

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EverythingRandolph>

There's been a lot of talk at Town Council meetings, Councilor's websites and Political Candidate's sites about the Mobility Hub. However, none bring up certain subjects associated with it, with the biggest being how is both the feasibility study and the bus service being funded? With taxes up due to projects such as schools and water treatment plants etc. that are needed and an asset to the Town, is it really the time to entertain expenditures like this? Where is the funding coming from to pay for: the purchase of buses, maintenance, Insurance, pay employees (both drivers and management) along with any other associated costs? Yes, there may be means to get partial funding but for how long and how much. How much will come out of the tax payers pockets now and in future years? Kathleen Grogan-Camara states on her web site "this is real money in the pockets of Randolph" How? It seems like it will be coming out of our pockets. Also, this service is primarily supported by renters who do not pay taxes to Randolph and have freely chosen to live at the establishments that they do. Looking at the proposed routing, this service is also traveling to surrounding communities such as Braintree, Avon and Stoughton as you can see on Councilor Gordon's page. Everyone needs to pay attention and ask the appropriate questions now and by the final vote and not wait to complain later about it. The info and details provided so far seem lacking. So now that the Hornets nest has been kicked, let's here the residents comments. Yes, this was posted anonymously but will be asking these questions in person at an upcoming council meeting but want to see hear the views on both sides first.

All reactions: 1616
86 comments

Jesse Gordon

The Mobility Hub program uses state funding for getting the buses and for running the system -- but the details are all to be worked out in the "Feasibility Study". That study is all there is so far -- that's what passed the Town Council vote -- its intent is to address all of the questions raised here. I'd love to see people come to the Town Council meeting to ask "When is the feasibility study starting and how do we hear details along the way?" because that has not occurred yet. Details at: <https://jessegordon.com/Bus/>

Diana Maloney

David Mulligan The people in charge of this bill probably want the shuttles to be free also. We all know what 'Free' means.

Jesse Gordon

Diana Maloney, yes, I'd LOVE if the shuttle bus were free! The feasibility study will determine if that's possible. Yes, we all know what "free" means -- it means we can hop on and off the shuttle bus whenever we happen to see it coming! And "free" means we can send our kids to visit across town with confidence that they can catch a free bus getting there and another coming home. And "free" means we all get to use the shuttle bus when it's funded by all of us, just like we all get to use the Randolph roads when they're funded by all of us. I will certainly advocate during the feasibility study for free shuttle bus service -- and I hope lots of people come and say the same! If it costs \$1, I'll still use it, but it'll get much less ridership. I'd like to see the regular MBTA buses in Randolph be free also -- like Boston does for three bus lines now -- want to help make that happen on the MBTA #240, the MBTA #238, and the BAT #12?

Kari Strouth

Top contributor

Everyone should consider what the value of this would bring to people. There is a need for this service. If you read the postings from Jesse, they state that there are grants for this type of service. I think this type of service is important to towns like Randolph. I'd like to see if it's possible and then see if there are grants available. I'm not automatically assuming it's coming out of my pocket and I'm also not worrying that someone will "get something" that I'm not.

Jesse Gordon

Kari Strouth, Yes, there are grants for a shuttle van -- the Town of Acton got a grant for this same thing a few years ago and that's my model -- program is linked below. To all the others -- yes, this is big money -- both to set it up, and to run it -- which the state will only partly fund in the long term. We should consider that an "investment" in transportation -- like we invest our tax dollars in road repair for car users -- because the investment in shuttle buses reduces car traffic and wear-and-tear on roads. Yes, there'll be a tax burden to pay for this in the future after the grant runs out -- but there'll be a big benefit that thousands of people will get around town more easily, without needing another car for every adult in their family! <https://transitmatters.org/mobility-hubs>

Kari Strouth

Top contributor

Jesse Gordon Thank you for filling in more of the details. I think it's always good to look into things that will help people in their day to day lives.

