

Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation

CARSHARING SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING NOTES

June 22, 2017

12:00 p.m.

Southwest Region Planning Commission
37 Ashuelot Street
Keene, NH 03431

Carsharing Subcommittee member present: Doug Barrett, *Cross-Spectrum Acoustics Inc.*

SWRPC Staff members present were Henry Underwood, *GIS Specialist/Planner* and Lisa Donnelly, *Intern*.

I. Welcome

Introductions were made.

II. Draft Carsharing Map

Lisa Donnelly shared three maps with the group. The first map depicted housing density in housing units per acre in Southwest NH and some adjacent communities in Vermont. The Brattleboro/Hinsdale, Bellows Falls/North Walpole, and Keene areas were among the areas with high housing density. Doug Barrett asked if the data includes multi-family housing units and/or housing units that are unoccupied. Lisa Donnelly responded that it does. The two additional maps depicted the City of Keene and Brattleboro/Hinsdale and Bellows Falls/North Walpole separately. Doug Barrett noticed that the areas of highest housing density outside of Keene's downtown area were similar to the "nodes" found in the City of Keene's Comprehensive Master Plan. Lisa Donnelly mentioned that dense mixed-use neighborhoods are beneficial locations to support carsharing because people can make walking and bicycling trips. Henry Underwood suggested that a map showing job density might provide additional insight.

III. Data Collection Update

Lisa Donnelly provided a chart describing three socio economic characteristics that improve the feasibility of successful carsharing programs. According to the research of Christine Celsor and Adam Millard-Ball in their report titled *Where Does Carsharing Work? Using GIS to Assess Market Potential*, neighborhoods with a higher percent of single family households, lower car ownership rates, and high percentages of walking commuters improve the feasibility of carsharing success. The same research observed two thresholds for each variable which indicated that carsharing in an area was a) stable, but not growing or b) likely to grow. According to the chart, no communities in Southwest NH met the second threshold, where carsharing would be likely to grow. However, a number of communities met the first threshold for one or all three of the variables analyzed. These areas included Harrisville, Jaffrey, Keene, Peterborough, Brattleboro, and Bellows Falls (based on % of single family households); Keene, Rindge, and Brattleboro (according to % of people who walk to work); and, Keene, Brattleboro, and Bellows Falls (according to the % of households with one or no vehicles). Henry Underwood suggested looking at 2006 – 2010 ACS data to see if the data is consistent with the 2015 ACS data that was used to create the charts. Lisa Donnelly

commented that these preliminary findings would be an important consideration for a carsharing service/operator creating a business plan.

Lisa Donnelly explained that she will be collecting and analyzing additional data, including information about parking in the City of Keene. She pointed out that the success of carsharing services is sometimes related to areas where there is high demand for parking. Doug Barrett observed that there was an important difference between daytime and overnight parking for carsharing programs. He said, for example that while someone is using a carsharing service, they may have to compete for parking at their destination(s) where parking is first come first served for everyone. On the other hand, returning a carsharing vehicle would be easier because the model typically includes a designated drop off space. Lisa Donnelly pointed out that locating pods where they are available for a variety of daytime and nighttime uses (e.g. grocery shopping or going out to dinner, respectively) is another important consideration for improving carsharing success.

IV. Carsharing Subcommittee Work Plan

a. Draft Community Survey

Lisa Donnelly provided copies of a draft carsharing survey and reminded the Subcommittee that its aim was to create one survey for the general public. Keene State College would later develop a survey for the college population. She commented that ZipCar had different policies related to their service areas depending on the user groups. She stated that the timing of the general survey would be during the summer of 2017, prior to the activities of the Keene State College Geography Department Seminar Project. Henry Underwood suggested a yes/no question at the beginning of the survey to find out the general level of understanding and awareness of survey respondents to carsharing. The question was proposed as: “Prior to participating in this survey, had you heard of carsharing?” He also suggested creating bullets for the content in the introductory paragraph.

Attendees discussed whether it would be important to conduct outreach prior to administering the survey. The consensus was that the survey itself provided a level of education and outreach. Additional outreach to Keene State College students could be done in the fall. Lisa Donnelly noted that carsharing was part of the Keene State College Office of Sustainability Action Plan.

Attendees discussed questions in the draft survey. Doug Barrett suggested adjusting the age groups, depending on the projected target member groups. Lisa Donnelly explained that ZipCar normally requires members to be age 21, but that campus programs allow drivers as young as 18 to join. Doug Barrett also mentioned that question three in particular would be sensitive to responses by students (who may be in a shared living arrangement or commuting from a household out of the area). Henry Underwood and Doug Barrett felt questions four and five were somewhat redundant and offered the revision: “Which of the following modes of transportation did you use in the last week?” as an alternative. Henry Underwood suggested removing “Train” from the list of choices. He also suggested removing the “Not Sure” choice from question six. Doug Barrett suggested question seven say “Saving on transportation costs” as opposed to “Members save on transportation costs.”

Attendees briefly discussed other questions to consider including demographic information, asking how far someone would walk or bike (in minutes) to use a carsharing service, and asking survey respondents for feedback on other types of needs/considerations that were important. The Subcommittee decided to ask about the need for car seats, whether it’s important that the service is pet-friendly, whether the program offers discounts at area businesses, free parking, E-Z Pass, and whether the vehicle type (i.e. truck, van, etc.) was important.

b. Outreach Activities

The Subcommittee determined that its short-term outreach goals would be to gauge people’s interest in carsharing and point to ways they could be involved in the future. Doug Barrett advocated for different levels of engagement. For example, many people might be willing to help share the MAST Subcommittee survey. Others may be interested to discuss more “in-depth” items such as: the ability to provide a reserved parking space, encouragement/promotion to employees, financial support, corporate membership, etc. A list of approximately forty organizations was reviewed. Attendees agreed it made sense to ask all members of the subcommittee to name organizations that they would be willing to contact.

VI. Next Meeting

Henry Underwood said that Mari Brunner would send out a poll to the Subcommittee to determine the next meeting date and time.

VII. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Henry Underwood
GIS Specialist/Planner