



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE Minutes

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives:

Ken Carlson, Chair
Tom Lamar, Vice Chair
Charlie Denison, Secretary
Alex Anderson
Alex Epstein
Enid Kumin
Alan Moore
Brian Postelwaite
Brandon Stafford
Sara Wasserman
Ian Woloschin

Ex-Officio:

Skye Stewart, Office of the Mayor
Matthew McLaughlin, Board of Aldermen
Commissioner Stanley Koty, Department of Public Works
Terry Smith, Traffic and Parking
Deputy Chief Stephen Carrabino, Police Department
Adam Polinski (Acting) Office of Strategic Planning and Community Dev.

Day/Date: Tuesday, November 15, 2016

Time: 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Location: City Hall Basement Lounge

Procedural and General Business - 20 min

- Guest introductions and sign-in sheet
 - o Dor Zhang
 - o Joe Sherman
 - o Ed Nicek
 - o Josh McGrath
 - o Tom Bertulis
 - o Brad Rawson (Director of Transportation & Infrastructure)
 - o Erica Satin-Hernandez (Coordinator, Shape Up Somerville)
 - Erica said SUS works with different community organizations and partners to make sure everyone in Somerville has access to health opportunities. SUS is involved with Safe Routes to School and promoting active transit. She attended the meeting to connect with SBC and find out more about what we do.
- Acting Secretary: (Sara)
- Approved October Minutes.
- Reimbursement of Web hosting fees
 - o Brad said Alan should submit invoices to be reimbursed for web hosting fees. Ken asked if we need W9s to get reimbursed (for future expenses). **Action item: Brad will find out the process by which the SBC can get reimbursed for simple expenses.**

- Thank you letter for Partners Healthcare multi-use path along Orange Line
 - o **Action item: Alan will draft thank you letter to the city and others involved with the creation of this path and will send to the committee before next meeting.** Committee voted to pre-approve it, pending edits and final approval from executive committee. Alan mentioned potential for another path along two unused tracks along the orange line that could connect this path and others in the area.
- New Member Application: Emily Balkam
 - o Ken explained how to become a new member – 6 meetings, show demonstrated interest in one of the 5 Es.
 - o Emily talked about her experience as volunteer co-chair for Transportation Alternatives in NYC, as well as with the BCU (she had previously sent us a letter with a more detailed bio). She has attended eight SBC meetings and is excited to get more involved, particularly with the Encouragement Team. *{note after meeting, Committee members voted and unanimously approved Emily as a member and the Mayor's office also approved within a few days of the meeting- Emily is now an official member of the SBAC!}*

Road Rage / Hit and Run incident – Joe Sherman

- Joe Sherman, who lives in Winter Hill and works as a video producer at Harvard, described his recent crash. He has been a daily bike commuter for years, always follows the rules and previously had no major issues while cycling. He was commuting home Tuesday (11/8) on Central St, approaching the intersection with Medford St. While waiting for the traffic light, he made eye contact with a driver at the light who was looking at her phone. He knocked on her window to ask her to pay attention and tried to politely reason with her. She began yelling so he gave up and faced forward. After the light turned green, he was about halfway through the intersection when he felt himself going over his handlebars. She drove away. Bystanders called 911 and a UPS driver got the license plate number. Police, fire and ambulance responded. He was at the ER until 1 am, had surgery the next day and stayed at the hospital until Thursday. He has an open fracture on his arm and will have a long recovery. He needs his hand for work (video editing) and is a drummer. He is going through the legal process now, working with Josh Zisson.
- {Not covered in the meeting- how we connected with Joe- Ken had heard about the crash through Facebook and connected with Joe by email then phone. Ken put Joe in touch with Chief Carrabino. Joe did not know that there were witnesses or that the driver was identified until he was connected with the deputy chief. Ken also connected Joe with Josh Zisson. Ken invited Joe to the SBAC meeting}.
- Ken asked Deputy Carrabino if texting at a red light is illegal. Deputy Carrabino said yes – you can use phones for GPS/maps or phone calls but can't read electronic media. The offense is non-surchageable so it won't make insurance go up. He said it's not illegal to *hold* a phone while driving.
- Ian asked if Joe had lights. Joe said he always rides at night with lights and reflectors, as well as a bell, a horn and a white helmet.
- Deputy Carrabino said originally the driver was charged with a misdemeanor, leaving the scene of an accident. He got it changed to two felonies – reckless operation and assault/battery with a dangerous weapon. The driver was mailed a citation and summons for arraignment.
- Ian asked how likely the charges are to stick and whether this can be publicized to show that

- drivers can't get away with it. Deputy said once the report hits court you can write about it.
- Joe said his lawyer advised that if it seems intentional, the driver's insurance might agree and not be liable. He'd then be left with medical bills and would have to sue the driver for personal assets.
 - Brad said that testimonial stories can be part of education when appropriate. He asked how we can make sure we're telling stories to gain traction and reduce the likelihood people will engage in this behavior. He said we need a strategy to tell stories that elevates the discourse.
 - Ken mentioned Geren Stone's letter to the editor of the Somerville Times. He also said the committee can look at the intersection to see how it can be made safer, especially as Central St. climbs uphill to Broadway with parked cars on either side leaving no safe place for cyclists. On Summer Street, parking was moved so that the bike lane was on the climbing side of the road. Could we do that? Ken also said Marshall St. will hopefully have contraflow in the next year.
 - Brian asked if we can know the demographics of the driver. Deputy Carrabino said she's a Somerville resident born in 1987.
 - Brad said the incident will get passed along to the mayor.
 - Joe said that when he is able to edit again he would like to help with shooting / editing videos for bike education.