I spent some time driving Uber a few years back, just to make a few extra bucks, and ALOT of people take Ubers from the apartment complexes to the bus stops. It adds up significantly for them and the reality is, the cars don't always show up on time. And as far as having the apartment complexes share the cost, while I know there's a concentrated need in those areas, I don't think it's the only place they are needed. I'd happily pay for a ride to Holbrook Station if it's less than an Uber.

And for those who say just walk to transportation, Holbrook station is 2.9 miles from my house. Yes, I need the exercise but I don't have the extra hour plus, twice a day, to do it. Plus, I'd probably get hit by a car at some point on Main Street. The bus is at least a 30 minute walk from my house. Again, not convenient. I can only imagine how minimized people must feel when they see comments such as "why'd you move there" or "just walk there". Really bad. If you can't be kind, then be quiet.

Kari Strouth

Top contributor

Jesse Gordon Thank you for filling in more of the details. I think it's always good to look into things that will help people in their day to day lives.

I spent some time driving Uber a few years back, just to make a few extra bucks, and ALOT of people take Ubers from the apartment complexes to the bus stops. It adds up significantly for them and the reality is, the cars don't always show up on time. And as far as having the apartment complexes share the cost, while I know there's a concentrated need in those areas, I don't think it's the only place they are needed. I'd happily pay for a ride to Holbrook Station if it's less than an Uber.

And for those who say just walk to transportation, Holbrook station is 2.9 miles from my house. Yes, I need the exercise but I don't have the extra hour plus, twice a day, to do it. Plus, I'd probably get hit by a car at some point on Main Street. The bus is at least a 30 minute walk from my house. Again, not convenient. I can only imagine how minimized people must feel when they see comments such as "why'd you move there" or "just walk there". Really bad. If you can't be kind, then be quiet.

Jesse Gordon

Kari Strouth, yes, the apartment complexes were the focus of the Mobility Hub Petition, but of course people who live anywhere could use the shuttle van! The apartment complexes are obvious "bus stops" but there'd be bus stops on street corners along the whole route. For some examples, watch our video linked below, where we take a walk from Rosemont housing complex to the nearest #240 bus -- well over a mile -- pointing out some nice potential bus stops along the way. Yes, high Uber usage at housing complexes to train stations indicates the high need. Think what it's like to live at Pacella Park, for example -- it's a mile walk to the #240 bus and over 3 miles to the Braintree T station -- all of those would be shuttle van stops. Or at Prynne Hills (the Avalon housing complex) -- that's almost 2 miles to the #240 bus and the sidewalks are incomplete there! I encourage residents there come and tell their stories -- Uber or otherwise -- about their commute to the MBTA or the train station -- that's what the feasibility study group needs to hear! https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?extid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-AN_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=YCRy0i&ref=watch_permalink&v=3411418745840683

Kari Strouth

Top contributor

Jesse Gordon Agreed. It can't just be the people saying no that speak up. Those what would benefit from the service should speak up as well. All sides need to be heard. And just a point - I don't actually think taxes go up just for a shuttle service. Things are built into budgets, right? And I don't particularly want my taxes to go up either.

Jesse Gordon

Kari Strouth, yes, the cost would be built into the budget, but the budget comes from property taxes as well as from state grants. I'm hoping that the state's Mobility Hub program pays for most of this project for a few years -- that's the main focus of the feasibility study. After that, there would be other grants for ongoing costs. The Gateway City program (which Randolph is about to become eligible for -- see link below) might pay for projects like this long-term. Boston used ARPA money (a federal grant) to pay for their free MBTA buses on three routes for the last 3 years -- we might do that too. And the next round of ARPA federal money -- called the "Inflation Reduction Act" -- is all about "green infrastructure" like a shuttle van -- I hope we can apply for grants in that future program too. <http://jessegordon.com/gateway.htm>

Laura Vona

I am a home owner who has a car now but I frequently took buses for years to get to work in Boston and Braintree. I hard walking from Holbrook late at night as that was the closest stop to my house at that time of day. I want to learn more about this. Traffic is already so congested in town, more busses could mean less cars on the road. I need to learn more but it sounds like a good thing to me. Teens, elderly, mobility challenged residents can all benefit from more bus service too.

