

March 20, 2012  
Meeting Minutes

**Transportation Policy Advisory Committee  
Public Transportation Sub-Committee**

**Members Present:**

Jennifer Kretovic, Chair  
Dick Lemieux  
Brent Todd  
Ken Hazeltine  
Kim Murdoch  
Ruairi O'Mahony  
Steve Henninger (Staff Representative)  
Laura Aibel (Staff Representative)

**Members Absent:**

Ed Roberge (Staff Representative)

**Others Attending:**

Jim Sudak  
Kevin Curdie  
Frank Vinciguerra  
Rob Mack, City Traffic Engineer

**I. Call to Order/Introductions**

Ms. Kretovic called the meeting to order and reviewed the agenda.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the February 21, 2012 meeting were reviewed and approved.

**III. Public Comments**

Mr. Curdie related an encounter he witnessed between a driver and a student from NHTI. When the driver requested proper ID, the student replied "I ride all of the time." The student began to use derogatory and offensive language towards the driver, but eventually sat down. During the encounter, Mr. Curdie indicated the driver remained professional and restrained towards the rider. Ms. Kretovic asked Mr. Sudak what procedures CAT has for these situations. Mr. Sudak replied drivers are trained to contact dispatch alerting them of the situation, and if necessary to call 911. Following an encounter such as this, the driver has an accident/incident report form to complete. If the rider has had numerous encounters, CAT can issue a pink slip to the individual which prohibits the individual from utilizing the CAT services. Mr. Sudak is the only person authorized to issue these slips.

Mr. Vinciguerra said the new bus schedule is confusing. The new Crosstown route doesn't stop at the Steeplegate Mall, Walmart, Havenwood Heritage Heights or Arnie's anymore. It is a long walk from the Ocean State Job Lot store to the nearest bus stop. Walmart has a new bus stop near the end of the building, can other people do the same?

He called CAT about having somebody teach people how to use the buses. Mr. Sudak responded CAT does have a travel trainer and arrangements can be made for people to learn how to use the buses.

Mr. Vinciguerra asked the drivers to be reminded about lowering the kneelers for passengers with mobility limitations.

**IV. Referrals**

There were no referrals this month.

**V. Presentation**

- i. Rob Mack, Loudon Road Corridor- Mr. Mack reviewed the Loudon Road lane consolidation project with the Subcommittee. Of particular interest were the Subcommittee's thoughts on the locations of the bus stops along the corridor. Aside from the State house and Eagle Square stops, the two busiest stops in the system are located at Morningstar and Arnie's.

The new lane configuration will consist of a five foot shoulder, a ten foot lane, a fourteen foot two way left turn lane (TWLTL), a ten foot lane and a five foot shoulder. The crash reduction anticipated is between 25-29%.

Mr. Lemieux expressed concern with the westbound bus stop at the Hazen Drive intersection being at the start of the right turn lane onto Hazen Drive. He was concerned the bus might not see vehicles behind the bus starting down the turn lane while the bus driver was pulling out into traffic.

Construction is anticipated for FY2014, after the Loudon Road water main replacement is complete.

**VI. Discussion**

- i. CAT NHDOT/CITY Grant Application Memo-

The application includes the same level of service from FY2012. There is a 10 week Saturday service trial again. Mr. Sudak felt the Saturday Service should include Fort Eddy Road service versus service to the hospital. It seems there's a larger demand for shopping than medical appointments on Saturdays.

The travel trainer funding may be switched from 5311 to 5316 or 5317.

Somebody asked what it would cost to have a free fare system. Mr. Littlefield responded the additional local match would be \$118,000 for a total of \$243,000.

Mr. Hazeltine mentioned the existing schedule might be too tight to accommodate the additional riders expected with a free fare system. CAT should examine the need for additional vehicles as an extra cost to implement a free fare system. Mr. Todd asked if a trial similar to the Saturday Service could be done.

Ms. Murdoch asked if the fare box could be sponsored for a time. Mr. Hazeltine suggested CAT may be able to use 5304 funds to study the concept and perhaps provide a demonstration period. He also indicated that the capital demands for a free fare system are tremendous. Mr. Sudak reminded the subcommittee that if the Fixed Route System is fare free, the STS and Paratransit components will need to be free also. He mentioned the volunteer driver program is exploding because it's fare free, as opposed to \$2.50 for the paratransit service or \$.50 for senior service, and the volunteer program goes door to door.

