



**Hingham
Climate Action
Planning Committee**

DATE: February 16, 2023
PLACE: Remote by Zoom
MEMBERS PRESENT: Brad Moyer (Chair), Henry (Bob) Hidell, Tom Morahan, Elliott Place, Kathy Reardon, Maria Zade, Gary Tondorf-Dick

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nancy Wiley, and Alyson Anderson, Carlos DaSilva, Beth Porter

GUESTS: Mike Stanley, TransitX, Steve Plusch TransitX, PDP TransitX, David Brooks TransitX, Jerome Washington TransitX, E. Jason Stone, Jessica Epstein, Paul Sprecher, Zephorene Helmreich (302 Linden Pond), Tanya Bodell (Energyzt), Brianna Bennett (HMLP), Brenda Black

ATTACHMENTS: 2023.1.11 CAPC Minutes
www.transitx.com/video; [TransitX Podway for Hingham, MA.pdf](#); Proposed Ban on Hingham Sales of Single-use Plastic Water Bottles under one Gallon-
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1fQuaLuN5LfbnwQkN1afd9LSucFLWr_WQ/edit?usp=drivesdk&oid=112268859156167572911&rtpof=true&sd=true

MINUTES: Elliott Place

The Chair, Brad Moyer, called the duly noticed meeting to order at 7:35 PM, and presented the Virtual Open Meeting Protocol and Procedures as outlined in the Governor's Chapter 20 Pandemic Directive of 2021.

1. Presentation on podway solar transit option for Hingham and the South Shore-
www.transitx.com/video (emailed previously to CAPC). **Mike Stanley** presenting proposal and power point presentation ([TransitX Podway for Hingham, MA.pdf](#) attached), 'from multiple-car congested mess to privately funded personal modal transportation'; they've tested these in various locations... **Mike** showed animations of the variety of different pods on rails, how it might look in Hingham. Then **Mike** opened up to questions. TransitX also has created a feasibility study (in above pdf). **Brad Moyer** asked about estimated reduction of traffic in Hingham's situation, especially since significant traffic from surrounding towns passes through Hingham. **Mike** answered that reduction would be significant; when a town is an early adopter others would quickly follow. **Kathy Reardon** asked how this might apply to Hingham with its road system. **Mike** said better than bike paths and present traffic. **Bob Hidell** asked whether the system illustrated from Morgantown, PA was elevated? **Mike** said 'Yes' it's an elevated rail system. **Gary Tondorf-Dick** had a couple of questions about the suspended infrastructure, whether it would be over the road or on the side of the road. **Mike** showed an example where

the rail is behind a parking lot and emphasized its unobtrusiveness. **Gary** asked about fares and other logistics. **Mike** said the fares would vary with volume of use- similar level to MBTA. **Brad** asked about who would own it? **Mike** answered that TransitX would be the primary owner and responsible; they would be contracted by municipality. Ownership would change over time. Trial period of a couple of years whereby TransitX solely owns it. **Bob** asked about licensing. **Mike**: FTA and other Federal and State governmental groups. **Bob**: Insurance?; **Mike**: Fully insured by TransitX and there's a feasibility study for liability **Mike**: most of it would be over public right of way land with a few exceptions. **Brad**; Where are pods parked when not in use? **Mike**: There would be established parking areas, especially during lowered usage times. **Bob**: How's the system of rails organized- must be computerized? **Mike**: In general we're looking at a one-way system. Also, there would be a network of junctions, etc. **Brad**: severe weather? **Mike**: If the roadways are not working then the pods won't either. **Brad**: Does financing depend on tax breaks? **Mike**: No, we're not depending on it. **Brad**: It looks expensive (overall \$242 million) for Hingham **Mike**: Cheaper than roads or MBTA. They plan to pay Hingham ~\$13 million a year. ~\$2.5 million permitting fees, based on an estimated line-item fees. **Brianna**: electricity fees, solar, batteries? **Mike**: Distributed Renewable Energy Generation and Storage at intermittent locations along rails (solar-based installation over rails, etc.). **Tom Morahan**: Can't see how this would work within the town's system. **Mike**: First we want to see if the town wants to go for it; then we'd work out the logistics. **Bob**: Wind? **Mike**: We have some mini windmills. **Gary**: How would this work in, for example a historic residential area like Main St., Rte. 228. **Mike**: about the same impact as an electric bike. **Gary**: How does it work with combined traffic and these ~20 ft elevated structure and pods? **Mike**: way less noise and pollution than car traffic. **Brad**: Are there opportunities for underground structure? **Mike**: I'm sure there are possibilities. **Bob**: This is a great concept and we must consider the competing technological solutions that reach carbon-net zero as efficiently as possible. **Brad**: Any more questions?

