

NOTES FROM STEP MEETING 29 January 2007

January 29, 2007, 7-9 PM

SCAT, Union Square, Somerville

Present: Ellin Reisner, Wig Zamore, Andrea Yakovakis, Karen Molloy, Steve Mulder, Jen Lawrence, Bob Nesson, Ken Krause, Avi Green

Notes written by Karen Molloy

1. Report on Somerville Bus Survey presentation at T Rider Oversight Committee Meeting today

Steve gave a fine presentation of the results and analyses of the STEP bus survey and it was well received by the TROC committee. East Somerville stood out as having the worst service according to the survey. Some were interested in knowing more level of details, portions of a route that were most problematic. Others were interested in the interface between bus and subway (such as Assembly Sq. and Sullivan Sq.). Others asked whether would there be a follow-on survey in a year or two. STEP was encouraged to take the survey results to the MBTA Board in a form of a quick focus and recommendations.

2. Upcoming Green Line Exhibits

Karen reported that the Brickbottom and Nave Galleries will both hold Green Line-themed exhibits this spring. Brickbottom's exhibit will be in April, the Nave's in May; both shows overlap during Somerville Open Studios weekend. Karen proposed STEP exhibit an informational display about Green Line project at SCAT concurrent with these exhibits. She'll contact Wendy at SCAT and see what dates are available at SCAT. She'll also coordinate material (map, Timeline, brochures, air quality handouts, etc.). She'll contact Mark Ostrander and see if he can update the STEP map of proposed stations. Steve recently updated the timeline, which is 8 feet long. We'd need to figure out a way to display at our materials at SCAT without putting holes in the walls. It was suggested we might put a green line of peel-off tape on the walls of our display materials.

3. Status of Green Line Project, and discussion of future collaboration with other organizations

On 8 Feb Boston MPO meeting the Regional Transportation Plan will be released for public comments.

A comment period is in progress to DEP and EOT regarding environmental analysis of transit projects. David Muller sent

comments on the SIP substitutions to the EPA. Discussion ensued regarding how MPOs conduct analyses of EJ issues including the averaging of health impacts. The results are imprecise, which in turn leads to no definitive results that could really drive policy. Take for example, Sullivan Sq and North Station, which are high-risk areas from vehicle emissions; they are also areas targeted for new affordable housing projects. It's too bad that, for whatever reason, MPOs use different models, have widely disparate results, and in general use inaccurate methods. If one MPO used a methodology that worked, all MPOs could use it and reveal a clear picture of EJ environmental impacts.

At the TROC meeting today David Mullen said the Green Line Extensions would be totally funded by the State, not by Federal funds.

4. **Report on Presentation at TRB poster session on Public Involvement and on STEP materials on health effects related to near roadway air pollution, possible collaborations**

Ellin reported that the STEP poster session at the annual TRB conference in Washington DC was well-attended. The STEP timeline was a big hit, as was the handout on Mobile Pollution. (She gave away 35 copies and will follow-up with others who wanted more info.) People were blown away by this report on the health issues; they are used to getting vague MPO analyses. She met some folks who have a grant to do some EJ transportation-related work. Many people are interested in the EJ health issues. Generally pollution papers at the TRB conferences are about toxic waste, power plants, asthma, and so on, but not about mobile sources, small point sources. European and UK researchers were there talking about EJ issues; they had stats on the relationships between economics and health. It would be great if next year STEP could present a paper on air quality issues and analyses from mobile sources. Ellin will disseminate some papers from the TRB conference. A presenter from Philadelphia was using GIS to look at projects and the effects of where improvements have the greatest impacts, Ellin pointed out that such a technique could also show zones of impact for air quality from vehicle emissions.

5. **Update and dissemination of Wig's annotated bibliography on the health effects of near-roadway air pollution**

Ellin will follow up with many from the TRB conference who were very interested in obtaining Wig's annotated bibliography of mobile pollution studies here in the US and in Europe. From 9,000 papers at

the National Library of Medicine, Wig culled about 30 with their abstracts.

6. **Filing for 501c3 and 501c4**

Andrea is working on rewriting the bylaws and articles of incorporation so that we will have 2 organizations: the 501c4 is basically what we are mostly now, an advocacy group that is not tax-exempt. The 501c3 will be a new organization for research& investigation, educating the public on issues related to transportation (and related quality of urban life), grantwriting, fundraising, which will not partake in direct lobbying.