

South Acton Train Station Advisory Committee

Meeting minutes - final
Room 46, Acton Town Hall
15 November, 2012

Committee Members Present:

- David Martin
- Clare Siska
- Tom Campbell
- Pat Clifford

Committee Members Not Present:

- Sean Hanley
- Michaela Moran

Other Attendees:

- none

Mr. Martin called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

1. Review of meeting minutes

- Minutes of 10/11/2012 -- Mr. Campbell moved acceptance with no changes; Ms. Siska seconded; minutes approved unanimously.

2. Comments from the Public

- none

3. Construction update – concerns, schedule, disruptions, etc.

- Large pile of railroad ties has been removed, though some remain scattered around the site
- Still awaiting construction notice to proceed; anticipated by end of Nov.
- Groundbreaking ceremony TBD; Mr. Hadley says this is up to Senator Eldridge.
- Ms. Siska reported that fencing has been added on the train-side edge of the platform, where it had been cut. Temporary plastic fencing has been removed. This gives passengers more room to spread out when waiting for the train. Mr. Campbell reports it is much easier to get on / off the trains now.
- The Montourri property closing has not yet been confirmed.
- At the last BoS meeting, the station footprint easement was approved

4. Fitchburg Line Working Group update – report from Mr. Martin

- The latest meeting of the FLWG was held on Friday, November 9.
- The MBTA gave a status update of the project components, including:
 - Double tracking is essentially complete (70%).
 - Crossings will be done by the first part of 2013. except for Martin and Central (east)
 - Bridge construction contract has been awarded.
 - Signaling to be completed early 2013; this will make the bridge construction less disruptive as trains will be able to go full speed on single tracks.
 - North Leominster parking garage (250 spaces) is well under way.

- An earmark was recently awarded for the Ayer parking lot (100 spaces)
- Westminster extension: there were more problems with bridges than anticipated; the MBTA is seeking more money.
- Rep. Benson indicated that House Bill 901 (parking meter money for shuttle busses) should have come out of committee this past Tuesday.
- The MBTA recently took delivery of initial 4 new train cars.
- MBTA new general manager: Beverly Scott, takes office in December.
- Two operational issues:
 - A note was made that the MBTA should be aware of the Rt 2 construction so the agencies can coordinate.
 - Consideration is being given to having the mid-day trains turn around in Littleton, rather than South Acton, as soon as next year, when that station is completed. Businesses want the reverse commute, and it would take pressure off Acton during construction. Rep. Jen Benson took an action item to set up a hearing on this item.
- Mr. Martin's described it as "a pretty positive meeting, overall"

5 Sidewalk committee meeting, update

- Mr. Martin attended the most recent SC meeting, where it was noted that the new Martin street sidewalk will get increased use soon as the construction area leading from Martin Street to the platform is fenced off; also, Stow Street will get more walkers when the South side entrance opens, ~1 year from now. Sidewalks will be critical at that point, with an increased number of people walking in the dark in winter. Engineering is looking into designing stow street sidewalk now. Mr. Martin told the SC that SATSAC would be looking into pedestrian issues on Maple Street and will involve the SC as needed.
- Sudbury uses CPC funds for sidewalks. This had been previously reported to SATSAC, where Ms. Clifford had stated that Town Counsel has previously rejected this concept. Mr. Martin suggested that the Stow Street sidewalk, because of its proximity to the ARRT, the Caouette-Simeone conservation land, and Jones Field might be considered a recreational walkway. Now would be the time to write up the proposal for 2013 CPC funds. No further action was taken.

6. 100% design available

- Now posted on the SATSAC page on the town website.

7. Maple Street Traffic Calming

- The committed identified these goals:
 - Pedestrian and traffic safety
 - Noise reduction
 - Air quality
 - Avoid traffic backup onto Rt. 27 and double stopping on Maple Street
 - Protecting the neighborhood
 - Create orderly patterns
 - Accommodate bicyclists
 - Ideas discussed:
 - Add a sidewalk on the north side of Maple Street between Rt. 27 and the station (to address the concern that pedestrians coming from the north side, over the bridge, will not double cross to the south sidewalk, then back again)
 - Narrow maple Street near Rt. 27; focus travel on the south side of the street and develop the south lane of Maple Street as a kiss-and-ride pulloff area. (Question: how

does this differ from the dropoff area already in the MBTA's plans?). Curbing would be designed so emergency vehicles can cross it.

- Need to coordinate with 25% design ideas in ARRT plan, which include choking up the street at the Maple/Stow junction and adding a raised sidewalk.
- Accelerate the building of the sidewalk on Stow Street – Summer 2013
- Add “No Stopping” signage to discourage sitting and waiting
- Make Maple Street one-way going westbound (Benefit is unclear. Assumption is that Maple Street would receive more inbound dropoff traffic than outbound pickup traffic)
- Address the Stow/Maple intersection. Would it accommodate a small traffic circle?
- Engage a traffic engineer. Request that Mr. York include it as an operating item in the Engineering budget.

8. Publicity, website updates.

- GlobeWest featured an article on 11/11, which used the wrong (hamster tube) picture. Corrected photo will be run on 11/18. Mr. Martin will send a copy to the committee.
- Suggestion that we put some sort of markers around the station to show people where the building will be and how high. If MBTA does not do this, SATSAC will.
- Also discussed printing a variant of the brochure in very large size – laminate and zip tie it to fence. Once construction starts, we could do this for each of the different phases. SATSAC should advise BoS and inquire whether we can get funding for this. Also, can the Engineering department help?
- The new SATSAC website has been provisioned; it is currently empty. www.ActonTrain.info Mr. Martin has a template he will fill in as time allows, probably December. There will be links from our town page to the new site. Much of the current content re: the project will be moved to the new site. This new site enables the committee to keep frequently changing content, such as construction updates and notices, up-to-date in a more timely fashion than we can do with the town website page.
- Municipal Quarterly: Judy Pears, COA, handles this. Department heads need to send her the info for inclusion. (Mr. York would be our contact). Deadline is December 1 for the next edition, then March 1. If we learn that the notice to proceed has come through before the end of November, it would be good to have a small notice included with construction start date. Mr. Martin will need to coordinate with Mr. York.

9. Parking issues during construction, expansion, lighting, etc.

- No discussion at this time.

10. Coordination –TAC, Economic Development Committee, Sidewalk, ARRT, etc.

- No discussion at this time.

12. Future Meetings, Calendar events over the next several months.

- Upcoming SATSAC Committee Meetings – note date changes
 - 12/13/12
 - 01/10/13
 - + tbd after that
- Other significant dates:
 - TBD – Groundbreaking ceremony.

13. Adjourn

Ms. Clifford moved to adjourn. Mr. Campbell seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Clare Siska

Links:

- <http://www.acton-ma.gov/satsac> is the SATSAC page.
- www.ActonTrain.info – this will be the NEW website (to come as noted above)
- <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