**VII. Updates/Old Business**

- i. Ridership Reports – Ridership reports were distributed, but not discussed.
- ii. Hospital Shuttle- Mr. Sudak reported the Concord Hospital shuttle was cancelled in early March.
- iii. **Route Timing** – Mr. Sudak indicated Tom Crikelair should have the new timing work completed by the end of April. He indicated the pulse system may not work

with the new timing. He'll ask Mr. Crikelair to determine the effectiveness of a pulse system with routes of such different lengths.

- iv. Quarterly Report – Ms. Kretovic said the quarterly report will be forwarded to TPAC's approval this week.
- v. Other Old Business
  - 1. CAPBMCI/CAT Staffing Update – CAT has not received applications from any qualified candidates to date. They will re-advertise.

#### **VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- i. Adopt a Stop- The Subcommittee agreed that it's premature to market a program like this until the route timing is revised. Mr. Todd felt that corporate sponsorship would be the logical choice for this program. He wanted to be sure that TPAC-P/T was not involved. Ms. Kretovic volunteered to send an email to the Greater Concord Safe Communities Coalition to encourage them to take the lead on this program.
- ii. Other New Business –
  - 1. RESERVED- New development and Capital Improvement Projects – No update.

#### **IX. Adjournment**

**MOTION** to adjourn was made, seconded and carried.

Greetings, I have several comments and concerns regarding public transportation in Concord. I realize another budget year is approaching and it in part has spurred some of these thoughts. To start on a bright note: I observed during the week of February 13-17 that the smaller bus being used for the Crosstown Route had the name "Crosstown" in its 'window' in the front!!! For one, the bus stop on North Main Street by Franklin Street, outbound, is still in the same location it has been since I have been riding. I recalled it being talked about as an less than safe location as a stop and if I remember correctly it was approved to be moved from that area to a location further south, in the area of the Washington Street intersection(?). Another summer and fall have come and gone and it has yet to be moved. I am reminded of the hazard of its current location when I've recently ridden the Penacook Bus and the driver stopped to pick up a rider (whom it turned out wasn't waiting for that bus!). It was later in the day and traffic was 'busy'. The driver as you all know has to cross 2 lanes of traffic to get back to the traffic lane they need to be in to continue its route north.

I also have my concerns about the proposal to add a bus stop to the Crosstown route to include a stop for the new location of the Friendly Kitchen. It has nothing to do with the stop per say, but more the route itself; the time that might be involved with people either entering or off the bus, how is that going to impact the timing? I will assume there is going to be people getting off to go to the kitchen and there will be a stop on the inbound route to pick up riders, perhaps on Commercial Street? I mention this in light of the timing as it current is, rather 'tight'. The late afternoon/evening is the time frame I have concerns about; the Crosstown bus has riders who transfer to the Penacook bus for one thing. I have seen this person get off the Crosstown at the Franklin St stop a number of times in an effort to catch the Penacook bus as it is now. The Crosstown does not always get to the State House stop in time for the transfer (and the driver doesn't seem to like to radio ahead to ask the Penacook driver if they can wait a few extra minutes). In fact I have observed the Heights bus leaving the State House stop while the Crosstown bus was approaching, which I was trying to catch (the driver didn't hear me ask them to please call the other bus to wait when we were coming onto North Main St heading towards the downtown!) I'm not the only one this has happened to, that I know of.

I also have wondered about a couple of former stops that still have signage but no longer serve as bus stops (see attached pictures). One being on South Main Street across from Thompson St (by the Kennedy Building) and the other is actually a bus stop sign on Storrs St that has never actually been a stop that has been used (it's on the street near Market Basket). I would have thought that at least the metal signs might have at least been removed or bagged. I also still don't understand after what, two years or so of there being no signage at the Storrs Street Plaza for the times of the bus there, there is a sign. Don't get me wrong, I just wonder how the property owner was finally gotten to allow it. Perhaps the same can be applied to the Wal Mart stop.

I have concerns over the missing signs with the route times that are still missing and in some cases have been missing since shortly after the 'new' schedule times were posted. The idea that there real signs are going to be put up, that somehow makes the lack of signs OK? And the continued lack of signs is OK in the mean while? I am hoping the 'new' signs are going to perhaps face the side people will approach the stops from, instead of facing the street. This is something I have noticed, as it has been winter and it does get dark early. At the State House stop there use to be a street light very close to the bus shelter. It was damaged during an ice storm, what 2 years ago or so. It was not fix, but rather removed and since that area, which includes a crosswalk has darken. Part of my concern with that is when it is dark during the winter months and there is snow and ice under foot, it can be a challenge to board the buses.

