

Princeton

400 Witherspoon Street □ 1 Monument Drive
Princeton, NJ 08540

Public Transit Advisory Committee

MINUTES –November 20, 2014

The Public Transit Advisory Committee met in the Main Conference Room of the Monument Municipal Building of Princeton, NJ at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, November 20, 2014.

Attendance

Present were: Marvin Reed, chair; Fay Reiter, director of social services, Princeton Community Housing; Councilwoman Jenny Crumiller; Joan Lockwood-Reck of the Greater Mercer Transportation Management Association; and Don Mayer-Brown of the Engineering staff.

Ridership

Joan reported on October “FreeB” ridership and on-time service:

- -- Ridership on the Commuter Route in October jumped to 1,232 passengers, an average of 53.6 riders per day, compared to 1,176 the previous month, a daily average of 56.0. The 2013 September average was 37.0 riders.
- -- Princeton Station remains the main destination for morning commuters, but Princeton Shopping Center is becoming a popular morning destination. There were 163 passengers boarding the ” FreeB” at the Station, indicating usage by morning ‘reverse commuters’ coming into Princeton from out-of-town.
- -- In the afternoon, Witherspoon and Wiggins is the most popular afternoon, followed by the Harrison St. Shopping Center.
- -- Ridership for the Mid-Day Neighborhood Route climbed back, carrying 2,180 passengers in October, an average of 80.7 daily riders. That’s 510 additional passenger trips more than October 2013.
- -- On-time service (97%) was slightly below the previous month.
- -- Highest day of the month was Thursday, October 30 – a total of 112 passenger trips.
- -- Lowest day of the month was Saturday, October 4 -- a total of 42 passenger trips.
- -- Busiest stops were Redding Circle (with 393 passenger trips) and Elm Court (with 289 passenger trips) for September.

Up-Grading the System

Don indicated that he has not heard a date for delivery from the County of a used jitney vehicle that had been part of the County T.R.A.D.E. senior transportation program. He will check on when to expect for \$1 to transfer to title to the municipality.

Don Mayer-Brown reported that he expects by the next meeting to complete drafting bid specifications for purchase of a new jitney vehicle for the FreeB service. The municipality will be asked to solicit alternatives for municipal purchase as well as vehicle-included operations.

Opening of New “Dinky” Station

It was noted that the relocated, new “Dinky” Station had been opened by the University on November 17.

Special commendations were made about the attractiveness and comfort of the heated passenger waiting area.

Marvin showed a sample schedule showing stops at the new Station combining the FreeB, Tiger Transit University buses, as well as the “606” and “655” NJ Transit buses. He was asked to complete full “AM” and “PM” schedules and explore mounting them as enlarged posters at the new Station.

Joan indicated that new Northeast Corridor train schedules do not change any of the connections to the “FreeB.”

Sunday Holiday Service

The committee discussed whether to recommend provision of special Sunday Shopping Service for the “FreeB.” It was agreed that under the current six-days-a-week schedule there should be adequate opportunities to access Downtown or the Harrison Street Shopping Center during the month of December.

Other Requests for Service

Marvin reported on correspondence with the 101 Mentors group, which has been assisting Princeton HS graduates enroll at Mercer County Community College. The group indicated that transportation has been settled for all but two current students. The committee agreed that it would, therefore, not be economically feasible to seek any additional transit from the “FreeB” system. The mentors expressed appreciation for the committee’s counseling and assistance.

Don reported on a request for “FreeB” assistance in transporting students between the High School and the JW Middle School as part of an after-school swimming program known as the USA Club Team. The request was not capable of being fulfilled within the “FreeB” afternoon schedule.

Copperwood Access

Joan relayed a request received at her office from the property manager of the new Cooperwood senior apartments on Bunn Drive, inquiring whether the “FreeB” might come up its drive for drop-off and pick-up at the front door. Tenants also have access by way of a paved path across the pipeline right-of-way to the NJ Transit bus shelter on Bunn Drive.

The committee questioned whether driveway access would add an inordinate amount of time to the “FreeB” schedule. The question is being pursued.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled for Thursday, December 18, 2014 at 9:30 am at the Monument Municipal Building.