

Kristin Alexander

From: terraf [terraf@compuserve.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 15, 2009 12:09 AM
To: terraf
Cc: Michael Kreuze; Roland Bartl; Steve Ledoux; Outreach Steering Committee; Xuan Kong; Kathryn Acerbo-Bachmann; Jim Purdy; Kristin Alexander; Daphne Politis
Subject: Re: Revised Summary Sheet

OK, enough people wrote in concerned about the Open Meeting Law. So while I'm confident that we'd be fine, as long as we don't approach quorum, I'm going to suggest that we take this up at the next meeting.

Terra

Message text written by terraf
>Michael,

Thank you for writing in. We need more heads on this problem.

I agree that my opinions should not be included. [And I will point out that Roland was the one that entered my opinions, so to readers of this email thread, please ignore Roland's comments, if you want to avoid being potentially influenced by my opinons.]

I totally agree that the data should speak for itself. The tough part is that we also have to put "text" around the data to help "regular" people "interpret" the data. And thus, we have to agree on what the data "means". And if something is not clear to all of us, or to a majority of us, I would consider it to be "borderline."
If it's borderline, I think it's worth discovering if we have "other indications" that might suggest a result one way or the other.

And I, for one, would like the statistics people to weigh in on the subject, because they have a "trained eye" as to how to determine what is a "clear majority" versus a borderline result.

I would like to know if we should include people saying that they'd use a shuttle "infrequently", as being "in support of" a shuttle.

Webster's online dictionary says that "infrequently" is defined as:

1 : seldom happening or occurring : rare
2 : placed or occurring at wide intervals in space or time <a slope dotted with infrequent pines> <infrequent visits> in·fre·quent·ly adverb

With respect to your van of 8...

As opposed to "private" (non government run) carpooling, the point of the exercise, unless someone can correct me, is to determine what "government" should do.

The difference is whether one supports private individuals sharing rides, or one supports government paying for some of all parts of those rides. I think what we're trying to decide right now is to decide what we think the "vision" of the town is with respect to government's role in shuttles. I do not believe there is any opposition to private individuals, either sponsored by a corporation, or doing it on their own. I think we're just trying to decide what government should do...whether we think government funded shuttles should be part of "our shared vision" or not.

IMHO your vanning has nothing to do with the survey data, but I respect that you are introducing a new survey of 8 people, just like I'm introducing a new survey from the Transportation Advisory Committee. But I argue that the some 1,000 survey datapoints in the TAC survey represent a more valid representation of the community of a whole than the

8, and so I do think that we should pay close attention to the TAC survey. It's also possible that the 8, or some significant part of the 8, were already included in the TAC survey. I can look and see if anyone mentioned Andover as a destination.

Relative to your question about drawing conclusions from the 5 or 8 people, I can only comment on what your conclusion is relative to the numbers that I see. I don't think it's relevant. But again, I await an assessment of statistics experts. If we don't hear soon from those on the citizen panel that are numbers oriented, I'll go seek out a couple more. I know there are some on the Finance Committee.

For the record, please let it be known...

I admire your willingness to carpool, and I hope others do to. I hope that someone in Acton will put together a carpooling blog, or a place where destination info can be shared.

I also respect your opinion relative to how to interpret the data. But I would argue that 8 people carpooling may not represent a majority opinion regarding a shuttle in Acton.

And we've decided as a group to let a "concensus" opinion drive the decisions on what we "should" do. With that, we decided to put, "in the vision", things/actions that are "clearly of the majority".

We decided that anything that is borderline, or "of the minority but interesting nonetheless" not be "in the vision" at this point, but go into a section called "interesting things that we'd still like to consider".

Then that "interesting" section would be further explored in Phase 2. And I'm sure some ideas will be explored well beyond Phase 2. The point is not to mislead the casual observer into thinking that something is "of a clear majority" when it may not actually be.

I look forward to hearing from someone that has a statistics background.

Kristin/Roland, how many people can join this email discussion without approaching quorum. Is Michael part of the quorum, or is his email input outside of the quorum calculation. I like this discussion and would like to continue it, but I don't want to unintentionally skirt Open Meeting Law rules.

Terra

Message text written by Michael Kreuze

>

Hey, Terra. Please let the data speak for itself. The outreach report is not an appropriate place to document opinions.

As an aside, I voluntarily take a vanpool with 5 other Actonians to work in Andover most days. There are about 8 Actonians who work at my company, so you can say that a clear majority of Actonians support shuttles. Or perhaps I am trying to draw a conclusion that I personally want from data that doesn't support it?