The part about the crosswalk is there are folks who exit the bus quickly at times to cross the street to make it to the outbound Penacook bus. Cars don't tend to travel slowly in that area for some reason, at least that I have observed.

I would also like to share something I just became aware of; something called a single ride pass. I had seen on a number of occasions a rider board a bus and hand the driver a slip of paper the size of a transfer slip. I had often thought, that the heck, that's not allowed to be used here. I am referring to someone boarding at stop like Shaws on the Heights. Or on Industrial Park Drive for a couple of locations. Now I find out there is another 'free' way to ride the bus? Gee how I do get one. I guess there are several different places to get them from. I didn't really ask, I was more amazed I guess than anything else.

And speaking of free rides; I've noticed one more than one occasion students boarding at the NHTI don't have the 'right' sticker on their student ID. I thought I recalled they paid a fee when they sign up for school? In fact I have noticed a few of these students giving the driver a hard time when they asked to see their ID, both front and back. When it was noticed they didn't have the correct color sticker the driver would tell them they needed to get the right one or they had to pay \$1.25, to which a few students would say to the driver; "You know me, I ride every day". I also didn't realize a valid student ID gets you a ride period, whether you are just riding into town or actually going to school. I guess that is my bad, I assumed it was only able to be used for trips to school. What a great deal for whatever they are paying is all I'll say.

And to round this out, I have concerns with the use of the smaller buses. It is hard to board them and get to a seat when you have bags in your hands (and not whack anyone as you try to squeeze by as you try to get to a seat). For myself, I am glad when I see one of the Orion's on the road. It's easy to board and easy to get to a seat. The flat bottom setup is, to me, the most user friendly bus going. Unlike the Trolleys when their steps and narrow area by the top of the steps, with the fare box right there. Again, anyone with bags or a small shopping cart it can be a challenge to board. I realize the small buses are spares for the most part, I'm just saying they have their limitations.

I have been attending these TCAP meeting for a while and am somewhat frustrated at the pace of change. I have a hard time recalling when something has happened, for the better. There has been talk about permanent signs, bus shelters, locations of stops, timing regarding transfers, a contest to design a color scheme for the buses, uniforms for the drivers, including an ID for the driver, lack of A/C during the summer months, snow removal during the winter, people being left at the bus stop, poor lighting at the stops. I realize things don't happen overnight and for the most part understand the need to have a plan, but gee...

And I really don't know how to address this, but while at the State House bus shelter on Tues February 14<sup>th</sup>, I noticed something, well, rather gross. Someone had vomited in front of the shelter, right in front of some of the seats. I observed several people who approached the shelter to wait for a bus who noticed it and moved away from the shelter (you couldn't sit, trust me). My question, whom would someone contact/call, to clean it up? Not something I would want to step in (and a few people did before they noticed it).



Bus Stop sign on Storrs St in front of Market Basket



Sign for Trolley Stop on South Main St.



Location of former Street Light Pole by the Bus Shelter on No. Main and Park St.



Sidewalk in front of 240 North Main St. (winter of 2010-11)

As you can note from this picture the sidewalk along North Main Street was not plowed as of 31JAN11

## **CAT DELIVERABLES:**

These reports are expected to show real progress on work your organization is doing. We anticipate some projects will experience slower than expected progress, setbacks, unexpected glitches, or other matters simply need to take priority.

### **Monthly**

1. Ridership Report
2. Quick Report

If relevant, this can include updates to the following:

- Program Goals
- Communication Plan (website can be included here)
- Fundraising
- Items related to bus stops, bus shelters or bus signage
- Items related to overall Route/System operations
- Saturday Service
- Volunteer Driver Program
- Mid-State Council
- New Projects/initiatives/etc.

### **Quarterly**

1. Productivity Reports
2. Bullet point report for inclusion in the TPAC/TPAC-PT Quarterly Report to City Council (this can easily be compiled and updated from the monthly Quick Reports and add whatever else you feel important for Council to know)
3. Updated Timelines on Program Goals/Communication Plan/Fundraising Plan (for TPAC-PT subcommittee)

### **Annually**

1. Budget Detail & NHDOT - 5311 Application
2. Any other transit related NHDOT Grant submissions (5304, 5310, 5317, etc.)
3. Grant Application to City (prior to submission to the City Manager)
4. Productivity Report and Peer-to-Peer Review

For the purposes of these reports, progress related to programs directly supported by City contributions should come first, i.e. the Fixed Route, Paratransit and Senior Transit Service. We encourage CAPBMCI to include the other programs secondarily.