

Town of Sharon



Transportation Advisory Board Meeting Minutes of 4/12/23

Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) Members

Linda Hager Co Chair	Terri Rawding
Neil Coplan	Sam Liao
David Fixler Co Chair	

Other Attendees

Kevin Davis, DPW Representative, Katherine Hughes, Linda and Jim McSherry

Administration

- The meeting of the Transportation Advisory Board was called to order at 7:00 PM via ZOOM.
- Future scheduled meeting(s): 5/3

Minutes

- Mr. Coplan moved to approve the minutes of 3/15/23 with minor modifications. Mr. Liao seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of approval of the minutes with modifications.

E-bike Pad

- Several residents of Pine Road and Chestnut Street wrote a letter concerning the E-bikes and pad being erected at the train station. This was brought to the attention of the Transportation Advisory Board by Ms. Rawding. The Town had received a grant for E-bikes and the train station was one location for the bikes. TAB had not been notified prior to this. The TAB feels that they should have more say regarding issues at the station.
- Ms. Hager said is there a layout? How will it affect circulation?
- Mr. Fixler asked Mr. Davis to provide a summary/background information.
- Mr. Davis said that the Town had applied for a grant for e-tourism as part of the Master Plan. The grant was for 20 E-bikes. They were to be located at the train station and Community Center. The specific area selected at the train station to put the pad down is 6 parking spaces in size. Dead

trees in the area were removed as per Kevin Weber. Grant monies paid for the bikes. Mr. Davis will get more specifics on the bikes.

- Jim McSherry of 61 Chestnut Street said he is concerned for safety of the residents and commuters who will have to access the bikes in a dangerous location off of Depot Street for pedestrians and motorists. Earmarked location has a steep decline. There is a blind spot when entering the depot. He said it's a dangerous place. Communication fell short. Residents were not communicated with. If you are exiting the large parking lot, you need to come around the blind spot. He said he appreciates being heard.
- Katherine Hughes of 18 Pine Road said she was at the station clearing garbage. She cares how the station looks. She wants a safe place for people to commute. No notice was provided to residents. Trees are sound barriers and visual barriers. She wants more info on the E-bikes. She is questioning who will use the bikes.
- Mr. Liao said he was not aware of the situation physically. He will go to the station to see for himself.
- Ms. McSherry offered suggestions for other locations within the station.
- Mr. Liao said he feels disconnected. He thinks this should have been within the TAB Charge. It is not good to have things driving at their own momentum. He said from a logistic standpoint you would not want bikes on the Boston bound side. Shouldn't it be on the Providence side? That's logical and would alleviate concerns. He suggested asking the DPW and Select Board to reconsider.
- Ms. Hager said why not consider locating the pad under the steps as there is already a concrete pad there.
- Mr. Davis said to clarify the other purpose of the bike pad is for people to park their bikes when going to the station not just e-bikes. On the Providence side one spot is wetlands. They didn't feel putting the pad in the middle of the parking lot was correct. Norwood street historically has accident issues. The area near the handicap area on Chestnut Street would require retaining walls which was not in the grant. The pad placement is a slow transition up Chestnut Street. It's not a state road. Another project on Main Street will connect the bikes to the station. Pad will be asphalt. 10 bikes will be at the train station and 10 at the Community Center. There are no other plans for construction, it's simply a pad. The existing bike racks needs to be moved as per the company that maintains the property.
- Ms. McSherry said Chestnut Street is a blind winding, residential road. Bikers are seasonal. Why take down trees for a three-month activity?
- Mr. McSherry said Depot and Chestnut are dangerous for bikers.
- Mr. Liao said he and Ms. Hager are design engineers. Can we put a hold on the project? He thinks it's the right thing to do until we figure this out.
- Ms. Hager said this is an issue with the Town Administrator. We are not getting information. We should be helping the Town plan.
- Mr. Fixler said there are questions with Sharon tourism. There is a myriad of issues with e-bikes.

- Mr. Davis said there is a charging station at the DPW. He does not have the authority to stop/start the project. Keolis has the ability as it is an MBTA lot. The Town was notified that the bike racks are under the MBTA authority and they said they need to be moved. Racks need to be moved somewhere else on the Boston side.
- Mr. Liao said the process is not how it should be. Racks are there for 20 years. Talk to the MBTA.
- Mr. Davis said advise Select Board on what they should do.
- Mr. Fixler said he doesn't understand the concept. Did anyone consider that the lithium batteries in the bikes have blown up in the past. He thinks the process did not happen in a transparent fashion. We can relay out thoughts to Mr. Turkington and the Select Board but we do not have all of the information. He said this is not how town government should work.
- Ms. Hager said she spoke with Ms. Switekowski and she said to bring this to Mr. Turkington and Mr. O'Cain.
- Mr. Davis said the origin is the Master plan. Biking and e-tourism was a facet of it.
- Ms. Hager stated shouldn't the location have been reviewed and approved?
- Mr. Davis said that the bikes have been moved to a storage facility at the DPW. They have a spot to charge the batteries. Batteries come with no cost. He will send more information on this pilot project length and conditions.
- Mr. Fixler said this should be the subject of a Select Board meeting.
- Mr. Coplan asked if the DPW posts when doing projects.
- Mr. Davis said waterlines no, roads yes, can't notify for all projects. Where is the line drawn?
- Mr. Liao motioned to notify the SB of our opinion. Put temporary halt to the project, get input, reconsider location and design and any issues. Ms. Rawding seconded the motion. The TAB voted 5-0-0 in favor.
- Mr. Fixler asked Mr. Liao to send an email to Fred Turkington and the Select Board regarding the TAB thoughts regarding this issue.
- Mr. McSherry asked what are the long term thoughts for this project. What will it look like when done? Is the town going to protect the bikes and are they exposed to the elements?

Survey and Parking Discussion

- The Board discussed minor alterations to the survey questions. Mr. Davis will post the survey tomorrow and will create blast emails. He will send both co-chairs the language to approve.

Train Station Stairs

- Mr. Davis said there is no update regarding the stair repair. They are getting quotes from various contractors. Need to decide if public procurement or regular threshold for 3 quotes. Once they ascertain price points will determine next steps.

Other Topics

Next agenda items to include, TAB charge, parking violation information, survey status.

Adjournment

Ms. Rawding moved to adjourn at 8:45 PM and Mr. Coplan seconded the motion. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of adjournment.

Submitted:

Rachelle Levitts

Transportation Advisory Board Administrative Assistant