



City of Cambridge

CR # 1
AMENDED ORDER

IN CITY COUNCIL

April 25, 1994

COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR MYERS
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
COUNCILLOR WALSH
VICE MAYOR RUSSELL
MAYOR REEVES

ORDERED: That the Cambridge City Council go on record urging the MBTA to review their present policy with regards to the kneeler step and that the review include the automatic use of said step; and be it further

ORDERED: That the MBTA be and hereby is requested to place placards in the front windows of the buses for senior citizens viewing.

In City Council April 25, 1994.

Adopted as amended by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury,
City Clerk



City of Cambridge

CR # 1
ORIGINAL ORDER

IN CITY COUNCIL

April 25, 1994

COUNCILLOR BORN

ORDERED: That the Cambridge City Council Committee on Elder Affairs go on record urging the MBTA to review their present policy with regards to the kneeler step and that the review include the automatic use of said step.

City of Cambridge

The Elder Affairs Committee conducted a public hearing on Thursday, April 7, 1994 beginning at 2:05 p.m. at the North Cambridge Senior Center, 2050 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge.

Vice Mayor Sheila T. Russell, Chair of the above referenced committee convened the hearing and stated that the purpose of the date's proceedings was to hear from Seniors with regards to their concerns about MBTA services. Present at the hearing were: Councillor Kathleen L. Born, Councillor Francis H. Duehay, Councillor Michael A. Sullivan, Deputy City Clerk John E. Flynn and "T" representatives Karen DiSpirito and Maureen Trainor.

To begin the discussion Vice Mayor Russell opened the floor for public comments, inquiries and exchanges with "T" representatives.

Ms. Irene Raiche, 17 Cambridge Terrace, cited as one of her concerns that drivers on bus route 79 and 83 do not allow adequate time for seniors to take a seat before proceeding to the next stop.

Ms. Trainor in response stated that as a rule drivers wait for passengers to step behind the yellow line thus allowing the driver with a clear view to proceed. She further stated that she would bring back this concern to the Transportation Department.

Ms. Margaret Stuart, 9 Cambridge Terrace, expressed her displeasure with buses that allow for the drop-off and not pick-up of passengers during specified times on Massachusetts Avenue. (She specified the Arlington bus)

Ms. Trainor in response states that during rush hour the 77 bus sometimes runs as an express with limited service between Cameron Avenue and Harvard Square.

Councillor Duehay inquired why the 77 bus did not directly drop off these passengers at the Alewife T station.

Ms. Trainor in response stated that the T was providing services to individuals who work in the City of Cambridge.

Ms. Helene L. Corry, facilities coordinator at the Senior Center, also expressed her criticism of the express bus and suggested that the T revise this policy of not picking up passengers along Massachusetts Avenue.

Vice Mayor Russell also voiced her support for reviewing this issue in light of

the hardships that the Winter of 94 caused for commuters.

Councillor Duehay also stated his support for a review noting that it was not a good policy and it is not good for the image of government or a quasi-government agency.

Ms. Julie Murphy, 2050 Massachusetts Avenue, listed the following criticism of the T service:

- 1) failure of drivers to pull up to the curb;
- 2) discourteous drivers;
- 3) failure of drivers to drop-off passengers on the right side in Harvard Square Station, and;
- 4) failure of drivers to accommodate Seniors who make a mistake in boarding an express bus between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.

In response, Ms. Trainor stated that drivers are required to pull into the curb and asked that individuals note the time and the bus number and to file a complaint. The same being true for criticism number two with regards to point three Ms. Trainor stated that it was a safety issue and will furnish the specific rule.

Ms. DiSpirito stated with regards to the express bus that Bus #77A provides local services along the route.

Ms. Johanna Chao, CDA, inquired if the T has a system for evaluating the present rules in its delivery of service.

Ms. Trainor stated that the T does evaluate routes to monitor the service level (i.e. ridership) and that the T has done card surveys to determine comfort levels.

