Photo Credits:

Cover Photo: Angela Roach
Page 3: Philip Dawson
Page 5: Andrew Busch
Page 7: Angela Roach
Page 8: Michael Pearson
Page 9: Michael Pearson
Page 10: Philip Dawson
Page 11: Michael Pearson
Page 12: Michael Pearson
Page 13: Philip Dawson
Back Cover: Michael Pearson

Contact:
SEPTA Citizen Advisory Committee
c/o SEPTA Customer Service and Advocacy
1234 Market Street, 10th Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3780
215-580-7076
www.septa.org/partners/cac/
In Memoriam: David Kalkstein

While the CAC must often say goodbye to members who have completed their terms, this year it faced the difficult task of losing a new member prematurely. Dave Kalkstein was appointed to the CAC in July 2014 as a representative for the City of Philadelphia. Dave described himself and his interest in public transportation as follows:

*I have a long time interest and appreciation for public transit, having used it most of my life wherever I have lived. I am very concerned that public transit is often viewed by some as a waste of money, and that many do not comprehend the extreme value of public transportation. I find that SEPTA allows me to commute to almost any location in the five-county region. In my free time, I enjoy “cruising” on SEPTA routes just for fun, to learn where destinations I don’t know about are and to better understand the service area that SEPTA impacts.*

As a member, Dave represented the Germantown neighborhood of Philadelphia and served on the Transit Subcommittee. Following a diagnosis of cancer, he remained impressively committed to his CAC duties, attending plenary and subcommittee meetings even while undergoing radiation and chemotherapy treatments. Dave fought hard to the end, reluctantly stepping down from his position only two days before his passing on May 1, 2015.

While we had the privilege of serving alongside Dave for only ten months, we fondly remember his dedication to the CAC, his enthusiastic contributions to our work, and his unrelenting passion for strengthening public transportation options in the Philadelphia region. It is in this spirit of remembrance that we reflect upon our work and achievements over the past year.
## Table of Contents

- About the SEPTA Citizen Advisory Committee
- Current Membership
- Eyes and Ears on the System
- Budget and Service Plan Review
- Major Project Review
  - SEPTA Key
  - Bi-level Railcar Acquisition
- Subcommittee Initiatives
  - Transit Subcommittee
  - Regional Rail Subcommittee
- Internal Administration
- Conclusion
About the SEPTA Citizen Advisory Committee

The SEPTA Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was established under the Pennsylvania Urban Mass Transportation Law of 1967 as the official independent representative and advocate of users and potential users of public transportation in the five county region of Southeastern Pennsylvania served by SEPTA.

The major concerns of the CAC are the quality of SEPTA service, including reliability and frequency, speed, cleanliness, safety and security, as well as fares, policies, financing and planning, and accountability of SEPTA and other governmental agencies that affect public transportation for the region served by SEPTA. The CAC carries out this mandate by advising the General Manager of SEPTA on policies and projects, by formulating proposals and suggestions to SEPTA staff, and by soliciting public opinion on SEPTA services.

The Citizen Advisory Committee holds three public meetings per month. The Transit Subcommittee meeting discusses policy and operation of all SEPTA services except Regional Rail, the Regional Rail Subcommittee meeting discusses policy and operation of Regional Rail, and the Plenary meeting provides a review of subcommittee findings and general transportation discussion.
2014-2015 Membership

The membership of the CAC consists of between 14 and 24 members appointed by the county commissioners, county council or mayor, as the case may be, of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties, and five members, one resident from each county, appointed by the General Manager of SEPTA. All members are regular SEPTA riders, and may serve up to three consecutive two-year terms.

Executive Committee
Chair: Philip Dawson | City of Philadelphia
Vice Chair for Regional Rail: Laura Hanes | Montgomery County
Vice Chair for Transit: Patricia Russell | City of Philadelphia
Secretary: Lee Wall | Bucks County

City of Philadelphia
Nathaniel Brouhard
Heather Clark
*Glenn Cuff
Philip Dawson
Carla N. Gardner
Michele Grant
John Greening
Walter Jeffers
*David Kalkstein
*Cameron Kline
Timothy Moyer
Nicholas Mulligan
Julio Nieves
Angela Roach
*Robin Robinowitz
Patricia Russell
Cem Sahin
Christine Schwarz
Esha Thornton
*Emily Van Yuga

*Bucks County
Lee Wall

*Chester County
Dana Bowles

*Delaware County
David L. Hackett
Roderick Powell
Laurie-Ellen Shumaker
Steven K. Gerber

*Montgomery County
Laura Hanes
Samuel T. Adenbaum

*Norman S. Marcus, P.E.

