

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

Meeting Minutes - final
Council on Aging Senior Center
08 September, 2011

Committee Members Present:

David Martin
Tom Campbell
Clare Siska
Pat Clifford
Sean Hanley

Committee Members Not Present:

Michaela Moran

Other Attendees:

John Sonner (BoS liason)
Corey York (Engineering)
Bob Condon (resident)
Bettina Abe (resident / sidewalk committee)

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:35.

Review of meeting minutes

- The meeting minutes for 6/30/11 and 8/11/11 were approved unanimously.

Acton 2020 Connections

- Acton 2020 is interested transportation connectivity.
- Paulina Knibbe will attend our next (9/29) meeting and will speak for Acton 2020 on this topic
- Acton 2020 will hold a meeting on this topic Wednesday, 10/12/11. SATSAC committee members welcome to attend. David Martin will attend.

Farmer's Market Community Table

- Reserved for Sunday, October 16
- Purpose: Educate public about project & schedule
- Need commitments from at least 4 people to cover table, setup and takedown (2 shifts, 9:15 – 11:15 and 11:15 – 1:15. Confirm schedule at next meeting.
- Staffing: David, Tom (probably), Clare, Pat; Sean is an absolute maybe (if in town). David approached Kathy Acerbo Bachman to see if anyone from AHDC wants to participate – she expects Yes but didn't have names yet, DM will follow up
- Need to produce materials:
 - Large posters with new designs – Cory to pick 2 elevations from 90% designs
 - FAQ sheets / project schedule on reverse
 - One copy of plan detail available at table
 - Other?
- Clare confirmed reservation: will create a mission statement, distilled from the charge, for the application and will submit it to ABFM.
- David will draft the FAQ; review on 9/29 (after 9/23 HNTB/MBTA meeting)
- 9/29 meeting, we should bring stuff that we propose to have at the table and review.

- Notes: send DM the shout-outs from the poster)

Crossings and Whistles

- Meeting 10 AM on 9/9 at Town Hall about the West Acton crossing
- No action anticipated in this committee on whistle ban until after 10/16 Farmers' Market; after that we should arrange a meeting with Congresswoman Niki Tsongas' office
- Whistle ban is recertified every 3 years – last recertification was Spring 2011
- Double tracks, extra trains, etc. can change the formula – we don't want to be penalized for the improvements we made to the station.
- If / when we don't qualify any more for a ban, if we can design enough improvements in the corridor to be within the safety measure, it can be reviewed again.
- As part of double tracking, we will get sidewalk gates at all crossings

Station Lighting and Parking

- Before construction starts, we want to have a conclusion on what we want for lighting and parking.
- This starts at the Engineering department; Cory York will draft a proposal.

Station Design Issues

- Phil Brake expects to have info on easements required before the 9/23 meeting.

Other business:

- MAPC letter outlining the project and schedule was distributed to all members present.
- Bettina Abe asked for and received an update on parking, Rail Trail and Caouette land.
- Bob Condon stated that Martin Street residents received notification this past spring that plans for a sidewalk would commence, and asked for an update. Cory York stated that survey work is completed; design is being developed. Sidewalk committee reports that Martin Street is in the priority list of 5; it's all time and money.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:39 PM

The next SATSAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 29th, depending on the final date of the HNTB meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Clare Siska

Links:

<http://www.acton-ma.gov/index.aspx?nid=244> is the SATSAC page.

<http://www.littletonma.org/content/49/3594/5590/default.aspx> is Littleton's MBTA Commuter Rail Advisory Committee.

http://www.mbta.com/about_the_mbta/t_projects/default.asp?id=15585 is the MBTA site about the project.



July 28, 2011

Steven Ledoux, Town Manager
Town of Acton
472 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720

Subject: Agreement for providing technical assistance to the Town of Acton

Mr. Ledoux,

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) looks forward to working with the Town of Acton to provide technical assistance for the proposed double track improvements at the South Acton commuter rail station. The attached scope of work details the tasks that MAPC will undertake. The scope is based upon the DLTA application Acton submitted to MAPC and subsequent conversations with town planning staff.

We will begin work upon receipt of this document. We anticipate that the project will begin in July and be completed by the end of September, 2011.

This assistance will be funded entirely by the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and there will be no cost to the Town of Acton.

