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Commuter Rail Service Changes Now In Effect

Commuter rail service was restored to Boston's Southwest Corridor on October 5, after an 8-year absence. Following is a guide to the new services:

Back Bay Station: This new rail/subway station is just two blocks from Copley Sq., on Dartmouth St. across from Copley Place. The new station offers an all-weather, indoor transfer to the Orange Line, for fast service to downtown Boston, Government Center, and North Station, and for connections with the Blue Line at State to Logan Airport.

All South Station commuter rail trains (except the Fairmount Line) now stop at Back Bay Station. Back Bay is also a stop for Amtrak intercity trains.

Ruggles: This new station is adjacent to Northeastern University, and a short walk or bus ride, via T-Bus 47, to the hospitals and colleges of the Longwood Medical Area. Many evening rush hour trains now stop at Ruggles; but only a few morning trains make the stop. Commuters can also take the Orange Line from Back Bay Station to Ruggles.

Needham Line: Commuter rail service has been restored to Needham, West Roxbury, Roslindale, and Forest Hills. Trains operate Monday through Saturday.

Fairmount Line: Trains operate hourly, Mon.-Fri., from South Station to Fairmount, with half-hourly rush hour service beginning in December. Stops are also made at Uphams Corner and at Morton St. Fairmount trains do not serve Back Bay Station or Ruggles; but riders may make the connection on other commuter rail lines.

Cleary Sq.: This new station is served by the Attleboro, Stoughton, and Franklin Lines.

Fares: The MBTA has lowered fares between Boston and some nearby commuter rail stops. **Zone 1A** now includes Back Bay, Ruggles, and Uphams Corner, for a 60c fare from South Station. **Zone 1B** includes Forest Hills and Morton St. on the south side and Chelsea, Malden Ctr., West Medford, and Porter Sq. on

Private Developer Has Plans For Route 128 Station

A draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was submitted in August for the proposed "Station Park" private development at Route 128 Station on the Dedham-Westwood line.

The developers, Gilbane Properties and Robbins Properties of Providence RI, intend to erect a 115,000-sq. ft. office building, a 320-room Marriott hotel, and an 8,000-sq. ft. ballroom. A 2,000-space parking garage would be shared by employees and users of the private development, by rail commuters, and by Amtrak (intercity) rail passengers.

The development would be built on the existing MBTA parking lot. This lot is now full every weekday; as many as 973 cars have been counted parked at the station.

During an 18-month construction period, the developers would provide a temporary station with parking for 647 cars, or 326 fewer parking spaces than are now available. Some of these 647 spaces may be occupied by construction workers' vehicles, since no other plans have been made for their parking.

After the project is completed, the developers claim that there will be 1,300 parking spaces available for commuter rail and Amtrak patrons. However, there is no way that these spaces can be guaranteed. The 700 spaces set aside for the office, hotel, and ballroom will probably not be adequate, and the overflow from this private parking will encroach on railroad station parking.

A.P.T. opposes the Station Park project (see our Editorial on page 2); and we filed extensive comments on the draft EIR. While planning for Station Park continues, Environmental Affairs Secy. James Hoyte's Certificate shows that the project faces many hurdles before it can be built.

the north, at a 75c fare. "B" monthly passes are valid for both Zones 1A and 1B.

For more information: Call the MBTA at 482-4400 or 800-882-1220.

Editorial: Route 128 Station For Transit, Not For A Hotel

The proposed "Station Park" project at Route 128 railroad station would have major adverse effects on the regional transportation system of metropolitan Boston. The project should not be built.

Route 128 station is at the junction of the state's busiest passenger railroad and its busiest suburban highway. It serves two different transportation markets:

Commuter Rail: Route 128 is the busiest commuter rail station in the MBTA system. New office construction in downtown Boston, combined with limits on highway and parking capacity, means that we must encourage even greater use of park-and-ride facilities such as Route 128. The Station Park proposal would permanently freeze commuter parking at this site to just a few more spaces than are now provided. Instead of letting developers use this public asset for private profit, state and MBTA officials should seek ways to maximize public commuter parking at Route 128 -- and elsewhere.