*Term ended during FY2015
Eyes and Ears on the System

The CAC supports the goals of SEPTA’s Customer Service and Advocacy division by serving as “SEPTA’s eyes and ears on the system.” CAC members are frequent SEPTA riders who provide valuable feedback on the quality of service on dozens of routes throughout the region from a passenger perspective. During FY2015, CAC members submitted over 90 reports to SEPTA Customer Service staff through its VERITAS system. These reports identified over 50 problems to be addressed, resulted in over 25 employee commendations, and offered numerous suggestions for potential improvements.

CAC VERITAS Reports (FY2015)

- Total Complaints, 52
- Total Commendations, 26
- Total Questions, 4
- Total Suggestions, 11

Legend:
- Total Complaints
- Total Commendations
- Total Questions
- Total Suggestions
One of the CAC’s most important duties is to provide formal input on SEPTA’s core annual fiscal and policy documents, including the Operating Budget, Capital Budget and Program, and Annual Service Plan. In FY2015, the CAC received advance briefings on these documents from SEPTA staff at its plenary meetings. After attending public hearings, open houses, and consulting with constituent groups, the CAC submitted timely feedback on each to SEPTA management.
Success Story | Communities Planning for Better Service

For the second time in the past three years, the CAC submitted a successful proposal in SEPTA’s Annual Service Plan, bringing about a service extension to ensure that bus routes adapt to community needs. During FY2015, CAC Chair Philip Dawson assisted residents and businesses in Philadelphia’s Hunting Park neighborhood in advocating for the provision of bus service on one of the area’s major commercial corridors. By coordinating the efforts of various stakeholders who already supported the project and helping proponents craft a professional proposal for review by SEPTA staff, CAC assistance helped transform longtime rider suggestions into reality. The SEPTA Board voted to approve the Route 53 extension along Hunting Park Avenue and other proposals in the FY2016 Annual Service Plan at its June 2015 meeting. The good news comes in the wake of a successful 2013 proposal advanced by former CAC Chair Aissia Richardson which resulted in the extension of SEPTA’s Route 3 into Fairmount Park’s popular Smith Playground.
Major Project Review: SEPTA Key

With the debut of SEPTA Key, SEPTA will embark on a long-awaited modernization of its fare payment system which will place it at the cutting edge of American public transportation systems. The rollout of this comprehensive new technology will also bring about a significant change in the way that customers experience SEPTA. As the official advocate of the riding public to SEPTA, the CAC is at the forefront of review and testing for the Key. CAC representatives participated in early stakeholder focus groups that were convened at the inception of the New Payment Technologies project, providing feedback on proposed fare structures and alternatives that helped to shape the final plan. As SEPTA initiates the installation of Key infrastructure throughout the system, it has once again turned to the CAC for feedback on implementation and its reception by different segments of riders. In the coming year, CAC members will help ensure a smooth rollout of the SEPTA Key as they participate in pilot testing of the technology and report their findings to SEPTA staff.

CAC members tour the SEPTA Key Testing Center and inspect new fare gates to be installed on the system.
As SEPTA works to increase system capacity, it has allocated funding for the design and purchase of new bi-level railcars in its Capital Budget. Already familiar to riders of New Jersey Transit and some other transportation authorities throughout the country, these double-decker vehicles will allow SEPTA to continue to grow in the wake of years of record Regional Rail ridership. As SEPTA staff began the procurement process, the CAC was called upon to advise them on the specifications of the new vehicles. Balancing such factors as carrying capacity, seat and aisle widths, and luggage space, the CAC’s Regional Rail Subcommittee devised recommendations on car designs in order to provide a superior passenger experience. Features recommended by the CAC that SEPTA staff incorporated into initial specifications include larger seats in 2x2 pairs, bicycle storage devices, and an on-board Wi-Fi network.
Subcommittee Initiatives: Transit

The Transit Subcommittee of the CAC studies and reports on all SEPTA surface and rail transit services, including bus, subway/elevated trains, trolleys, trackless trolleys, and the Norristown High Speed Line. Major initiatives advanced during the past year include:

- **Service Evaluation Survey:** This collaboration between Transit Subcommittee members and SEPTA staff produced a standardized survey form for CAC members to utilize when riding the system in order to generate usable data on service quality.