CAPC went on to discuss this concept: **Elliott Place** suggested this has been discussed for 2-3 years on a regional basis, but it's not ready. **Brad** asked whether in an ideal world on a sunny day, everything working, do we like the concept. **Bob**: Too many unanswered questions and logistics that could go wrong. Great idea, though! **Gary**: It doesn't make any sense. It's not practical. It's a great engineering concept. **Maria Zade**: How would they build this (embodied carbon footprint?) and the payback period in terms of carbon emissions. How practical would it be for families with equipment, etc. Hingham should start with a short test rail, connecting two key locations. The cost, \$242 million, looks exorbitant. What if it had to be taken down?

Brad: All the costs need to be examined, including if we had to take it down. There are always complications to be considered. **Maria**: With all the possible things that could go wrong what do we do when the town is not responsible, because it's privately owned. **Zephorene Helmreich**, Linden Ponds' Guest: What would the real impact be on our landscape and how would it work during inclement weather? We wouldn't know 'till an actual plan was laid out. Aesthetics count. Need to see a real drawing. How many trees would have to be cut down? How would the Historic Commission respond? **Brad**: Need to field trip/ road trip this to see details. **Bob**: Not going to happen. We can think about it, but we can't realistically assess this. **Gary**: We could do a much smaller test pilot with other electric vehicles to test demand, to try a smaller version. **David Brooks**, TransitX: Yes you can wait and see; take your time to examine this. Hopefully, you will see this as the most energy efficient land-use for transportation...CAPC needs to say we've vetted it and its worth presenting it to the town. TransitX is shovel ready. Everything's insured. Ultimately, to reduce carbon is the most important thing. This system reduces carbon. Thank you all for listening. This is definitely a disruptive product for changing the world for the better. **Maria**: What would be the next step? **Brad**: CAPC endorses it for TransitX to present to the town. **Bob**: This is going to take a lot of consideration. **Brianna**: I think they'd be looking for permission to build on the public rights of way. **Brad**: Ownership issues would require town meeting. **Gary**: we'd need a huge feasibility study and testing. **Paul**

Sprecher, 302 Linden Ponds Road: Impact would be monumental. Show me where it's working, first. There's a lot of 'Going to' by TransitX No Vote of Endorsement was taken.

2. Discussion and vote on single-use plastic bottle bylaw. Hingham Selectboard heard **Maria Zade**, Chairperson of Cleaner Greener Hingham presented the two warrant articles related to this, 2023.2.14, and voted favorable action for both: 1) Proposed Bylaw to Ban the Sale of Single-use Plastic Water Bottles Under One Gallon in Hingham 2) Proposed Bylaw to Ban the Procurement or Sale of Single-use Plastic Water Bottles Under One Gallon by Hingham Municipality. **Brianna**: Will there be help for organizations to adapt and change their watering systems. **Maria**; many organizations are ready to help. **Brad**: Do you have the by-law to share? **Maria** put it up (attached). **Elliott** motioned and **Maria** seconded. 4 in favor and 3 against or abstained. **CAPC** voted to endorse both proposed bylaws.
3. Update on warrant article submission with the Select Board- **Brad Moyer** will likely go before Selectboard on Feb. 21 or another day next week.
4. Discuss timeline and approach for reviewing the draft Climate Action Plan summarized version (approved by CAPC) with various Town constituencies and moving to final approval. Scheduling presentation with groups: **Brad** will present to the Energy Action Committee, School Committee and Selectboard. (**Maria**: School Committee should happen earlier than later.) **Brad**: Previous target deadline is March 31 to finalize, fully vetted, approved and welcomed CAP. More important is for that process to complete than meet March 31 deadline. **Gary**: Planning Board, **Bob**: Conservation Commission, **Elliott**: HNZ, **Brianna and Tom**: HMLP, **Ginny** (with help from CAPC): DPW. We are simply presenting what we've come up with and agreed on (the full text is available on the town website). If there is/are objections are they correctable? Asking for written input, feedback, and comments within two weeks. Each **CAPC** member to get back to **Brad** on the date and time when you will present to your outside group.
5. Review and approval of previous meeting minutes (2023.1.11) Minutes passed unanimously
6. Other business brought before the Committee: No on CAPC table at Ecofest, 2023.5.20. Join Hingham Net Zero or HMLP's table if you wish to participate.
7. Discussion of possible agenda items for the next meeting and scheduling of that meeting: Thursday, March 16, 7:00pm- Assess the status of our CAP Roadshow Review.
8. Adjourned at 10:00pm