



September 5th, 2017

President Russ Sanford
Members of the Winthrop Town Council
CC: Chief Delahanty, Joseph Dolemenowitz

Re: Transportation Advisory Committee Update

Dear President Sanford, Chief/Town Manager Terrance Delehanty, and Members of the Winthrop Town Council,

These are exciting times to be involved in transportation and urban planning here in Winthrop. On behalf of the Winthrop Transportation Advisory Committee, I want to commend you all for your commitment to exploring new ideas and supporting innovative actions to increase access and mobility and economic activity in our town by way of improvements to our transportation infrastructure. Here are a few key initiatives we have been working on this summer:

1. **MBTA Bus Service & Charlie Card Issue:** As you know, the new busses serving Winthrop are not equipped with Charlie Card readers, making it impossible for people to board a bus to or from Winthrop using the same card they use to ride the trains and busses everywhere else in the region. Not only is this inconvenient, it is unfair, as Winthrop residents are forced to literally pay twice to access the transit system that many of them rely on to get to work, school, medical appointments etc. It is also a barrier to tourism and attracting new residents, visitors and businesses to our town.

Our efforts to push the T towards a solution have come up mostly empty, and it is clear that we need to take our voices to another level. Councilor Christopher and I have both been in touch with Senator Boncore and Speaker DeLeo to inform them of this issue, and they have both expressed support for our Town submitting a letter to the MBTA General Manager and Secretary Pollack to demand a solution to this problem in the service to our town. We have drafted that letter and hope that the Town will submit in the coming weeks.

We have also obtained a list of existing bus stops throughout town that are used but not currently marked and will be working with the T to obtain signs so that every stop is visibly marked.

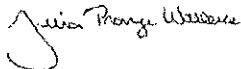
2. **Complete Streets Prioritization Plan:** Together with the Complete Streets working group, we worked with the consultants at Green International to submit our Tier 2 application for funding to implement improvements through the state Complete Streets program. In this round of funding, we have requested the maximum of \$400,000 to implement key improvements in both high demand/high cost areas like French Square and high visibility/low costs projects like buffered bike lanes and pedestrian crossing safety improvements near our schools. I encourage you all to read through the complete Prioritization Plan as it contains a thorough and robust "laundry list" of projects to undertake over time that will make Winthrop's streets and intersections fully "complete". We look forward to continuing to work with the Town and DPW on implementing additional complete streets improvements over time.
3. **Middle School Re-Zoning Recommendation:** We would like to echo the Economic Development Citizens Advisory Committee in advocating for a re-zoning of the Middle School and ice rink

properties under MA Chapter 40R in order to both stimulate the high density, mixed-use and mixed-income residential housing that we need to support successful redevelopment of our Center while also preserving affordability for Winthrop families and individuals and ensuring that our schools are equipped to absorb the cost of accommodating more students.

4. **CBD Traffic Pilot Study:** Again, we commend you all for taking bold and strategic actions to experiment with new traffic patterns that favor safety and accessibility and change the way that public space is accessed and used in our Center. We recognize that this is a highly contentious public issue and urge you to continue to uphold the changes throughout the duration of the pilot. Changes to urban space often feel more dramatic than they are, and given a period of adjustment during which we introduce new and exciting ways to engage with the space (instead of just parking a car or driving through, try enjoying an outdoor meal, playing games, meeting with friends, hosting street fairs, etc), we will be able to effectively assess what elements of the pilot are working and which ones need to be revised or scrapped all together. There is no way to know what is possible in our Center unless we give new ideas a try. Certainly, a number of other land uses in the Center will have to be addressed in order for this pilot, or any positive redevelopment to be successful, namely our parking management, which is currently mostly obsolete and inactive. It's time to change that.

5. **Downtown Parking Workshop 9/14:** Please attend this exciting informational workshop the we have worked hard to bring to Winthrop, featuring an international expert on parking and traffic management. This is a tremendous opportunity to gain new insights and learn best practices for managing our downtown parking effectively so that we are able to pursue new development as recommended by the Master Plan without compromising our historic character or creating a barrier to access. This is a rescheduled date from its original 7/6, but the timing couldn't be more perfect now that we are in the midst of this traffic pilot, and the issue has never been more relevant for Winthrop. I hope you can join us.

Sincerely,



Julia Prange Wallerice, Chair

Winthrop Transportation Committee

Members: Stephen Hines, Christopher Aiello, Jerome Falbo, Charles Southworth