Michael Kreuze

On Feb 13, 2009, at 1:32 PM, Roland Bartl wrote:

> Terra:

>

> I know that you believe that shuttles are a step away from rural and a
> move towards urbanization. True or not, that is your perception as you
> expressed it at a recent Board of Selectmen's meeting with the Shuttle
> Study Committee.

>

> At one of the early Outreach Steering Committee meetings I reminded
> all members that the job of the committee is to attend to the process
> so as to make sure that all views are heard and that the process is
> inclusive; and that, if necessary, committee members needed to set

> aside their own convictions and beliefs for the benefit of
> inclusiveness and acceptance of all views, comment, and desires.
>
> So, I ask you and everybody else: Please refrain from attempts to
> tamper with the outcome and message in the report in efforts to
> exclude or marginalize certain types of outreach results just because
> you personally don't agree with them, or in the reverse unduly
> highlight other results that you particularly like or agree with. The
> role of the Steering Committee, and your role as individual members
> was and is to steer the process, not the outcome.
> The Outreach Campaign was not about voting, which is about winning and
> excluding the loser until the pendulum swings. Rather, it was about
> hearing all sentiments and allowing them all to be developed further
> in the next plan phase while having some awareness of the numbers. In
> this process the comment of one can be as relevant as the comments of
> 100. It is not about what you support, or don't support. It is about
> the community as whole. It's members have majority and minority views
> an everything. We want to hear and develop further both. At some point
> decisions will have to be made that won't please everybody. But, this
> is too early in the process to make those decisions. And, when
> decisions are made, they should be made with the goal for
> inclusiveness to the largest degree possible.

>
> We cannot move forward in a credible manner if the report on the
> Outreach campaign, which stands at the beginning of the Comprehensive
> Community Plan ends up being rigged by overemphasizing certain
> viewpoints while excluding or marginalizing others.

> Regards -

>
> Roland Bartl, AICP
> Planning Director
> 472 Main Street
> Acton, MA 01720
> (978) 264-9636

> -----Original Message-----

> From: terraf [mailto:terraf@compuserve.com]
> Sent: Friday, February 13, 2009 12:13 PM
> To: Daphne Politis
> Cc: terraf; Kristin Alexander; Roland Bartl; Jim Purdy; Kathryn
> Acerbo-Bachmann; Xuan Kong
> Subject: Re: Revised Summary Sheet

>
> Thanks, Daphne. Yes, most helpful. But based on the answer
> choices that
> I see, "infrequently" does not indicate to me that someone is
> interested in having this.

> Here are the choices and the answers:

	% of those that answered the question	
> At least once a day	36	10.3%
> At least once a week	100	28.7
> At least once a month	32	9.2
> Infrequently	85	24.4
> Never	95	27.3
> Total	348	

>
> In total, I see the first three answers as indications that the person
> is interested in having a shuttle. That comes to 48.2%, which is
> pretty close...close enough to consider that an error may bring it to
> a majority, but also close enough that I wouldn't want to assume a
> majority...especially, when the total responses
> 36+100+32=168 which is only 46% of the total number of respondents.

> One might argue that if someone was interested that they'd be sure to
> answer this question.
>
> Anyway, I will leave it up to the group as to how to position this
> topic.
> We may want to
> mention that it was borderline.
>
> Note that Question 17 asks train users what improvement they want, and
> only 27% said shuttle. And in Question 19, whether they'd pay for a
> shuttle, only 19% said yes. And no significant number of commenters
> suggested that they thought lack of public transportation was an issue
> for the town.
>
> Also note, that in a different survey that was conducted by the
> Transportation Advisory Committee, there was a question:
>
> *1. Acton presently has weekday van service only for seniors and
> disabled residents. We are exploring different service options for an
> expanded community shuttle for all residents, including - On- demand
> reservation (rider calls in advance for a pick-up) - Fixed route
> (traditional bus route makes scheduled, specific stops) - On- demand
> fixed route (regular, pre-paid riders determine fixed route)
> - Combination of these We want to hear from you. Would you consider
> using any of the these types of public transportation?
>
> 956 total respondents, 100% answering:
>
> Yes 53.9%
> No 21.9%
> Maybe 24.3%
>
> But then the issue starts. There is little agreement as to what times
> people would ride or what routes.
>
> For the question:
>
> *1. Which of these service options would you prefer?
>
> only 747 (78%) answered:
>
> On-demand reservation (rider calls in advance for a pick-
> up) 7%
> Fixed route (traditional bus route makes scheduled, specific stops)
> 41.5% On-demand fixed route (regular, pre-paid riders determine fixed
> route) 5.1%
> Combination of these 46.5%
>
> They seem to agree that they'd want to ride it during the day:
>
> *1. If shuttle service is provided at these times, how likely would
> you be to use it? - Weekday - daytime
> Daily 235 31.5%
> Weekly 109 14.6%
> Sometimes 224 30.0%
> Maybe 111 14.9%
> No 68 9.1%
>
> *1. Do you ever use the commuter rail?
> Regularly 201 21.0%
> Intermittently 445 46.5%
> Never 310 32.4%
>
> Note that well over half either never use it or only intermittently.
>
> *3. Would you be likely to use a shuttle service to access the train

> station if such a service were convenient to you?

