

**South Acton Deck Advisory Committee**  
**Thursday, March 26, 2009**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Room 204**  
**Acton Town Hall**

Committee Members: Peter Berry , Chairman, F. Dore' Hunter, Bruce Stamski, Greta Eckhardt, David Martin, Michaela Moran, Nick Zavolas, , Jim Yarin, Tom Campell.

Others Present: Terra Friedrichs, Bors Condon, Trey Killett, Jim Citro, Ann Susman, Michael Baskin, Phillip Brake, Anne Forbes, Paul Hadley, Christine Hanley, John Mahoney and Steve \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman Berry opened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Mr. Berry also stated that the meeting is being recorded. Mr. Berry stated that questions were put together by the committee and given to the MBTA ahead of time.

Next Meeting: The Committee discussed when to hold the next meeting. It was stated that with the upcoming Town Meeting that the next meetings will be held at the Senior Center on April 16 and 30, 2009. Mr. Berry indicated that the Selectmen are anticipating the committee's recommendation by the end of June.

Mr. Berry stated that these meetings are an opportunity for people in town to come and give us their input so this committee can report back to the Board of Selectmen. The committee has asked the MBTA Ask someone from T and rail. Rail improvements – MBTA has control over. Do we have any input into design. Dual track and central platform. Structure erected with handicap access. Fitchburg line people are here this evening. Dore' interested on any further info...meeting at Devens @ 8 am for Fitchburg line. MBTA project – how much input we have. M Z why isn't this treated as a developed property? A lot of confusion by his neighbors..Why isn't abutter notification required like any other developed project in town. The neighbors don't know too much about this. MBTA needs an easement. Dore stated that this would have to be done along the whole line. Mr. Z – 30' structure is being proposed. T is usually exempts from all statutes. Advised town staff that easement is required. The ramp does incroach upon town land. 2/3 majority vote required at town meeting for the easement? Dore' – erecting billboards...immune to local regulations. Transportation bill may be addressing these issues. Mr. Z. – what is the committees opinion on whether abutter notification is required. Bruce – town planner contacted the person from the rail trail – were notified of meeting not sure if they were planning on attending. PB – town will get as much information out as possible.

Mr. Cosgrove, MBTA Thanks for inviting us. This is the start of the process. Short meeting – state is under this committee...mbta is getting funding through commonwealth. Expand 1000 spaces by 12/2011. Clean air act. Do not know where money is coming

from. Economic crisis in transportation committee. Design funding..candidate sites. – action is one. Salem is also another. 85% capacity for parking. Acton has a need. Fitchburg rail – design process concept design, public meeting, 30% design. Final design. The state has final decision as to which parking sites will be funded. Town has to be a full partner cause it is a municipal site. Hadley and Brig status update as to where we are on the line improvement project.

Paul Hadley – project manager on the Fitchburg project. SIP parking litigation parking – looking at s acton it lends itself to a deck..due to the drop in elevation of the parking lot. MBTA an advocate to town to get the project funded. The town has to be an advocate for the deck. We are just letting you know the money is available. Design has not even been drawn. EOT has money. Deck timing – just letting you know the money is available. PB – Fitchburg rail – HMTB – do they have the work for the design and the rail improvements. Both t projects? Two distinctly separate projects, separate funding. Funding for Fitchburg line improvements...50% federal funds matched by state funding. 300 million dollar project – had 150 million..defer some of the items – stimulus money can replace some of the deferred 150 million cuts. There is funding in the stimulus package for dual rails – just bringing additional funding to the table. Letter to the legislator to petition the money for the parking deck – our letter. If the deck goes forward it will be separate money. PB – is the big dig litigation money 125,000 available funds – state money. PB - Funding scheme for the parking spaces? Commitment projects forced to cut back and slow down the process. How will the state fund these project. PB – budget line item – grant agreement with executive transportation – none mbta money. 30% of deck can be funded. Commitment through a lawsuit – is that correct? State is saying they will fund it. Has any of the 1000 spaces been funded? Any commitment from cities and towns, Beverly has committed – 1 in land acquisition. Design Natick, Salem and Rockport, Franklin Forge Park. – same stage that we are at. Mr. ZHow many projects are in the design phase at this point. 5 in or about to enter into design phase. 1 in land acquisition stage. Schedule for this – scope of work can be e-mailed to us. Approx 1 month.

Additional info – paragraph summary, how many parking spaces, design where they are located, for all 5 in design phase.

