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STONEHAM TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE HOSTS AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES WORKSHOP

Stoneham, MA : Picture this – you’re headed to work, driving Route 93S and reading your presentation in anticipation of the big meeting. That’s right, the car is moving and you are intently studying your notes, somewhat oblivious to the traffic, because.... you aren’t driving the car, your car is driving itself! This is not the stuff of the Jetson’s, but, in fact, a reality – one which has already begun testing in a few local communities.

Recently the Stoneham Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC), in an effort to move the autonomous vehicle (AV) conversation from the theoretical to the ground level, co-hosted with MAVE Apartments in Stoneham, a Saturday morning workshop focused on autonomous vehicles. The workshop was led by Carol Schweiger, President of Schweiger Consulting LLC and Chairperson, New England ITS. STAC. Ms. Schweiger, who is a founding member of STAC, has more than thirty-eight years of experience in transportation consulting and is nationally and internationally recognized in the area of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Advanced Public Transportation Systems (APTS). The workshop covered what Autonomous Vehicles (AVs) are, the benefits, costs and concerns of AVs, and future planning locally and regionally. Ms. Schweiger explained the difference between automated vehicles and

autonomous vehicles and showed several examples of both types. She noted that soon selected Lyft passengers in the Boston Seaport district will be matched with nuTonomy self-driving vehicles when they request rides through the Lyft app.

She cited some of the potential benefits of automation, including reducing the number and severity of crashes and aggressive driving; expanding the reach of transportation modes to disabled and older individuals; providing first/last mile connectivity for commuters; increasing efficiency and effectiveness of existing transportation systems; and providing guidance to state and local agencies to help them understand impacts of automated vehicles.

Ms. Schweiger also shared that in Massachusetts, an Executive Order last October established an Autonomous Vehicles Working Group, chaired by Secretary of Transportation Stephanie Pollack, which has completed an application and

Memorandum of Understanding to test autonomous vehicles on public ways in the Commonwealth. Ms. Schweiger suggested that through the next ten to fifteen years, AVs will be developed for consumer purchase.

For those who would like more information about Autonomous Vehicles, it can be found using any of the following links –

[How AVs work](#)

Robin Chase (founder of ZipCar) [“Automated Vehicles are Here”](#) [Disney’s Magic Highway](#) – a 1958 vision of transportation

Ms. Schweiger’s complete slide presentation from the workshop can be found at <http://www.stonehamcdc.org/autonomous-vehicles.html>



Photo: Pictured at the Autonomous Vehicles & You: An Introductory Workshop hosted by MAVE Apartments on Fallon Road, Stoneham, are (left to right) Stoneham Transportation Advisory Committee (STAC) Chair Rachel Meredith Warren, Presenter Ms. Carol Schweiger, STAC member Raymie Parker, Anna Wright, Jackie Dicenso and Property Manager Stacey Dittmar, all of MAVE Apartments.