

Neponset Valley Regional Coordinating Council Meeting Notes from October 21, 2015

Attendees

Anne-Marie Gagnon, HESSCO
Karen Dumaine, Neponset Valley TMA
Richard McCarthy, Town of Dedham
John Sisson, Economic Developer, Town of Dedham
Linda Lally, MBTA
Laura Leventhal, Dedham COA
Joanne LaFerrara, GATRA
Sharna Small-Borsellino, EOHHS Human Service Transportation Office
Robert Pierson, Norfolk County RSVP Rides for Veterans
Alicia Wilson, Boston Region MPO/CTPS
Sean Pfalzer, Boston Region MPO/CTPS
Lina Arena-DeRosa, Westwood COA
Jana Katz, Senator Timilty's Office
William Clark, Town of Milton
Tom O'Rourke, Chamber of Commerce
Vi Ho, The Kraft Group
Michele Brooks, TransAction Associates
Cindy Frené, TransAction Associates
Scott Zadakis, CrossTown Connect/TransAction Associates
Adam Blye, MassDOT
Rachel Fichtenbaum, MassMobility
Aniko Laszlo, MassDOT

Community Transportation Services

Town of Dedham – Rich McCarthy

Dedham previously had a local transit service that was subsidized by the MBTA, but service was poor. In 2013, the Town Manager tried to eliminate the service and enhance senior service instead, but the town wanted to keep but improve the local service. Dedham decided to fund the service themselves so they wouldn't have to follow the MBTA's guidelines. They contracted with TransAction Associates starting January 2015. They recently rerouted the service, and the [new route](#) started in August. They are piloting this route for 6 months while collecting data and then will revise it if appropriate. Eventually they would like to expand service and offer multiple routes. The current service costs the town \$117,000 annually. They see this service as open to all ages, not just for seniors.

- Challenges – property owners who didn't want bus stops near them, seniors who have a longer ride from the COA to downtown
- Advantages – service is much improved, with a newer vehicle & great customer service from the drivers

CrossTown Connect – Scott Zadakis

[CrossTown Connect](#) is a municipally-led Transportation Management Association running a rail shuttle, a general public dial-a-ride, a Regional Transit Authority service for seniors and people with disabilities, and joint dispatch services for member COAs. Acton is currently in the process of adding a fixed route

shuttle to this list, inspired by the [Westborough Shuttle](#). Acton raised town funds by voting to implement the local option meals tax and then dedicated other town funds toward a fixed route transit. In addition, the Lowell Regional Transit Authority is providing the town with some of its assessment funds. They are currently finalizing the route for the new service, to be called the Cross Acton Transit (CAT), and foresee a grand opening sometime in November. Data from the other services that CrossTown Connect manages has helped inform the route planning.

Note: for towns that are members of [GATRA](#) or another Regional Transit Authority, your RTA can also be a partner in starting new transit services.

Suburban Mobility Funding – Linda Lally

Some private operators run T routes, and the MBTA funds this through the Suburban Mobility Program. Funding will be opening up at the end of next year (late 2016). Towns can apply for a subsidy to offer service beyond what the MBTA offers. Towns that currently use this funding include Lexington, Bedford, Burlington, and Beverly. Towns can choose their own operators and monitor the service, but they do have to meet some federal requirements, including meeting ADA regulations. Any city or town in the MBTA area is eligible to apply. Linda will let us know when the RFP comes out.

Boston MPO – Sean Pfalzer

The Boston MPO is currently planning how to structure funds that will become available in 2021 to support community shuttles. Sean will keep in touch as plans develop.

Medical Forum

The RCC is going to plan a forum on medical transportation. We will aim for January 2016. MAPC has offered to help by creating maps of the resources and gaps.

If you would like to get involved in planning this forum, please contact Anne-Marie Gagnon at agagnon@hessco.org.

Other Discussion

- RSVP Rides for Veterans has 40 volunteer drivers. Dispatch is very time-intensive, so they have reached out to GATRA and local FISH programs. Long-distance trips to the VA are also difficult, and it's hard to coordinate with the DAV.
- We could have a future meeting focusing on dispatch strategies and joint dispatch.

Next Steps

- Contact Karen Dumaine for more information on starting a community shuttle in your town: kdumaine@transactionassoc.com
- Contact Anne-Marie Gagnon to help with the medical forum: agagnon@hessco.org