Paul Hadley Presentation for Fitchburg project. – Project goals – improve performance of line – increase transit reliability and decrease travel time. Start construction spring 2009. FTA rating status to meet funding. Environmental permitting – got exclusion – streamlined for order of conditions for local conservation commission. Prioritize – signal system some properties are very antiquated. Existing Fitchburg constraints Limited track crossovers, restrictive curves. Freight conflicts, 17 station stops, 60 mph – will be going to 80mph max.

Conceptual systemwide engineering  
Evaluate corridor and refine proposed packages.

Operation analysis –

Rtc software  
Built model of line  
Analyze – curve modifications

Model shows where we can increase speeds to reduce trip times by showing elevations.

Replace controls so conductor can see them in train. Replacing fiber optic cables.  
Two gaps on this line – are from Acton to Ayer and a small segment of Waltham.  
Constraints – sight – double track will improve this. Reconstruct track – willows interlocking – south to Worcester or continue west to Fitchburg – Albany ny... track improvements to untangle freight/passenger travel. Current platform at s Acton is actually in the footprint of where the double track used to be. Upgraded – sidewalks- make sure we are in agreement with the town for the sidewalks. Repair bridges on this corridor. One repaired and one replaced in Acton. Interlocking improvements traverse from one to Drainage and right of way improvements.

Results – express train – Fitchburg to Porter sq 60 min – save time 9 minutes. Significant reliability improvements. Jim Yarin – what is the main objective of reducing time. – User benefits are calculated to existing riderships – ridership increases. Shorter durations between train to bring people in and out of city to Devens. Moran – savings in time – spread throughout corridor. Inbound 2 minutes with replacement of bridge in Acton. – existing speed restrictions. PB – when will s Acton station – 4 yr project – starting spring and continuing to 2012. s Acton station work will occur within 2-3 year period. Contract work to begin later next spring for s. Acton.

Ann – my property goes up to the train tracks. Will there be more trains. No trains added. Bringing line to modern state, increasing speed, fixing structure. Same schedules but will happen sooner. Fitchburg dropped out of project due to funding. – Need more equipment to increase service out west. These were the ones to cut.

John Mahoney –  
Three alternatives

1. platform – 800' 4' high – directly from platform to train. Better handicap access to accessibility. Reduced dwell time (reduces time the train sits at station) – double track is eliminated by new track. – walk the whole length for inbound 800
2. side platforms – underpass..go down under and up. Works best if track is elevated. High water table and rock not conducive to underground building
3. independent structural crossing – center island platform – don't have to worry about in or outbound platforms. Security aspects – everyone together. Use more of the right away, need ramp to get up and over pedestrian bridge. Works well as a parking deck. Moved platform away from residential and moved it east. Less impact on adjacent abutments. Negative – concentrating everyone in one space, realignment

Mike Baskin – architects. – alternative in development. – 800 foot platform, emergency egress stairs, - ramp or stairs – wait under canopy. Lighting, trash

receptacles. Designed with safety and security. Protect people from the elements. Mr. Z – design heights for station. Comparable to Woburn – height is about 30 to 34' from platform to top of structure. Design of steel structure. Design for platform canopy.

Committee was put together to get information to present to the BOS.

Mr. Z. – lack of information. Ask mbta to put entire project on the web. To better help the residents understand this. Exempt from federal review. MEPA review is required. State review needed? No. ENF filing with the NEPA process. Have talked to the town...there is some scope of work on the web – but will be updated. In touch with town, need to get further in the design before public meeting can take place. Suggested that the town notify people. Town or the proponent not notifying the abutters. Someone has to do the right thing and notify the abutters.

Following minutes taken by Committee Member David Martin:

Notes from SAPDAC Meeting with the MBTA - DDM 26 March 2009

Joseph Cosgrove

- 1000 SPACES BY 2011 commitment from lawsuit judgement
- at 85% parking capacity in system
- planning for 15, 30%, 60%, 90% final design
- final decision by fall
- line improvements 50% federal / 50% state 150M; + stimulus
- deck is a separate project 125K for 30% design, grant from EOT
- no spaces constructed yet
- commitment from Beverly
- others are West Natick, Rockport, Salem, South Action, Franklin Forge Park
- new spaces could not be restricted in use
- would have to be managed as a single facility

Paul Hadley

- Town must be an advocate for deck
- HNTB is responsible for the design of the deck & tracking
- line improvement goals are to decrease time and increase reliability
- The 30% design will take about 6 months.

Philip Brigg HNTB

- Line construction begins Spring 2009 thru 2012
- Acton construction will take about 2 years, probably starting with bridge work next year.
- No new trains at this time.

John Mahoney C.E.

- Single island is more efficient when trains turn around
- Single island is safer, because people are together

Note: A CD of this meeting is attached to these minutes for reference.