

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

Meeting minutes - APPROVED

Acton Town Hall Room 126

29 August, 2013

Committee Members Present:

- David Martin
- Clare Siska
- Pat Clifford
- Sean Hanley

Committee Members Not Present:

- Tom Campbell
- Michaela Moran

Other Attendees:

- Bill Davies, resident

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

1. Review and accept meeting minutes

- Deferred to next meeting.

2. Construction Status and Concerns

- Mr. Martin says that the time frame for moving the layovers to Littleton is TBD, though Littleton would like it soon.
- Ms. Siska reported that some Maple Street residents would like the weekday train layovers to take place west of Martin Street to reduce noise pollution.
 - The committee advises that the neighbors contact Joe Nolan directly with this request.
 - Ms. Siska will take this response to the residents.

3. Parking Lots

- **Main parking lot:** Acton's Engineering department has no reconfiguration proposal for the Main lot at this time. Mr. Martin will request a status report and plan from Corey York.
- **Montourri lot:** Roland Bartl, Town Planner, is now in charge of this project as he is seeking rail trail monies to fund it. John Sonner reported to SATSAC via email that Mr. Bartl agrees to include SATSAC in his planning. Town Engineering is working on a draft designs. Mr. Martin will push for a presentation at the next SATSAC meeting. The committee requested that Mr. Martin provide the following input to Engineering for their first drafts:
 - As aesthetically pleasing as possible.
 - Instead of small islands of green in between rows of parking, create a green buffer zone between Maple Street and the parking area, that could include a kiosk, plantings, benches or other park-like amenities and a sidewalk from the parking area to the platform.
 - Condense the parking in one area as close to the Main Street bridge as possible and downslope (hidden) from Maple Street.
 - Look at landscaping proposal from last year's CPC funding request
- **27 School Street:** This property, next to the School Street municipal lot, is for sale as a tear-down. The committee considered whether to pursue that for train station parking. Discussions included balancing aesthetics with the need for additional parking; concern for South Acton being

“paved over” in every possible place; AHDC jurisdiction. The sense of the committee is that we do not want to drive anything related train station parking on this lot and we will take no action.

- **All parking lots:** Ms. Siska asked about availability of public funds to install electric vehicle recharging stations as are available at Littleton and Alewife stations. Mr. Martin offered to investigate funding sources. Ms. Siska also asked whether Engineering is considering designated spaces for small cars, which allows for a higher number of spaces, or preferred parking for green vehicles. Mr. Martin will take this input to the Engineering group.

4. Landscaping

- Mr. Martin had discussed funding with Ms. Acerbo-Bachman of the AHDC, who reported that the MA Dept. of Revenue determined CPA funds cannot fund landscaping, so we will not pursue CPA funds in the future.
- Discussion included:
 - Back of platform, north side, viewed from historic Jones Tavern, Exchange Hall, and the condominium and apartment complexes, is of particular concern
 - Newly landscaped Junction Park in West Concord cost \$186K. Funds were received from local organizations and the town of Concord, plus the Organization for the Assabet River.
 - MBTA landscaping budget for South Acton Station is \$30K
 - Ms. Clifford suggests organizing a community meeting to engage a larger community; get the BoS and some political backing; engage the Railroad Street condo association, Iron Work Farm, and the AHDC. BoS should have some ownership of this issue.
 - Timing is important. When the south side platform is in place, the community will have a greater sense of what we are dealing with.
- The sense of the committee is that we need to pursue, but that it should be timed for 2015 Town Meeting (or Fall 2014 STM, if held).
- Actions:
 - Mr. Martin will report back to Ms. Acerbo-Bachman
 - Table issue until SATSAC agenda for December 2013 or January 2014

5. Publicity

- The *Beacon* published an article on 8/29/13.
- Good *Patch* article published on 8/29/13 regarding the upcoming suspension of train service

6. Coordination with other committees

- Acton Health Director Doug Haley has been leading the **Cross-town Connect** program effort: \$120K total grants to coordinate and manage, through a dispatch service, bus services between Acton and other towns on the Rt. 495 corridor.
 - “Last mile” concept
 - Separate from the MinuteVan shuttle
 - Businesses are contributing
 - Mr. Haley recently presented to the Finance Committee.
 - Ms. Clifford will forward the presentation to SATSAC.
 - Suggestion that Mr. Haley attend a SATSAC meeting to coordinate any tie-ins with our charter.
- **Acton Community Housing Corporation:** Avelon Acton has one parcel left to develop. They will construct ~ 60 rental townhouses and provide a shuttle service to the Littleton station as a mediation effort.
- **ARRT:** Ms. Siska offered to follow up with Tom Kelleher and the ARRT website to get a project update.

- **River Street park concept:** Ms. Siska reported that there is a community effort forming to have the town purchase the Lazaro paving property on River Street and turn it into a town park.

7. Future Meetings / Calendar

- Meeting schedule proposed:
 - September 19, 2013
 - October 10, 2013 (tentative)
- October 20, 2013 – Farmers' Market table

8. Adjourn

Ms. Siska moved to adjourn. Mr. Hanley seconded. Approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Clare Siska, Acting Clerk

Links:

<http://actontrain.info/> -- SATSAC's Station Construction project web page

<http://www.acton-ma.gov/satsac> is the SATSAC town website 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.

<http://groups.google.com/group/South-Acton-Rail-Chat?lnk=srg&hl=en> – South Acton Rail Chat