> Yes	606	63.4%
> No	350	36.6%

>

> 1. If any of the following forms of shuttle service existed, how likely would you be to use it for access to the South Acton station?

> - Less than 5 minute ride non-stop from a satellite parking lot to South Acton station

>

> respondents: 672

> Yes	220	32.7%
> Maybe	235	35.0%
> No	132	19.6%
> No Reply	0	0.0%
> Missing (No Value)	85	12.6%

>

> Note that 12.6% had a missing value and 672/956 didn't answer at all, almost 30% not answering.

>

> 1. If any of the following forms of shuttle service existed, how likely would you be to use it for access to the South Acton station?

> - Local fixed route bus with posted stops within walking distance of home or work

>

> respondents 672

> Yes	390	58.0%
> Maybe	178	26.5%
> No	55	8.2%
> No Reply	0	0.0%
> Missing (No Value)	49	7.3%

>

> Again, a rather high number not responding.

>

> 1. If any of the following forms of shuttle service existed, how likely would you be to use it for access to the South Acton station?

> - Curbside pickup/drop off by advance reservation or subscription

> Yes	186	27.7%
> Maybe	236	35.1%
> No	153	22.8%
> No Reply	0	0.0%
> Missing (No Value)	97	14.4%

>

> Here an interesting thing happens. If we make it more convenient, fewer people said yes.

>

> I know that we're supposed to be "visioning" and thinkign ideally, but I also don't want to ignore data that we have:

>

> 2. While federal and state funds pay a major share of the cost of providing transit service, some local funds may be needed to help support a community shuttle in the future. If local funding is needed, what sources do you prefer for the service?

> None, don't use any public funds	148	19.8%
> Town government, reduce other services and redirect funds	263	35.2%
> Town government, increase an existing tax or impose a new tax	181	24.2%
> Ask employers and retail stores to contribute	359	48.1%
> Raise parking fees at South Acton Rail Station	262	35.1%
> Other revenue source, public or private (please specify, and be creative!)	116	15.5%

>

> This all being said, like I told Franny with the TAC, I'm willing to support a "pilot" using drivers and vans that we already have to see

> if a shuttle could be user funded. But I just don't see enough data
> to suggest that public transit "for all" is a vision. Your words:
>
> "public transportation to connect people and places, and to support
> independent and safe travel for all."
>
> With the data so borderline, where is the indication that it should be
> "for all"? Even if we dropped people off at their houses, there's
> only a "maybe" as far as their wanting a shuttle.
>
> I just don't want to take a leap and assume that this should be
> something in a "vision". But again, I'll present this info to the
> group, and they can decide.
>
> Terra
>
> Message text written by Daphne Politis
>> THIS FROM BRIAN: "45.8% of phone survey respondents said they would
> use a shuttle service at least once a month or more frequently. An
> additional 23.2% said they would use it "infrequently" (Less than
> once a month). Only 26.0% said they would never use it and 4.9% did
> not answer. Also 42.6% said they were willing to pay taxes to support
> a shuttle bus. I think you can say a majority of residents favor a
> shuttle service, based on the fact that 69% (over 2/3) said they would
> use it."
>
> HOPE MY RESPONSES HAVE BEEN HELPFUL.
>
> DAPHNE<

----- Internet Header -----
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Received: from QMTA03.westchester.pa.mail.comcast.net
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for <terraf@compuserve.com>; Sat, 14 Feb 2009 11:16:19 -0500
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In-Reply-To:
<8DC6B2DFB5DA134E9996D763C03D6AA767B6D925@core-mail-box.town.acton.ma.us>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=US-ASCII; format=flowed; delpsp=yes
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Mime-Version: 1.0 (Apple Message framework v930.3)
Subject: Re: Revised Summary Sheet
Date: Sat, 14 Feb 2009 11:16:17 -0500
References: <200902131212_MC3-2-1C63-3818@compuserve.com>

<8DC6B2DFB5DA134E9996D763C03D6AA767B6D925@core-mail-box.town.acton.ma.us>
X-Mailer: Apple Mail (2.930.3)
X-Virus-Scanned: ClamAV version 0.93.3, clamav-milter version 0.93.3 on
liaag2af.mx.compuserve.com
X-Virus-Status: Clean

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