Ms. Iwanski, 24 Camp Street, inquired of whose responsibility it is to clear snow in designated bus stops.

Ms. Trainor in response stated that it is the responsibility of the City. Ms. DiSpirito added that the T has submitted its snow removal policy to the Commissioner of Public Works.

Councillor Duehay requested of Ms. DiSpirito to provide the City Council with this Policy statement.

Councillor Born noted that the City Council had a hearing on snow removal a few months prior and that the Council was told that the T had the responsibility to clear the snow in bus stops.

Ms. Trainor in response stated the City has the responsibility to clear the bus stops and that the T has the responsibility to clear the stations.

Ms. Mary Mallet, 50 Cedar Street, registered her complaint with regards to signage. She noted that some Seniors have vision problems and that poor signage has resulted in Seniors getting on the wrong bus.

At this time several Seniors voiced their criticism with the failure of drivers to pull up to the curb and the verbal treatment that they have received trying to navigate the steps given the height of the steps and if they are aided by a cane or a walker.

Ms. Trainor in response stated that a kneeling step is available on the newer buses and that it is used when an individual requests it. She stated that it is not automatically used. She also suggested that the Lift Program could aid Seniors who use the trackless trolley service.

Many Seniors stated that this policy of asking for the use of the kneeler was ridiculous and requested that it be reviewed.

Vice Mayor Russell and Councillor Duehay both stated their agreement with the Seniors and requested that this issue be reviewed by the T.

Ms. Hedy Pecius commented on the general bus service through the Harvard Square Station and noted that the #1 bus service can be sporadic requiring riders to wait up to 45 minutes. She also noted the lack of cleanliness of the station.

Ms. Trainor acknowledged the delays stated that the buses do get caught up in traffic.

Ms. Pocius also noted that at the station there is only one person selling tokens causing long lines and the potential to miss a connection.

Councillor Duehay noted that this complaint was brought to the attention of the T General Manager John Haley last year by the City Council and that the Council was informed that a fare card program was to be implemented.

Ms. Trainor stated that the T has been implementing token vending machines. Ms. Corry inquired if the T had a monitoring program for emission controls.

Ms. Trainor stated that a program is in place and buses are monitored.

Ms. Chao inquired of Ms. Trainor if the T requires drivers to go through sensitivity training.

Ms. Trainor responded in the affirmative.

Councillor Duehay stated that this meeting would have been a useful teaching tool for drivers so that they could better interact with their ridership.

Councillor Born requested a copy of the training manual that is used by the T.

To conclude the hearing Vice Mayor Russell summarized the complaints received and that a follow-up would be provided by the T on the concerns as outlined.

At this time the Chair recognized Councillor Born for the purpose of introducing the following motion:

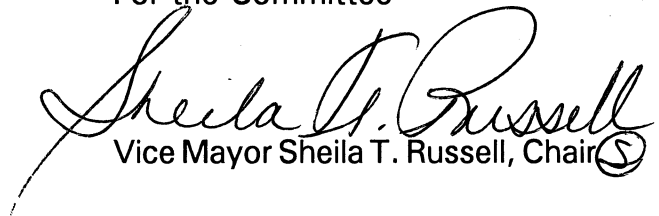
ORDERED: That the Cambridge City Council Committee on Elder Affairs go on record urging the MBTA to review their present policy with regards to the kneeler step and that the review include the automatic use of said step.

On a voice vote the motion carried.

Vice Mayor Russell thanked all those who participated for their comments.

The hearing was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

For the Committee


Vice Mayor Sheila T. Russell, Chair

Committee Report #1

S-180

A comm. received from John E. Flynn
transmitting a report from Vice Mayor
Russell Chair of the Elder Affairs Committee
for a hearing held on 4/7/94 re: MBTA services.

In City Council April 25, 1994

*Report accepted
Placed on file
Order adopted
as amended.*