

Meeting Summary:

Commuter Rail Communities Coalition Meeting

October 25, 2018

MetroWest Regional Transit Authority Community Room, Framingham, MA

Purpose of Event

The purpose of this event was to continue forming this new coalition of mayors and town managers/administrators of communities in the MBTA service area.

This event was sponsored by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the 495/MetroWest Partnership, with support from Transportation for Massachusetts, and hosted by the City of Framingham's Mayor Yvonne Spicer and the MetroWest Regional Transit Authority at their multi-modal operations center.

Purpose of the Commuter Rail Communities Coalition

The Commuter Rail Communities Coalition (CRCC) will help address near term-issues around budgets, service, and operations of commuter rail, and help cities and towns in our region address important long term planning and investment issues that will determine what kind of rail system we have with the MBTA.

Often, the users of the commuter rail system cannot speak "with one voice," because municipalities need to focus on their own individual lines or stations, all of which are scattered throughout a very large region. Our goal is to assist communities that depend on commuter rail services to develop a unified vision and voice, and to advocate together for more resources and improved operations.

Currently, MassDOT is undertaking a Rail Vision study to help shape the next commuter rail operating contract. This Coalition will be a conduit for providing input for that study in the near-term, as well as a means for continued coordinated advocacy for the rail system in the long-term.

Discussion Summary

Framingham Mayor Yvonne Spicer and MetroWest RTA Administrator Ed Carr gave opening remarks and welcomed the Coalition.

Organizing the Coalition

Marc Draisen, MAPC Executive Director, and Lizzi Weyant, MAPC Director of Government Affairs, led the discussion on the governance and structure of the Coalition, as well as the priorities of the Coalition. The draft Governance and Priority documents that were reviewed at this meeting can be found on the [CRCC webpage](#).

The Coalition by voice vote approved the draft Governance document, with the following recommended changes.

- Voting members must be city or town managers, administrators, or mayors, and Coalition members may assign representatives to participate and vote in their absence.

- Leadership should also include “line diversity”, i.e., co-chairs should not be from the same commuter rail corridor.
- Add a Coalition Mission Statement.
- Add a list of member communities, including municipalities with rail stations; membership may also be open to “abutter” and other communities that depend on rail service, and/or the entire MBTA service area within Massachusetts.

The Coalition by voice vote approved the draft Priorities, with the following recommended changes.

- Develop language for consideration on system resiliency and climate change, including exploring the potential of an electrified/non-diesel technology that reduces greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Coalition priorities should be impactful, and support a transformative change of the rail system, with innovative ideas to create a modern, world class transit system for the region;
- Where possible the priorities should consider changes that members can do outside the MBTA.

Other members noted that the priorities can be revised on an ongoing basis, depending on the needs of the Coalition.

MAPC, T4MA and the 495/MetroWest Partnership will revise the Governance and Priorities documents to reflect the revisions suggested by the members, and submit them to members for review before the next Coalition meeting.

Selection of Coalition Leadership

Members discussed the selection of co-chairs, but decided to delay nominations and selection of leadership of the Coalition since some potential candidates were not able to attend today’s meeting.

Coalition members who are interested being a co-chair, or who wish to nominate a member, were asked to contact Marc Draisen and/or Paul Matthews.

David Scorey, General Manager of Keolis

David Scorey gave a presentation on Keolis operations of the commuter rail system for the MBTA.

A copy of the presentation can be found on the CRCC webpage [here](#).

Next Steps/Next Meeting

- The next meeting will be in the early 2019.
- Future meeting items for discussion will include refining the governance structure, selecting leadership, and refining the priorities for the Coalition.

Attendees (based upon the sign-in sheets at the meeting):

Karen Adelman, MAPC
Town Administrator Charles Aspinwall, Canton
Town Administrator Keith Bergman, Littleton
Mayor Michael Cahill, Beverly
Marc Draisen, MAPC
Ethan Finian, TransitMatters
Town Manager Sean Fitzgerald, Swampscott

Paul Halkiotis, Norwood
Meaghen Hamill, Lynn
Town Manager Michael Herbert, Ashland
Town Manager William Keegan, Foxborough
Thatcher Kezer, Framingham
Joseph Laydon, Grafton
Peter Lowitt, Devens Enterprise Commission
Paul Matthews, 495/MetroWest Partnership
Town Administrator Jeff Nutting, Franklin
Josh Ostroff, T4MA
Travis Pollack, MAPC
Patrick Shield, Walpole
Daniel Racicot, Worcester
Susanne Rasmussen, Cambridge
Claire Reynolds, Southborough
MJ Selby, Acton
Mayor Yvonne Spicer, Framingham
Lucas Santos, staff for Rep. Seth Moulton
David Scorey, Keolis
Jessica Strunkin, 495/MetroWest Partnership
Justin Thompson, Keolis
Brad Washburn, Scituate
Lizzi Weyant, MAPC

Updated December 20, 2018

Please email Travis Pollack (tpollack@mapc.org) for changes or corrections to this document.