Jesse Gordon

Laura Vona, Yes, you addressed the core concept: "more busses could mean less cars on the road". That's the most important rule of transportation policy, but it's a rule that very few people understand the big picture. Alas, I've been telling people that for over 20 years (see link below from 2001!) My 2001 article is about the Southeast Expressway and how the Big Dig highway project won't reduce traffic -- but investing in the MBTA would. The same is true for the Mobility Hub project -- there is no way to build enough roads to make commuting from Randolph have less traffic -- but creating and improving mass transit infrastructure really DOES reduce traffic in the short term AND the long term! https://jessegordon.com/spec.../Central_Arteriosclerosis.htm

Gerry McGill-Maclellan

Top contributor

Can you post some links where this is discussed by the town, the councilor's and the candidates? This will help people get info on the topic and people's views. Otherwise it may be ignored as "I don't have time to research."

Anonymous member

Gerry McGill-Maclellan <https://jessegordon.com/Bus/>

many of the links are there and some town meeting too.

Videos about creating a Randolph Shuttle Bus

- The shuttle bus became the hottest Facebook topic on Aug. 25 -- [I excerpted several pages](#) or you can read [Everything Randolph Facebook](#) (search for "Mobility Hub").
- The shuttle bus was discussed in the [August 21 Town Council Meeting](#) in two sections -- starting at 3:00 until 3:06 on traffic, then at 3:08:15 until 3:13:30 on the feasibility study.
- At the Aug. 7 Town Council meeting, a bus supporter asked ["What's next?"](#) and got no answer yet -- so let's ask again! (fast-forward to 45:30 until 47:00)
- At the June 12 Town Council meeting, many people came to speak in favor of the the Bus Petition, and the Town Council then voted to conduct the Feasibility Study -- on [RCTV video](#) from 04:20 until 52:40 (early in the meeting video).
- March 27 Town Council meeting, I announced the bus petition -- it's at 1:20:45 (near the end) on [RCTV video](#)
- On April 2 we took a "Walk to the Bus" -- -- broadcast on [Facebook Live \(by Councilor Natacha Clerger\)](#) -- explaining all of the Shuttle Bus details.

David Mulligan

Imo it's not responsible to be entertaining this at All as a expense to the town budget.

We have some major increases in property tax and warer sewer upcoming new school and water treatment plant both projects costs have significantly increased because of Cd19.

Nobody has given hard numbers of what the increases will be to the taxpayer.

Jesse Gordon

[David Mulligan](#), is it "responsible to be entertaining" programs to improve our roads, even though those programs will increase property taxes? is it "responsible to be entertaining" ideas to improve our water supply, even though those programs will increase water bills? I think "yes" on both and most other infrastructure improvements. Paying for infrastructure improvements is a major purpose of taxes -- it's an investment in our future and in our quality of life. And quite often, infrastructure investments save individual taxpayers money -- like not needing so many car repairs if our roads are paved well. or not needing cancer treatment if we keep our water PFAS-free, Or not needing a second family car if we have a shuttle van. That's the reason I entertain all of those programs -- I believe that's the definition of "responsible" = look at the long-term costs and savings for everyone, not just look at whether David Mulligan's individual property tax might go up a little bit!

- **David Mulligan**

Jesse Gordon wants and needs ? (NEEDS) Improving our water quality benefits all the town.

(WANTS) As for the your proposal IMO this isn't a town matter its a Tennant / Property management matter.

Under NO circumstances should the town tax payers be paying 0.01 towards it EVER.

Again it should be paid for by the property management company.

For those who need rides to doctors the RIDE provides door to door service.