Intercity (High Speed) Rail: Gov. Dukakis and other state officials are promoting 3-hour Boston-New York rail service as a way to

reduce highway and air traffic congestion at Logan Airport. Route 128 station is the only feasible site in Massachusetts for park-and-ride rail service to New York City. With 2-3/4 hour trains from suburban Boston to midtown Manhattan, Route 128 station would have extraordinary potential to divert New York-bound travelers away from Logan Airport, where they now account for 21% of all travel. The Station Park proposal allows no room for expansion to serve high speed rail travelers. If it is completed, this development would be a substantial obstacle to the success of high speed rail service.

With its potential for high speed rail, Route 128 station is the most valuable park-and-ride location in Massachusetts. Yet the Station Park proposal would divert more than half of this site to private use.

A hotel, an office building, a ballroom can be built anywhere; but as a transportation resource, this site is unique. To convert this irreplaceable public transportation asset to private, non-transportation uses makes absolutely no sense.

Editorial: Better Commuter Rail Service, Promotion Still Needed

A.P.T. is pleased to see the completion of the Southwest Corridor project and the recent changes in commuter rail service. There are some places, however, where more work is needed to obtain the full benefit of these improvements:

Fairmount Line: The new stops and lower fares at Uphams Corner and Morton St. show that commuter rail can benefit inner-city residents as well as suburbanites. But people must be aware of the service in order to use it. The MBTA should conduct an intensive publicity campaign, in English and in Spanish, in the neighborhoods served by the new stations. A clip-out coupon for a free trial ride could provide positive feedback on the success of this publicity effort. The T should also look at possible new station sites, such as Mt. Bowdoin near Grove Hall.

Ruggles station: A.P.T. is dismayed by the lack of morning rush hour commuter rail service at this station, which is near many major employers and colleges. The earliest morning arrivals are at 9:23 from Attleboro and 10:50 from Franklin; there is no service at all from Stoughton. These trains already pass by Ruggles; it is frustrating that they do not stop there. This would be an easy way to encourage new commuter rail riders.

This station is also close to the Museum of Fine Arts, the Gardner Museum, and even Fenway Park; and the T should open Ruggles station to commuter trains on Saturday.

Needham Line: All midday and Saturday trains on the Needham Line now terminate at Needham Junction. Commuters to and from Needham Center and Needham Heights are being told to take T-Bus 59, which "connects" with trains at Needham Junction. The bus connection, however, requires up to a 25-minute wait plus an extra fare. If the MBTA intends for anyone to actually use this service, it should provide a timed, scheduled connection which is published in timetables. The present schedule deprives Needham Center and Needham Heights residents of express service to Boston, which they had until October 17.

Other issues: On-time performance has dropped, and train exhaust fumes at Back Bay Station are poorly ventilated. These problems need to be resolved by the T.

MBTA commuters and Massachusetts taxpayers have invested millions of dollars in these new commuter rail lines. A few simple measures would assure that we get the greatest possible return on our investment.

A.P.T. News

"Station Park" comments available: A summary of A.P.T.'s comments in reply to the draft Environmental Impact Report for this private development at the Route 128 Station will be sent to anyone who requests it. Just send us a postcard asking for the "Station Park comments summary."

"Car-Free in Boston": Detailed planning has begun for the 6th edition of A.P.T.'s transit guidebook, which will be published next summer. We are eager to hear "Car-Free" readers' thoughts and suggestions; this will be your last opportunity to comment before work begins on the next edition.

Photographs wanted for "Car-Free": Our members and readers are invited to submit photos for publication in the next edition of "Car-Free in Boston." Transit and non-transit subjects, in and near Boston, are needed. Pictures should be recent and they should show human or visual interest; we are not looking for so-called "equipment shots." Payment will be made for pictures which are used. Please call Charles Bahne at 354-0539 for details; we are not responsible for photos sent to us without prior arrangements.

Can You Believe It?

North Station commuter rail riders must not need signs to tell them where the station is. From street level, there is no visible indication that the station building has anything to do with the MBTA. Regular commuters know to use either "Boston Garden Entrance 2" or another, unmarked door.

More than a year after a ramp from Route 2 to the **Alewife** station parking garage was opened, state highway officials have finally erected a sign for the ramp. Unfortunately, the sign directs motorists into a bowling alley, instead of to the T station.

At a newly remodeled entrance to **State** station, workers have just installed a sign pointing to the "Orange Line to Everett." Everett station, on the old Charlestown elevated, was closed 12 years ago.

For several days in mid-October, "MBTA Message Board" video monitors in **Harvard** station gave this news:

@APMAIN9TMED LINE SERVICE NORM
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We welcome your contributions to this column. Send them to "Mass. Transit," c/o A.P.T., P.O. Box 192, Cambridge MA 02238.

