trails.
- Ms. Fasser suggested that it was appropriate for us to identify ‘connecting two points’ but that it was sometimes necessary to study all of the issues related to “making the connection.”
- Ms. Davis suggested that we recommend pursuing the CrossTown Connect idea and that the need to purchase a vehicle was related to the town’s inability to participate in that program.
- Ms. Davis also noted that culverts and water infrastructure are fundable under ARPA.
- The members then agreed that funding a transportation planner should be at the top of our list of funding priorities. The rest of the ideas would be put in alphabetical order. Members then suggested that the committee does not have sufficient information about the various ideas for providing transportation services, but believed that such information had been previously developed. Chair Pappas suggested that the town needs ‘transit services’, micro-transit, fixed route, on demand, other attributes. Strategic Complete Street (“CS”) infrastructure – bringing the CS philosophy to both downtown areas, “connectivity infrastructure”, very specific geographic areas where we will recommend the CS approach be implemented. Members then had a discussion about ‘complete streets philosophy’, what that means in terms of specific projects and/or specific infrastructure, whether the town staff supports the idea, how the idea can be implemented in specific places given the limits of the right of way, how the idea is implemented in other places.
- Then was then a discussion regarding “Bringing to bear the CS Philosophy in the areas of greatest use” versus “bringing CS to the areas of greatest need”.
- Ms. Davis then stated that the Committee make recommendations regarding specific projects.
- Chair Pappas will create a list of slides that will be sent around to the Committee members. Ms. Fasser will undertake to add information regarding Complete Streets. Chair Pappas inquired how the committee could make recommendations (e.g. sidewalk on Sudbury Road) in light of competing priorities. He then suggested that population density could be a criteria. Members should sent suggestions directly to Nick. Mr. Posner will investigate pre-existing bike share idea.
- Chair Pappas suggested we should “create a picture” of what the town would look like if our ideas are implemented. Ms. Davis suggested the committee should create a document or plan that presents ‘visions for Concord’s future.’

The meeting was then opened for public comments.

- Mark Gailus of 62 Prescott Road related that the Attorney General had guidance regarding the use of email in a manner that complies with the open meeting law and recommend that members be careful in the use of email to avoid noncompliance with the law.

Motion to Adjourn Mr. Posner moved to adjourn; Mr. Schragger seconded. All members voted to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 9:13 PM