

**Town of Needham
Mobility Planning & Coordination Committee
Minutes for Wednesday, May 22, 2024**

HYBRID

Charles River Room, Public Services Administration Building
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or

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ADOPTED JUNE 10, 2024

7:03 p.m. Call to Order:
A meeting of the Mobility Planning & Coordination Committee was convened by Justin McCullen, Chair. Those present in-person were Duncan Allen, Tim Bulger, Alex Clee, Tyler Gabrielski, James Goldstein, Moe Handel, and Shane Mark. Paul Molta joined via Zoom.

7:04 p.m. Approve Minutes from April 8, 2024:

Mr. Goldstein commented that he would like to provide some additional context related to the Community Way as referenced in the minutes.

**Motion by Mr. Handel to approve the meeting minutes from April 8, 2024 with corrections made by Mr. Gabrielski based on Mr. Goldstein's comment.
Second: Mr. Bulger. Unanimously approved 6-0.**

7:05 p.m. Update on Transportation Master Plan Scoping Assistance (Call with Travis Pollack, Sr. Transportation Planner, MAPC):

Travis Pollack, Senior Transportation Planner with the MAPC, provided context for scoping the upcoming transportation guide. The project purpose is to provide technical assistance to develop a Scope of Work to select a vendor who will assist the Town in creating and adopting Street Design and Policy Guide. Mr. Pollack noted that there are currently 140 miles of streets in Needham and 109 miles of sidewalk (on at least one side). There are four Commuter Rail Stops and twenty-four MBTA bus stops. He also presented several maps showing the various zone-use types and top crash areas. Discussion ensued regarding how crash trends compare to statewide trends and where bicycle accidents are concentrated.

Mr. Pollack also presented additional data about where people who live in Needham work, including Back Bay, Longwood, Downtown Boston, Waltham, and Framingham. People who come to work in Needham also live in various parts of Greater Boston. Other interest data include:

- 13,400 people leave Needham every day to go to work.
- 20,000 people come into Needham every day to work.

Mr. Pollack utilized policy and design guides from Newton, MA, Minneapolis, MN, and Charlotte, NC to illustrate some of the functional classifications and safety goals of comparable communities, specifically the purpose of these other guides and how it may inform the work of Needham's transportation plan. The purpose of these guides included:

- Make streets work better for everyone by attracting more people to other modes by making walking, biking, and getting to mass transit safe, comfortable and convenient (Newton)
- Advances adopted City policy and supports the goals of the Transportation Action Plan. This guide is a key step to make walking, bicycling, and transit real options for people of all background and in all neighborhoods of Minneapolis, eliminating all traffic deaths and severe injuries, and addressing the effects and lessening the causes of climate change (Minneapolis)
- Implementing key aspects of the Transportation Action Plan – increasing the quantity and quality of streets, enhancing the integration of land use and transportation decisions, and providing “complete” streets for residents, property owners, and all types of travelers (Charlotte)
- Set functional classification
 - o Arterial, collector, local, constrained – Newton
 - o Boulevard, bikeways, transit stops, roadways, intersections
 - o Main, avenues, boulevards, parkways, local (residential, commercial, industrial)
- Sidewalks, trails, transit, intersections also key design/policy areas

Discussion included how the transportation scoping document for Needham may differ from the examples presented and how the features of the scoping guide will form the next step of determining projects.

8:02 p.m. Update on Downtown Bottleneck Grant:

Mr. Gabrielski reported that he met with consultants earlier this month who sent over a memo that included results of their traffic study and suggestions for how to improve flow in this area. Mr. Gabrielski is ensuring updates of video detection systems at these signals. These signals are currently based on timing and do not utilize a dynamic setup is based on traffic. Mr. Gabrielski presented three alternatives that the consultants offered and the potential improvements that each alternative could result in. The consultants will now model a combination of alternatives 1 and 2 to maximize the efficiency of the northbound left turn at this intersection.

8:22 p.m. Update on Downtown Redesign Scoping and Proposed Schedule:

There have been two scoping meetings which have included discussions on timeline considerations, survey and study tasks, and who will comprise the working group that will be established over the course of the summer. Information gathering will

be followed by preliminary design work in the fall which will be the major opportunities for public feedback and outreach. Proposed piloting will begin in Spring 2025 and move to final design work in the summer which, once it has begun, will take two construction seasons. There are opportunities for grants which the Town is working on with consultant Environmental Partners.

8:27 p.m. Update on Dedham Ave and Webster Street Projects:

Regarding Dedham Avenue: This project report included updates on the ADA ramp compliance upgrades that began earlier in May. This included at the Webster Street intersection where there will be new pedestrian signals and granite and sidewalk along this corridor and the sidewalk extension.

Regarding Webster Street: Mr. Gabrielski provided an update to the revised design following the recent neighborhood meeting. Work will continue once the academic year ends. Topics discussed included the goal of making this area a safety zone and adjusting the speed limit. The travel lanes will also be reduced from 11 feet to 10.5 feet. Mr. Gabrielski emphasized that the traffic calming measures will be focused on the exact points where pedestrians will cross, most notably with raised table crossings. There will be another neighborhood meeting to provide an update to the plan based on the prior neighborhood meeting in an effort to facilitate buy-in from residents.

8:46 p.m. Appointment to Climate Action Committee (CAC):

Mr. Gabrielski reported that the MPCC was selected to have a representative on the Climate Action Committee. Paul Molta expressed interest in sitting on this Committee.

Motion by Mr. Bulger to nominate Paul Molta as a representative on the Climate Action Committee.

Second: Mr. Handel. Unanimously approved 6-0.

8:48 p.m. Committee Leadership Discussion:

Justin McCullen announced that this would be his last meeting as Chair but will remain as a member. Vice Chair Tim Bulger will become Chair. This leaves the Vice Chair position open for a future election.

8:50 p.m. Additional Item:

Duncan Allen presented on a transportation advocacy group that is currently forming in West Roxbury that may affect surrounding areas. The Committee discussed the MPCC's potential involvement with this effort and the appropriate response. Committee members agreed it is important to stay informed as to what

this new group is working on as their efforts evolve and that Mr. Gabrielski would inform the Town Manager of this new information.

9:06 p.m. Adjourn:

Motion by Mr. Handel that the Mobility Planning & Coordination Committee vote to adjourn the meeting of Monday, May 22, 2024.

Second: Mr. Allen. Unanimously approved 6-0.

The next Mobility Planning & Coordination Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, June 10, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.