



Town of Arlington, MA. Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC).

Meeting Minutes.

Date: December 10, 2025 — 7:00 – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation.

Members Present: Melissa Laube, Ofer Mazor, Jane Morgan (SB), Scott Smith, James Stubbe (Chair), Laura Swan.

Members Absent: John Aslanian, Bill Copithorne (DPW), Corey Rateau (APD), and Shoji Takahashi.

Associate Members Present: Beth Benedikt, Kristina Osborn, Emily Prud'hommeaux, and Chris Tassone.

Associate Members Absent:

Members of Public in Attendance: Michael Kozuch.

1. Approval of Minutes from the last Meeting.

Minutes for the Meeting of October 8, 2025, were approved.

2. Correspondence Sent / Received from 10/4/25 – 11/7/25.

Memos received from the Select Board:

- East Arlington Safety Zone Approval.
- Arlington Center Safety Zone Approval.
- Irving St Safety Zone Approval.

Memos sent to Select Board for approval:

- Arlington Center Safety Zone.
- Irving St Safety Zone.

3. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

There were no public comments.

4. Town Issues / Activities (not already on the agenda) – DPCD / DPW / APD.

DPCD.

Work continues on the Broadway redesign and Mystic to Bikeway projects with MassDOT.

DPW.

Road work is basically done for the year, except for the Mystic Street Bridge; cement work will continue for a while.

The unintentional speed bump on Jason Street at Irving Street remains an issue. The contractor installed curb ramps too high (4 inches above the road) and then dumped 6 inches of asphalt creating a non-ADA compliant hump. DPW may wait until spring to address it properly, though it does effectively slow traffic. Emily Prud'hommeaux expressed enthusiasm for keeping what she called the "safety hump," noting it effectively slows traffic.

APD.

There was no update from the Arlington Police Department.

5. Vote: Washington/Overlook/Ronald Response.

Scott Smith summarized the Memo. The recommendations:

- Do not recommend 4-way stop at Washington/Overlook based on MUTCD criteria.
- Recommend proper stop sign post and painted stop bar at Ronald Rd.
- Consider rumble-strip medians on Ronald Rd when road is next repaired.
- Pedestrian flags challenging due to geometry, lack of nearby poles, and presence of traffic supervisor at Overlook Rd during school hours.

Melissa Laube asked whether the issue was more about pedestrian crossings or vehicle conflicts. Scott noted some pedestrian activity but not enough to warrant all-way stop under MUTCD guidelines. No pedestrian incidents have been reported. Motion to send the memo as written to Town Manager Jim Feeney in response to the roadway safety request form passed unanimously.

6. Discussion: Net Zero Action Plan.

Michael Kozuch, representing the Arlington Clean Energy Future Committee (CEFC), presented and discussed the slides. Notable for TAC in particular:

- Fully implement the Connect Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan.
- Change parking policies to promote alternatives to personal vehicle use.
- Support safe use of e-bikes, e-scooters, and other micro-mobility solutions.

Scott Smith raised two points: (1) TAC should care about vehicle size, noting that large electric vehicles (e.g., Rivian trucks) make narrow bike lanes unsafe and pose pedestrian safety risks. He suggested a subcompact gasoline car might be better

than a large electric pickup from a safety standpoint. (2) Vehicle owners aren't a monolithic group - daily commuters versus occasional long-distance drivers have different needs regarding electric vehicles.

Beth Benedikt expressed caution about advocating for electric bikes and scooters due to recent fatalities, including a 13-year-old in Bedford. She recommended waiting for legislation on licensing and safety parameters before promoting these as transportation solutions.

Jim Stubbe noted that slowing traffic down increases emissions per mile for gas vehicles operating in the 15 – 20 MPH range, though this becomes less relevant as more vehicles become electric. Scott Smith noted TAC works to mitigate this by making traffic flow smoother through signal timing and other measures.

Jim Stubbe mentioned the Minuteman Bikeway data could contribute to emissions savings calculations, as many people use it for commuting year-round.

7. Discussion: Eversource Grid Work.

Jim Stubbe provided an update on the Eversource Electric Sector Modernization Plan (ESMP):

- Project has been delayed one year to the right, now starting late 2026.
- Ross, the original lead contact, has been replaced by someone else.
- Timeline extended over approximately 10 years.
- Will impact Broadway, Warren Street, and Mystic Street under the preferred route.

