



City of Cambridge

Committee Report #3
IN CITY COUNCIL

December 18, 2000

COUNCILLOR DAVIS

ORDERED: That the City Manager or his designee be and hereby is requested to invite a representative from Boulder, Colorado to Cambridge to discuss the issue of shuttle service.

In City Council December 18, 2000.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

- The elderly and senior population; and
- The youth population.

The elderly have unique needs, he said. The Council on Aging runs a shuttle service. Non-emergency service is available from SCM Transportation. Additional service can be provided in the area of non-emergency. Costs need to be determined and who will provide the service.

In the area of youth, sports and after school activities need to be reviewed by the School Department and determine how can this area be served.

The city, he said, received a grant for a shuttle service. This service will be planned by the Charles River TMA. The city will receive knowledge about running a shuttle service. The city can operate a shuttle service as long as it does not interfere with the MBTA service. Jitney license, he said, includes any vehicle which carries passengers for hire. One exception to the jitney licensing procedure is when there is one pick up/drop off stop and these routes the DET licenses.

In the Phase I the need to improve existing MBTA services was outlined.

Richard Scali, Executive Officer, License Commission, informed the committee that a consultant has been hired to address taxicab service issues such as customer service and quality of service.

Councillor Davis asked Mr. Scali if the LMA shuttle is operating within the scope of the License Commission regulation. Mr. Scali responded that the LMA is not regulated by the License Commission because it is a free service traveling to the medical area. Councillor Davis stated that the LMA is not a free service shuttle. Mr. Barr stated this service is not open to the public.

Ms. Rasmussen stated that the city's licensing procedure should be reviewed as to how the best interest of the city is served. If the public is forced to be allowed on private shuttles it may hamper the overall goal of the city for shuttles. The LMA shuttle has changed over the years.

Councillor Davis questioned the 200 responses to the survey outlining the area of need. Ms. Rasmussen stated that the survey was not the only means of information used to outline the area of need. Meetings were also held throughout the city, she said. The 200 responses to the survey was a reasonable survey according to the Statistics Manager in the Community Development Department.

Councillor Davis stated that she put in an order requesting that the after school sports and extra curriculum transportation needs of high school children be reviewed. Ms. Rasmussen informed the committee that a meeting will be held with the School Department on this issue. Councillor Davis stated that Bill Bates in the Physical Education Department is the key person to contact in the School Department.

Councillor Davis asked if the shuttle between the city, TMA and private businesses will be an open door shuttle. Mr. Barr responded in the affirmative. TMA, he said, will plan which businesses will be involved and what routes will be used. A grant has been received for a shuttle route from North Station to Kendall Square to University Park. Councillor Davis stated that residents would like to have the benefit of a shuttle to travel around the city. A shuttle from Harvard Square which travels to the library that will loop around the city is a vision that she has. Ms. Rasmussen stated that the city would have to run the vehicle at a greater frequency than the MBTA. Experience, she said, will be gained with the North Station shuttle.

Mr. James Gascoigne, Charles River TMA, informed the committee that it is difficult to get businesses to work together on shuttle service.

Elie Yarden, 143 Pleasant Street, asked if the business shuttle was going to use diesel fuel. Mr. Barr stated that the city is hoping to get an alternative fuel vehicle. Mr. Gascoigne stated an RFP (Request for Proposal) is being done and will include alternative fuel pricing.

Charles Bahne, 76 Standish Street, stated that a list should be compiled of all shuttle service within the city. Mr. Barr responded that there is a list of shuttle service within the city.

Mr. Bahne stated that Haymarket station is a terminus for busses coming into North Station. He stated that students and employees who use the LMA shuttle have to pay a fare by buying tickets.

John Gintell, 9 West Street, suggested reviewing the Somerville shuttle which is a loop shuttle. Ms. Rasmussen stated that Somerville shuttle is not successful yet. Mr. Bahne stated that it is impossible to get a schedule of the Somerville shuttle which only stops at designated stops. Regarding the surveys about new shuttles, Mr. Gintell stated that people do not see the advantage of new things until they use the service. The North Station shuttle needs to be monitored for quality and marketing needs to be done, he said. The LMA shuttle, he said, could include patients to the medical center. Service reliability and predictability is important, he said.

Councillor Davis informed the committee that a representative on shuttle service from Boulder, Colorado is willing to come to Cambridge to describe their shuttle service and the process used to develop it.

Councillor Davis made the following motion:

ORDERED: That The City Manager or his designee be and hereby is requested to invite a representative from Boulder, Colorado be invited to Cambridge to discuss the issue of shuttle service.

On a voice vote the motion -
Carried.

At six o'clock and fourteen minutes p.m. the topic of signs at bus stops was discussed.

Ms. Sue Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, outlined the strategies to get the information out to the public for bus stops. It is a two-phase project, she said. The Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department will make the signs which will include the route name. The routing will be placed on the back of a tombstone sign at bus stops. Scheduling frequency information is important, but putting this information on the signs is more complex. The strategy is to seek a grant to secure holders to install the schedules at the stops. The quarterly changes to the schedule will be the concern, she said.

The Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department will start with Route 69, a high ridership route with 40 stops. Two signs will be produced including the website address and the MBTA telephone number. This winter is the projected time frame. By the end of the summer, experience will be seen and then the remainder of the city will be done.

Councillor Davis asked how long will it take for the 29 bus routes to be posted. Ms. Clippinger responded that getting the signs will be the time consuming part of the process. Each site needs to be reviewed for the location of the tombstone signs. It might take longer to install the second tombstone sign, she said. To complete the remainder of the city will be a financial concern.

Councillor Davis asked if it will be one year until the first route is done. Ms. Clippinger stated that by the end of this budget cycle the first route will be posted. The cost of the other routes will be in the next budget cycle.

Councillor Davis suggested using stickers similar to street cleaning stickers to change bus information. Ms. Clippinger stated that this is time consuming. A "No Weekend Service" is a doable strategy, she said. Changes, she said, become a management issue. The city is committed that there should be a schedule at the stops, the problem is how do you accomplish this feat.

Elie Yarden stated that every bus stop should have a bus shelter. He also urged that the sign should contain a map with the bus route and the stops. He further suggested that information should be posted listing the arrival time at each given bus stop. This sets up expectations for service, he said. He suggested the map should be a good design. It is a demand issue, not a marketing issue, he said. Complaints about inadequacies has increased the use of the automobile.

Mr. Gintell stated that priority should be given to the front stop. Do the easy thing first, he urged. He suggested an experiment such a web site - www.nextbus.com.

Mr. Bahne stated that the MBTA is not good at posting bus stops and schedules. Many cities have dedicated telephone numbers for certain routes, he said. The city needs to focus on what it can do. Signs, he said, are not in the correct position for the user. The issue of updating the signs needs to be addressed. He informed the committee of a sign in Porter Square that is fifteen years out of date. He agreed with the concept of consolidation on the signs.

Mr. Bahne suggested to the committee that storeowners be asked to post the bus schedule in their store windows. The Route 69 bus shares this route with other busses and the shared stops should have the shared routes on the sign. The T logo and tombstone signs should be installed in Central Square, he said.

Councillor Davis asked if the bus stops will be posted at the Holmes block. Mr. Barr stated that the stops will be revised when the Holmes Building is completed. Councillor Davis stated that a map of the area including the routes and the stop locations is needed for this area.

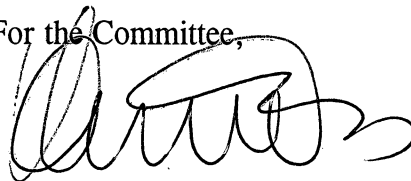
Mr. Gascoigne stated that this is a good start. There is a complexity to this issue. The devil is in the detail, he said. He urged that the simplest should be done first, then focus on the details. It is difficult to put information in a small space.

Councillor Davis stated that trying signs out with a focus group is a good idea.

Councillor Davis thanked all for their attendance.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Davis', written over a horizontal line.

Councillor Henrietta Davis
Chair

City of Cambridge

**TRANSPORTATION, TRAFFIC AND PARKING
COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

*Councillor Henrietta Davis, Chair
Councillor Jim Braude
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.*

In City Council December 18, 2000

The Transportation, Traffic and Parking Committee conducted a public meeting on Thursday, November 30, 2000 at five o'clock and seventeen minutes p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber.

The purpose of the meeting was to continue discussion on shuttle service and signage at bus stops in the city and any other issues relating to traffic in the city.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Davis, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Born, Susanne Rasmussen, Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning Division of the Community Development Department, Joseph Barr, and Katherine Preston, Transportation Division of the Community Development Department, Sue Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Richard Scali, Executive Officer, License Commission and Donna P. Lopez, Deputy City Clerk.

Councillor Davis convened the hearing and explained the purpose. The first topic discussed was the issue of shuttle service.

Susanne Rasmussen, Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning Division of the Community Development Department, stated that in the Spring a study was done to analyze the need for shuttle service in the city. In July 2000, Phase I of the study was presented to the City Council. In December 2000, Phase II will be presented to the City Council.

Joseph Barr, Transportation Division of the Community Development Department, stated that the task of Phase I was to look at the need for improving transit service in the city. The public, he said, is happy with the current transit service as contained in 3.9 out of 5 telephone surveys.

In Phase I, two market areas were not reached:

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Committee Report #3

Committee Report from Councillor
Henrietta Davis, Chair of the
Transportation, Traffic and
Parking Committee for a meeting
held on November 30, 2000 to
continue discussion on shuttle
service and signage at bus stops in
the city and any other issues
relating to traffic in the city.

In City Council December 18, 2000

Report Accepted

PLACED ON FILE

ORDER ADOPTED