

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF CONCORD  
CITIZENS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
Thursday July 19, 2012  
7:00 PM-9:30 PM  
Clock Tower Room  
Harvey Wheeler Community Center**

**Present:** Lisa Bergen, presiding  
Rick Anderson  
Louise Haldeman  
Kate Damon joined the meeting at 7:30

**Absent:** Ray Bruttomesso, Abraham Fisher, Mark Hanson

**Citizens Present:** William Plummer, Phil Benincasa

**1. Call to order:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by Chair, Lisa Bergen

**2. The minutes:**

The minutes of the July 9<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved

**3. Correspondence:** Ms Bergen reported that she had received two letters, one from Craig Logan expressing worries about the morale of the transportation staff in view of the uncertainty of their employment situation and one from Mark Hanson, who could not be present, with questions about the placement of the transportation facility and stating that not moving it would result in a savings of well over a million dollars.

**4. Chairs Report:** see below

**5. Citizens Comments:** Mr. Plummer presented maps of the proposed high school site showing that there would be sufficient distance between the current transportation building and the new high school to allow for a road and passage of fire equipment and suggested that a retaining wall to allow for differences in elevation would be far less expensive than moving the building or replacing it.

**6. Reports and Issues for Discussion:**

a. *Meeting and hearing schedule:* Ms. Bergen confirmed that she has cleared space at Harvey Wheeler and that the Committee would meet on the following dates, July 26, August 2, August 9 and August 30. It may be necessary to schedule additional meetings in September as well. The Committee will hold its first and preliminary hearing on August 16 and its final hearing on September 13. Originally it was expected that the committee would present its final report at the school committee meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup> but as that is the start of Yom Kippur, she will seek to reschedule the hearing.

b. *Approval of a notice for public hearings:* This will be taken up at the next meeting.

c. *Regional School Committee meeting of July 17.* Ms. Bergen reported on the July 17 Joint School Committee meeting and the TAC meeting which followed it. At the Joint SC meeting Superintendent Rigby reported that she and other school officials had met with the MSBA and the issues raised in the letter from the MSBA were clarified to the satisfaction of all parties. She also reported that enrollment is increasing rapidly.

Until construction actually gets underway, the school buses will remain on site. When it is necessary to move them they will be parceled out to various schools while a long term solution is sought. Mr. Flaherty gave a report on the efforts of the schools to address the maintenance and refueling problem for the buses. He said that refueling at the Town DPW facility would only be possible after 5PM which would affect the work schedule of the drivers and would also require an expensive refitting of the fuel lines on the buses. He is looking into the possibility of making an arrangement with some gas stations in the area which would be able to accommodate school buses. The leased transportation maintenance facility in Billerica could also be used for fueling as well as handle repairs etc.

d. *At the TAC meeting* the committee designated the sites which they would look at and also outlined their report, content to follow. It was noted that in contrast the CTC has first determined content and will structure the report accordingly. The TAC will not look a high school land but is aware that the CTC will do so.

There was also discussion of the letter sent to the Selectmen by the School Committee explaining why they did not wish to use the high school land because of, among other things, water conservancy. In response to this it was pointed out by various CTC committee members that since the current transportation building was “grandfathered” under water conservancy points, that it could be a reason for retaining it.

*e. Committee member updates on assigned area of research:*

*Safety:* Mr. Anderson reported he had spoken with the Fire Chief concerning emergency response plans and since the plan has not been updated or some time, this may present a good opportunity for doing so. It has always been assumed that in the case of a need to evacuate a building or neighborhood that the buses would be available. If the buses were not nearby what would happen? He also noted that Mr. Bruttomesso is following up on this issue in more detail.

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Hanson will continue to work on clarifying safety statistics and Mr. Hanson on gathering data from other school systems.

Ms. Bergen reported on her meeting with the transportation staff. As already noted the staff placed safety as is highest priority but also emphasizes service, punctuality etc., The current set up of the transportation department guarantees that a “spare” driver is almost always available without need for overtime pay. As has been previously noted the transportation manager and mechanics are all licensed bus drivers however if they are no longer on site, it would be difficult for them to fill in as quickly.

*Measuring the social factors:* Ms. Haldeman reported that while many of these factors are “intangible” they do rest upon a well organized bus system which has a design of work that allows for flexibility for the drivers, and bus routes can be designed to meet road conditions etc. She asked what the costs would be of replicating our system elsewhere. It is one thing to put up with temporary disruptions during construction but the public has come to rely on a very well run system. It was noted that in his research with other towns, Mr. Hanson has learned that the Concord system is considered outstanding.

*Cost analysis of the options:* Ms Damon is continuing to research the costs of rebuilding a transportation facility elsewhere. Firms which work on public project are often reluctant to commit to figures but she will also consult some architects.

*Possible sites:* Although the TAC has selected various parcels of town and school land to consider there are some other parcels which were mentioned in the Solar Siting Committee Report that we should also look at. Ms. Haldeman said that she would undertake this but didn’t promise a full report by the next meeting It was noted that both committee need to look at the pros and cons of a given site and that the public should not make assumptions.

7. **Action Items:** In view of the continuing concerns that the School Committee may have not fully considered the possibility of retaining the bus maintenance facility at the high school and given considerable costs of either moving or replacing it, several CTC members expressed interest in visiting the site to determine if there would be space to allow for the retention of the building. Ms. Bergen, Ms. Damon, and Ms. Haldeman will arrange to meeting with Mr. Plummer, who has done a great deal of site evaluation, next week to further explore his ideas and to get a better feel for the site. They will report at the next meeting.
8. **Citizens’ Comments:** Mr. Plummer questioned why the Turner construction company and the architects of the building had not been asked to find ways to retain the maintenance building.
9. **The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM**

Respectfully submitted,

Louise S. Haldeman, clerk