Jesse Gordon

David Mulligan, I think your "not one penny" rule is because you got confused by wanting to ensure that no one in housing complexes ever gets any benefit from your tax dollars. But that's not what we're proposing -- it's a shuttle bus for EVERYONE in town, not just people who live in apartments! Take a look at the proposed routes -- I link directly to the route map below -- thousands of people in single-family homes would be right on the bus route too! You got confused because you're mixing up a target audience with the actual proposed users -- the shuttle bus would be for EVERYONE in town, not just people who live in apartments! There's a stop near your house, and near my house -- and near EVERYONE's house, if we design the routes right! The whole idea of a shuttle bus is that there's a bus stop within a 10-minute walk of every residence in town. So therefore, by your logic, EVERYONE should pay for it, even if they never want to spare "not one penny" for anyone other than themselves! http://jessegordon.com/Bus/Mobility_Hub.jpg

David Mulligan

Jesse Gordon if you want it funded by the town then have the voters vote on it.

Put it on the ballot.

David Mulligan

Jesse Gordon as for you assumption that's your opinion. Wrong as it is...

The bottom line is the taxpayers shouldn't need to add this additional expense to there pocketbooks and wallets..on top of the new school and water treatment plant wich costs still haven't been disclosed .

Joanne Cammarata Lucas

David Mulligan you are absolutely correct. Why should the taxpayers foot the bill? It should be included in the property managements fee.

Jesse Gordon

Joanne Cammarata Lucas, So you'd say that only people with cars who live in single-family homes should pay for road repairs? If that bill were NOT paid by the housing complex's property management fees, that would be more fair -- everyone would pay for what they use, like a giant toll booth system. That would be FAIR but would be mighty expensive. I support sharing infrastructure costs that we all benefit from, among all of us. We all pay for the roads, even if we don't have a car. We all pay for the buses, even if we DO have a car. We all pay for the schools, even if we don't have kids in school -- because all of those services benefit some of us -- that's the way a community works!

Anonymous member

just 2 comments. 1) if those routes are within a 10 minute walk for every resident , looking at the route and map. How can you claim it was a 45 minute walk down Chestnut to bus stop in your video. And seeing most of the route are side streets and 1 lane each direction , how will buses traveling and stopping everywhere effect traffic, knowing these streets it would make driving a real experience . Add that to the way drivers are on them already.

Jesse Gordon

Our video "Walk to the Bus" is a 45-minute walk to the MBTA bus. It's BEFORE the shuttle bus exists! The point where we start in the video is at Rosemont Housing at the corner of Chestnut Street and High Street -- it's a 45-minute walk to North Main Street, currently the nearest MBTA #240 bus stop. The shuttle bus would have several stops along that walking route, as we point out in the video -- maybe one at the Convenience Store on Chestnut Street, etc. I am NOT proposing that the Convenience Store pay for the shuttle bus, except as part of their property taxes! (That's the same as people saying "the housing complex should pay" -- they're just near the bus stops -- it's not just for them!)

On your issue of "side streets" -- I drew that map, and my intent is "all big streets" (but this is just MY map as a proposal for the feasibility study to look at). The "red route" goes on big streets like Chestnut, Oak, High Street, Canton Street, Pond Street, and North Street. The "Orange route" goes on Mazzeo Drive, Rt. 138, South Main Street, Center Street, and maybe Mill Street -- all "through streets". http://jessegordon.com/Bus/Mobility_Hub.jpg

Bryan Powers

Top contributor

Jesse Gordon, Dave is right. Let the townspeople vote on it. Also, since your map shows it going to Braintree and Avon, let them pay for it, too. Btw, it doesn't go near my house. I vote no.

Jesse Gordon

Bryan Powers, Two great ideas! But we already tried both! Yes, we wanted to include Avon and Braintree (and Stoughton and Holbrook) but the law disallows that. The law about the MBTA says we can't include other towns because then we would be a "Regional Transit Company" -- so it has to be just Randolph (for now!). We can deliver Randolph residents to destinations in Avon and Braintree, and pick them up for the ride home from there, but we can't stop in those towns except for those points. If you check the map, I list no stops in Braintree EXCEPT the MBTA station, accordingly, and the same in Avon for the Wal-Mart destination.