- **PATCO Interoperability:** The Transit Subcommittee advocated for a long-term focus on improved interoperability between SEPTA transit and PATCO’s subway line, beginning with a focus on seamless transfers between the new SEPTA Key and PATCO fare systems.

- **Bicycles on the System:** The Transit Subcommittee initiated a comprehensive inquiry into how bicycles are accommodated on the SEPTA system, how policies can be improved to facilitate convenient bicycle commuting, and how to balance the needs of cyclists and other riders.

- **Responding to Acute Issues:** The Transit Subcommittee regularly serves as a forum for introducing and pursuing solutions to miscellaneous issues that members of the CAC and their constituents note on the system.
Subcommittee Initiatives: Regional Rail

The Regional Rail Subcommittee of the CAC maintains a special focus on all issues related to SEPTA’s extensive Regional Rail network.

- **Evaluation Metrics**: Like the Transit Subcommittee, the Rail Subcommittee has developed evaluation metrics to enable members to produce usable data as they ride the system and consider service quality.
- **CAC Brochure Development**: The Rail Subcommittee has taken the lead in developing the CAC’s first public information brochure in recent memory. This publication will play an important role in CAC outreach activities in the coming year.
- **Historic Train Station Designation**: Recognizing that rail stations are an integral part of their communities and often architecturally and historically rich in their own right, the Rail Subcommittee initiated a project to identify historic stations and recommend them for formal designation. At the Subcommittee’s urging, the CAC formally supported the installation of a historic marker at the Jenkintown Train Station.

The CAC’s Regional Rail Subcommittee engages in a roundtable discussion about new bi-level coach designs with SEPTA’s Assistant General Manager for Operations, Ron Hopkins.
Internal Administration

During the past two years, the CAC has devoted considerable time to strengthening its internal structure, administrative practices, and recruitment processes. Significant achievements include:

- **Bylaws Update**: For the first time since the 1980s, the CAC completed a comprehensive review and update of its bylaws, clarifying its administrative practices for the benefit of new members and SEPTA staff.

- **Onboarding and Orientation Manual**: For the first time in its history, the CAC has developed an internal onboarding manual to help acquaint new members with information about the Committee, SEPTA, and public transportation in Philadelphia, ensuring that future appointees have the tools they need to become knowledgeable and navigate in their new roles.

- **Subcommittee Structure**: The CAC engaged in a deliberative process to evaluate its subcommittee structure and ensure that it was conducive to the fulfillment of its legislative mandate.

- **Streamlined Recruitment**: Both SEPTA and the City of Philadelphia worked to rapidly fill vacancies on the Committee and more broadly advertise for applicants, ensuring adequate representation for all riders and bringing a new pool of talented, enthusiastic public transportation users to the CAC.

In partnership with SEPTA staff and appointing agencies, these initiatives are creating a strong, efficient, active, and diverse CAC that is well-equipped to serve as the primary link between the riding public and their public transportation authority.
Conclusion

Fiscal Year 2015 at SEPTA was marked by record ridership, an improved outlook for public transportation funding, and a celebration of the Authority’s 50th Anniversary. As SEPTA embarks on promising campaigns to modernize and rebuild its system, the CAC’s role as an impartial advocate for the riding public and a focus group for new policies and projects is as important as ever. The CAC’s growth and achievements during the past year will serve as a springboard for increased public engagement, timely analyses, and new service proposals that will cement its role as a crucial connection between SEPTA and its customers.

Please visit www.septa.org/partners/cac to learn more about our members, view our public meeting schedule, and contact us with your questions and ideas.