MAPC staff looks forward to working with you on this project.

Eric Bourassa
Manager, Transportation Division

cc: Roland Bartl, Town of Acton – Planning Director
Corey York, Town of Acton – Department of Public Works Director
David Martin, Chair of South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

Scope of Work **South Acton Commuter Rail Station Assistance**

Metropolitan Area Planning Council to undertake for the Town of Acton

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The South Acton commuter rail station is located on the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Fitchburg commuter rail line approximately 25 miles northwest of North Station in Boston. The South Acton station has the most boardings of all stops on the Fitchburg Line with approximately 850 daily (nearly 15% of the total boardings on the line) on one shared inbound/outbound platform. Travel time to North Station is approximately 54 minutes. Parking is provided for approximately 400 vehicles: 270 spaces in a parking lot directly north of the station, and approximately 130 spaces in satellite lots.

The station is expected to expand to a dual-platform proposed by the MBTA. The Town has reviewed and commented on the design plans. The Town has expressed concerns to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) regarding queuing at new pick up and drop off areas, inadequate parking for the site, safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in the area, potential increases in area traffic, and the pedestrian and bicycle connection with the nearby Assabet River Rail Trail.

MAPC will assist the Town by identifying potential improvements for the site.

PROJECT STUDY AREA

The project study area will include the commuter rail station and parking area, the surrounding parking lots, proposed pick up and drop off areas, Main Street connections, and the connection to the Assabet River Rail Trail.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

TASK 1 Data Collection – end of July

- Obtain existing traffic data from the Town
- Obtain proposed plans for the site – including the MBTA’s 60% design plans for the station, and the 25% design plans for the Assabet River Rail Trail
- Obtain existing traffic and planning studies for the site
- Obtain Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) data regarding the South Acton commuter rail station
- Perform weekday morning and evening observations in the study area
 - Observations will include: pick up and drop off activity, queuing, parking, bicycle/pedestrian activity, and carpool and shuttle observations

Scope of Work
South Acton Commuter Rail Station Assistance

Metropolitan Area Planning Council to undertake for the Town of Acton

- As train ridership is expected to be lower than the yearly average during these observations, MAPC will adjust counts as necessary to reflect average ridership

Meeting – end of July

Meet with representatives of the Town Planning and Engineering staff, and the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee (SATSAC) at the site to identify issues and discuss potential solutions.

TASK 2 Issues Analysis –August

MAPC will undertake an analysis of existing conditions and initiatives as well as previous work completed by the Town of Acton and CTPS. MAPC will provide recommendations to issues identified from the analysis. It is anticipated that MAPC will evaluate and give recommendations regarding the following:

- Pickup and dropoff areas (including the proposed Maple Street access point)
- Site traffic
- Additional parking opportunities
- Safety of pedestrians and bicyclists in the area
- Connection to/from the Assabet River Rail Trail

Budget permitting, the issues analysis may also include:

- Land use recommendations (including potential sites near the rail line)
- Changes to zoning that may be required to implement recommendations

TASK 3 Deliverable Preparation – August/September

This task will focus on creating a concise written plan for the site and developing strategies to implement the plan. Options and issues would be filtered to determine whether they are short or long-term goals. Advancing the goals of MAPC’s MetroFuture Plan and implementing the State’s Sustainable Development Principles will be addressed in the deliverables.

Meeting – beginning of September –MAPC will present its findings to the Town Planning and Engineering staff, and the South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee. The findings will be sent to the Town prior to the presentation for review.

Scope of Work
South Acton Commuter Rail Station Assistance

Metropolitan Area Planning Council to undertake for the Town of Acton

HOURS AND COSTS

The hours and costs for the scoped elements are estimated as follows:

Task	Task Description	Number of Hours	Staff	Hourly Rate	Total Cost
1	Data Collection	10	Engineer/Planner	\$90	\$900
2	Issues Analysis	24	Engineer/Planner	\$90	\$2,160
3	Deliverable Preparation	12	Engineer/Planner	\$90	\$1,080
		8	Graphics/GIS	\$90	\$720
			Total Estimated Funding		\$4,860
			Total Estimated Hours		54

This assistance will be funded entirely by the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and there will be no cost to the Town of Acton.