Your other great idea -- to put it on the ballot -- we tried that also! Our petition was actually to get the question onto this November's ballot, as specified by the Citizen Initiative rule in the Town Charter. The process to do that is to go to the Town Council, then if they vote No, it goes on the ballot. Much to our delight, the Town Council voted Yes! So it won't go on the ballot until the feasibility study is done -- then if the Town Council votes No on implementation, we'll put it on that November's ballot.

Here's my outdated map which I sent off to Stoughton before the state agency said "Not Allowed". Stoughton is the most likely other town to participate -- they have non-existent bus service on the entirety of Rt 138, their main street! <https://jessegordon.com/Necklace/Shuttle.htm>

Anonymous member

Author

Exactly how do the claims of less traffic work. you essentially are taking a handful of cars off road for a certain errand etc. out of over hundreds if not thousands of cars commuting through Randolph each day from everywhere. also , a lot of supporters probably don't have cars.

Jesse Gordon

Most people who don't ride the bus or train don't realize how many people ride the bus and train -- it's many thousands daily! The shuttle bus isn't about "taking a handful of cars off road" -- it would be hundreds of cars every day. Especially during rush-hour commuting, when people could take the shuttle bus to the Braintree T, for example, instead of driving there as part of their commute. I guess you want to see a formal study, so I link one below, showing how congestion went way up in Los Angeles when there was a transit strike. Here are some Boston statistics from the City of Boston website, to show that it's not going to be just "a handful of cars":

- * 229,600 people commute into Boston daily
- * 95,000 of those commuters drive alone
- * 83,000 take transit (bus or train -- about 35%)
- * 36,000 carpool

Imagine what the Southeast Expressway would be like with 35% more cars -- that would make a standstill! Imagine what North Main Street at the entrance to Interstate 93 would look like with 35% more cars -- traffic would back up for a mile!

L.A. study: <https://t4america.org/portfolio/la-transit-strike/>

Anonymous member

Author

Jesse , you didn't even want the study when you presented it.....people can see that if the replay the meeting

Anonymous member

Author

OK , Now this discussion is rehashing a lot that was said all over again. But thanks to some info from here, people should watch and listen to the Council meeting where this came up , Residents can go to the " Randolph Massachusetts " Facebook page and scroll down to the June 12th meeting . the subject starts at 28:00 minutes . you here other councilor's views and residents who were there to comment for as a group, but especially go to minutes 39:30 - 40:20 and you can here that Jesse states that there would be a study AND THEN NO OTHER VOTE AND RIGHT INTO IMPLICATION. (that was the groups initial plan to try and pass that night.

Jesse Gordon

Yes, I very much wanted the study -- it's right in the petition wording, which I worked very hard to gather signatures for! The petition says in the first sentence, "the Town of Randolph will conduct a feasibility study concerning providing shuttle bus service to Randolph residents. The study will include information on securing funding, as available, for the provision of such service. The feasibility study will be conducted by June 2024 and provide a plan for funding and implementation by June 2025."

Yes, I interpreted that last bit as "the feasibility study in June 2024 will lead right into implementation by June 2025." But my interpretation was voted down, in favor of the interpretation that there has to be another Town Council vote to begin implementation, after the feasibility study is concluded. I accept that result, because I lost the vote, and that's the way democracy works! Now, I very much want to participate in the feasibility study -- and then I'll push for implementation too -- and I hope many of you will join me!

Here's a link to an actual petition that we handed in -- a blank copy -- so you can see the wording isn't me adding later that I very much want the study -- it's right there! -- http://jessegordon.com/Bus/Petition3_Mobility_Hub_Final.pdf

David Mulligan

Jesse Gordon I have a question what will stop Braintree residents who live in the huge complex on Pond st Braintree near the Randolph line from using this service that is intended for Randolph residents only?