Short Items...

Congratulations are due to the MBTA for an informative **"Passenger Guide"** given out at the Back Bay Station commuter rail opening. We hope that the Guide will be distributed more widely in the future, and that it will be a model for other publications.

The MBTA is wrapping up its study of the now-closed **Arborway streetcar line** (Green Line-E). The final report is expected early in December, a public hearing in January, and a final decision by the MBTA Board of Directors by February 1st.

Join Us!

Mass. Transit is published quarterly by the Association for Public Transportation, Inc. (A.P.T.), a non-profit tax-exempt organization founded in 1973 to encourage the use and improvement of public transit in Boston. We support transit because it is ecologically sound, because it is less disruptive of neighborhoods, and because it is the only transportation available for many people.

We also publish "Car-Free in Boston," the guidebook to public transit in greater Boston and New England.

A.P.T. depends on donations from its members and friends to continue its activities. Membership is \$15 a year, or \$5 for students and persons on fixed incomes. Members receive **Mass. Transit**, as well as a copy of the next edition of "Car-Free" when it is published. All contributions are tax-deductible.

We welcome your ideas, comments, letters, and articles on transit issues. Please send them to **Mass. Transit**, c/o A.P.T., P. O. Box 192, Cambridge, MA 02238.

Association for Public Transportation, Inc.

P.O. Box 192, Cambridge, MA 02238

___ I'd like to join A.P.T. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of \$15.00 (\$5.00 for students and persons on fixed income)..\$ _____

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"Car-Free" Update #5

A.P.T.'s guidebook "Car-Free in Boston" contains complete listings of all Boston-area transit services. "Car-Free" is sold at bookstores and newsstands, or use the mail order coupon in this newsletter. Below are transit service changes since Update #4 in July. For a copy of Updates #1-4, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to A.P.T.

Commuter trains on the Rockport/Ipswich Lines now stop at a **new station in Salem**, at Washington and Bridge Sts, next to Parker Games. MBTA buses also use the new station, which replaces the old stop south of Riley Plaza. Parking is available for over 500 cars.

T-Bus 5 (City Pt.-McCormack Hsg.). Formerly T-Bus 10A. Now operates Mon.-Sat.

T-Bus 34E Route extended to (Walpole Ctr.-Forest Hills), via East Walpole, Mon.-Sat.; nights & Sun. still operate (East Walpole-Forest Hills).

T-Bus 112 (Wellington-Maverick). All trips now serve Admiral's Hill in Chelsea.

T-Bus 112A (Admiral's Hill-Bellingham Sq.). Route discontinued; see T-Bus 112.

T-Bus 310 (Needham-Downtown Boston).)

T-Bus 310A (Needham-Copley).)

T-Bus 315 (Roslindale-Copley).) Service discontinued; take
Needham Line Commuter Rail.

Attleboro Line Service to Providence RI will begin in January, according to the Boston Globe, despite earlier reports it would be delayed until April.

Patriots Train Special commuter rail train to all Patriots home games, departs from South Sta., Back Bay Sta., Readville, Norwood Central.

Amtrak All trains now stop at Back Bay Sta. as well as South Sta.

(Boston-New York). Now stops at New Rochelle NY instead of Rye NY.

(Inland Route). Now offers daily morning and afternoon service from Boston and Framingham to Worcester, Springfield, and Hartford CT.

Bay State Cruises (Boston-Hull). Two rush-hour trips, also serves Spinnaker Island.

Bonanza Bus (Boston-Newport) and (Boston-Woods Hole) routes now serve Logan Airport.

Greyhound (Boston-New York). Now operates hourly, 14 trips per day.

LIFT #5 (Framingham-Hopkinton) via Ashland. New service. Hourly, Mon.-Sat.

Marathon Line Does not operate service to Patriots games this year.

Transit Bus (Norwood-Walpole). Service discontinued. See T-Bus 34E, above.

Weybus Operates local buses in Town of Weymouth. New service. Call 335-2224.

PHONE/TERMINAL CHANGES AT LOGAN AIRPORT:

Air Atlantic..Terminal E..800-565-1890 Butler Aviation..Terminal D..567-8010

Air Nova.....Terminal E..800-422-6232 Van Dusen.....Terminal D..569-5260

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