Melissa Laube asked about road closures and construction duration. Scott Smith asked when Eversource will select a route. These points remain unknown with the project delay, leadership change, and pending contractor decisions.

Ofer Mazor raised several points: (1) Eversource prefers the route through Arlington because it requires fewer wetland crossings; (2) The route continues down Alewife Brook Parkway into Cambridge, which will impact Mass Ave intersection traffic; (3) Anticipates increased traffic on alternate routes throughout Arlington; and (4) Suggests planning for higher traffic volumes on all alternate routes.

Laura Swan suggested environmental permitting may dictate the route, as utilities require setbacks from wetlands. Routes around the lakes may face more environmental constraints.

Jim Stubbe noted opportunities for improvements, such as potentially narrowing Mystic Street and adding green space, but acknowledged significant unknowns remain. He will follow up with the new Eversource contact about route selection timeline and construction details.

8. Discussion: SSR and Safety Zone Recap and Path Forward.

Jim Stubbe presented a comprehensive summary of Special Speed Regulation (SSR) and Safety Zone work completed over the past two years as detailed in the slides.

Notable accomplishments:

- Rescinded all SSRs with speeds above 25 MPH.
- Installed 94 Thickly Settled District 25 MPH signs (once Mass Ave installation complete).
- Created 5 Safety Zones at 20 MPH (Summer Street, Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, East Arlington, Irving Street).
- Covered approximately 11 miles of Arlington's 103 miles of public roads (10.6%).
- Impacted all major arterials including Mystic St, Route 2A, Route 60, Gray St, Lake St, and portions of Mass Ave.

Discussion on Future Directions:

Scott Smith emphasized the need to systematically collect speed data to protect against political pressure to install signs everywhere. He noted everyone claims speeding on their street, but data will show where issues actually exist.

Jim Stubbe noted TAC has approximately \$2,500 for about eight speed studies. He was hesitant to conduct studies in safety zones until Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) are installed, as those will impact speeds.

Laura Swan made several points: (1) caution against oversaturation of signs; (2) shift focus to other safety factors beyond speed; (3) Systematic review of crosswalks town-wide for visibility, lighting, geometry, and length; (4) Proactively address crosswalk safety rather than waiting for accidents or complaints; and (5) Implement standard crosswalk improvements whenever DPW touches an intersection.

She mentioned daylighting crosswalks on Pleasant St as a potential project, using "Don't Block the Box" pavement markings.

Notably, the Town is searching for a transportation planner, and major traffic calming decisions should be postponed until the position is filled.

Discussion on Safety Zones:

Jim raised ongoing challenges: School zones do not cover weekends/evenings when parks and fields are used; and safety zones do not address specific school arrival/dismissal times. MassDOT does not have a combined tool in their toolbox.

Long-term solution may be traffic calming (raised crosswalks near all elementary schools).

9. Vote: Mass Ave Thickly Settled District 25 MPH Signs.

Jim Stubbe presented the proposal for installing Thickly Settled District 25 MPH signs on the three segments of Massachusetts Avenue not covered by safety zones.

Jane Morgan noted drivers need frequent reminders about speed limits, referencing Seattle's success with frequent signage achieving 20% speed reduction.

Scott Smith suggested one modification for Segment 2 eastbound: move the sign to the other side (east) of Elmhurst Rd to catch traffic coming from Bates Rd, which uses Orvis Rd as a cut-through. He noted this area has two eastbound lanes during morning rush due to heavy volume from Bates Rd. Jim Stubbe agreed with the logic and confirmed the change could be accommodated if feasible based on tree placement and visibility.

The motion to send the Installation of Thickly Settled District 25 MPH signs on Mass Ave to the Select Board as presented, with Scott Smith's suggested change if feasible, was passed unanimously.

10. Introduction: Jane Morgan, Select Board Representative.

Jim Stubbe introduced Jane Morgan as the new Select Board representative to TAC, replacing Len Diggins, and she introduced herself. TAC warmly welcomed her to the Committee.

11. Adjourn.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.