Jesse Gordon

David Mulligan, What would stop Braintree residents from getting on the Randolph shuttle bus? Nothing! They are free to do so, and I hope they do! There won't be any bus stops near that Braintree housing complex, so they'll have to walk to a Randolph bus stop -- and maybe in a couple of years when all our neighbors do that, they'll join us in a Regional Transit shuttle bus!

You know, this sounds like the same thing you said when we installed the "free filtered water" system at the Randolph DPW to address people who wanted to avoid PFAS without installing a personal filter. You and others said things like, "We should disallow Holbrook residents from using our free water" (my webpage on that is linked below). I responded then by asking the Town Manager what was the marginal cost -- about a penny for a gallon -- and I'm fine letting anyone come and get healthy water, without asking any questions. We're now installing a second water filter in North Randolph because the first one is popular -- and I'm fine if people from Braintree want to take our water for a penny a gallon there too. I responded to an earlier post about your "Not one penny rule" -- I will hand it to you that you are consistent in applying that rule. Maybe you'll hand it to me that I'm consistent too, in wanting to provide services to everyone in Randolph, whether they live in apartments OR houses -- and even if they live just across our borders!

<https://jessegordon.com/PFAS/>

Anonymous member

Author

well this subject got a lot of interaction from members. Now the next step and question : Who will be conducting the feasibility study ? Should be a 3rd party with no ties to either side. It sounded like there was one done in the past and even maybe one ongoing in listening to the past town meetings. If one was done prior , what was the findings? Are we paying for and beating a dead horse or is / was it feasible ?

Jesse Gordon

Anonymous member , no there haven't been any past shuttle bus feasibility studies. The idea was first proposed by Town Councilor **Arthur Goldstein** a decade ago, as a shuttle bus

connecting the Randolph/Holbrook Commuter Rail station to the Stoughton Commuter Rail station, which would pick up passengers along Warren Street and Mazzeo Drive. **Arthur Goldstein's** proposal never got to the feasibility study phase. In the current version, the idea was expanded to include all over town, by a coalition of the Randolph Tenants Union, the Randolph Democratic Town Committee, and the Coalition for Social Justice. Those are all the people who gathered signatures and come to Town Council meetings to speak. Here's Kathleen Camara, a Randolph Dems member, asking the Town Council about starting the Feasibility Study (fast-forward to 45:30 until 47:00) <http://108.20.229.83/CablecastPublicSite/show/2842?channel=2>

David Mulligan

How much will this cost the tax payers ?

Grants are NOT Lifetime...

So a grant is going to cover this for how long?

Hours

5am-9pm m-f

6 am-7pm sat

8am-6 pm sunday

How many shuttles 4 plus 1backup.

1-2 mechanics / repair facility with tools and overhead.

Manager

Assistant Manager

Secretary with office and supplies

10 drivers with benefits

Fuel / Insurance for a year .

I don't think the town can operate a transportation company.

This free service imo would have to be sub contracted out.

3-4 million a year is my guess?

Jesse Gordon

David Mulligan, Yes, those are the right questions to ask -- answering them is the purpose of the Feasibility Study. Kathleen Camara attended the Town Council meeting on Aug. 7 and asked about starting the Feasibility Study -- and asked for a response too! At the Aug. 21 Town Council meeting, the response to Sandi Cohen and Paul Foos asking the same questions was "The Town Manager will handle it all by the June 2024 deadline". But that didn't really tell anyone how they can participate in any Feasibility Study meetings. So we should continue asking the same things at Town Council meetings -- they're obligated to take action on the Feasibility Study. You can see Sandi Cohen at 3:00:00 until 3:06:00 on traffic, and Paul Foos from 3:08:15 until 3:13:30 on the feasibility study -- in the video linked below: <http://108.20.229.83/CablecastPublicSite/show/2844?channel=2>