Fitchburg Line Working Group 4/23/2021

Present: Karen Dumaine (CrossTown Connect), Kevin Bowe, Melissa Fetterhoff, George Kahale, Bruno Fisher, David Martin, Franny Osman, Joyce Waldron, Jeremy Thompson, Richard Dean, Sam Squallia, Mayor Steve DiNatalie, David Dean, Susan Templeton, Sue Felshin, Senator John Cronin, Senator Jo Comerford, David House, Paula Walsh, Robert Huggan, Neil Angus, Torry Mazzola, Peter Lowitt and Makela Niles.

The group introduced themselves over zoom.

Ms. Niles joined the meeting and presented on the RFP for design services for the Norther Tier rail service along the rail (Fitchburg) line from North Station to North Adams.

Richard Dean and Tory Mazzola of Keolis discussed resumption of service along the Fitchburg line beginning May 3rd. Keolis presented their vision for transforming commuter rail service to a regional style of service with consistent bidirectional hourly service. This means trains will be leaving Boston and Mt Wachusetts stations at the same time every hour on the hour from 5:30 Am to 7 PM to provide a consistent level of service with customers knowing when trains will arrive at their stations on the hour.

There will be no express trains to begin with but they may be added on a demand basis. As customers are added and demand increases they will first add an additional car, then express service.

Weekend service will be provided every two hours. Keolis will announce when weekend service will resume.

MART announced that its ridership is at 65% of pre-pandemic numbers. MassDOT/FHA has a workforce grant which MART secured to coordinate with Ayer, Shirley and Devens around Council On Agings and using third party vendors (Uber, Lyft, taxis, etc) to move folks about. Devens is currently using the taxi model and MART hopes to revisit shuttle service soon. The Littleton-Westford Shuttle is also gearing back up CrossTownConnect and the location of an Amazon Warehouse near Littleton Station.

While the line has been closed they have been busy installing ATC on the Fitchburg Line.