Focus: Winter is Coming- Ken - 15 min

Suggested projects/issues/initiatives to focus on over the Winter

- #1 Priority- Bike Safety- keep working on ideas over the winter
- General
 - o City/BOA related
 - Meet individually and collectively with BOA members
 - Present to City Dept Heads
 - Replace Stan Koty as ex officio member with City Engineer
 - Encourage City to devote set % of transportation funds to bike
 - Ghost write bike safety column for Mayor
 - Promote moving ahead with Vision Zero Process
 - Annual Report- Target date to Adam- Feb 1
 - Including Accomplishments and Goals for 2017
 - Who can drive it? Sara and Tom volunteered to help Ken with Annual Report.
 - Increase SBC membership and increase member and non-member participation in sub teams
 - o Evaluation
 - Tap into data mobility dashboard
 - Help collect baseline data for Mobility study
 - Review Routine street re-paving list- make recommendations for priorities
 - Protected bike lanes- where next?
 - Contra flow- where next?
 - Neighborways- work with Mark Chase
 - Community Path- work with FCP
 - o Engineering

- Increase ties with City Engineering
- Suggested projects
 - Cutter
 - College Ave
 - Elm
 - Lowell St CPX terminus
 - School St
 - Contraflow on Marshall St
- Education
 - Create connection with High School
 - Promote bike safety education
 - Prepare bicycle info for new residents
 - Help schedule Bike Talks for year
- Enforcement
 - Dutch Reach promotion (e.g. parking permit renewals)
 - Bike Box education- on site at intersections?
 - Uber/Lfyt driver education
 - Promote truck safety improvements/restrictions in Somerville
 - Enforcing new 25 mph speed limit
 - (Captain Jim Donovan will be our representative)

Review and Action Items from Meeting with the Mayor- Tom 15 min

- Tom said the meeting with the mayor was productive and the mayor is a strong supporter.
- Tom talked about replacing Stan Koty as ex officio with an engineer from Rob King's organization. Brad said he is not sure who it will be but is working on it. He said the new engineer is starting soon.
- Tom said Skye Stewart is looking into finding a high school teacher to be a liaison.
- Side guards/cross over mirrors:
 - Tom said the city is using Volpe Standards for its own trucks. He doesn't know if that includes cross over mirrors. **Action item: Alex Epstein to update the Committee on the Volpe standards.** Ken asked if they can they be required for truck contractors with the city and how can we lobby for that. Brad suggested speaking up to our aldermen as constituents and said it's on Maryanne's radar with so many construction projects going on in her ward. Brad said it's an opportunity to write in appropriate levels of protection for contractors, which could include training/certification. We can't retroactively change contracts for current projects (Lincoln Park / Beacon) but Somerville Ave (Union to McGrath) is coming up. The design is at 25% and the bid will be put out in March.
 - Brad wants committee to look at the 25% design. The comment deadline is in about 30 days. **Action item: Brad to share the 25% design plans for Somerville Ave with the Committee; Brian to add to Engineering Team meeting agenda.**
 - Brad said we need to talk about the design of Somerville Ave and traffic management during sewer construction in Union, which will last 30 months and have an 18 stage traffic plan and will result in the ripping up of Somerville Ave

- between Union Sq and McGrath Highway. Ken said that's a good reason to push Webster changes forward.
 - There will be a great opportunity to re-think bike facilities on Somerville Ave and the SBC should be bold and consider removal or parking for creation of bike lanes.
- Tom said the mayor liked our idea of his writing a column about bike safety to the Somerville Times. **Action item: Ken will ghost write a column for the Mayor on bike safety and will draft it before the next meeting for review.** Alex A. referenced a relevant blog post written recently by the Vice Mayor of Cambridge. (<http://www.cambridgeday.com/2016/11/12/the-evolution-of-a-motorist-bicycle-safety-will-inconvenience-but-we-must-save-lives/>)
- Brad noted that the end of year would be a good time for the column since it is a time for reflection.
- Tom said they talked about the use of flex posts and vertical elements to more rapidly build up a network of protected bike lanes.
- Tom said they talked a lot about Webster Ave. The mayor liked the Webster option that involved removing parking on both sides. Ken asked if we should start talking to businesses on Webster about parking removal. Brad suggested asking Maryanne her opinion. Ken suggested having a point person for Webster (someone in Ward 2). Ken and Brandon will take this on and will meet with Maryanne. Alex said he could talk to the owners of Workbar, which is nearby. Brian suggested asking Geren Stone to speak with Maryanne. Brandon said Geren's incident is an example of a near-death incident here in Somerville. Brad said Webster will be ripped up by Eversource in the spring and when they restore it (end of school year) we'll have the opportunity to repave, redo markings, etc.
- **Action item: Ken, Brandon and Geren Stone to meet with Maryanne Heuston about parking removal on Webster Ave.**
- Ken asked Brad how he thought the meeting went. Brad said it was a great meeting and the mayor "gets this stuff intuitively." The mayor is encouraging us to be progressive.

Update from City- Adam 30 min

- Update on Senior Transportation Planner position
 - Personnel office is bogged down but hoping to start interviews very soon. It's not too late for other candidates to apply.
- Progress on mobility data dashboard
 - It'll be a couple months before it's up and running. Somerstat is still understaffed.
 - Adam finished entering bike/ped counts, with the exception of a few sheets still coming in. Based on what he has entered so far (30 out of 36), the raw numbers are fairly similar, with slight ped increases.
- Detailed bike facility plan for Beacon St before Winter
 - Adam will attend Beacon meeting on Thursday (11/18). Ken said he measured Beacon between Park and Washington and put together recommendations. The parking lane on Beacon between Washington and Park is "gigantic" – he recommends putting back the bike lane for the winter. Brad responded and said it's a temporary parking lane and there's full intention to create a bike facility there. Ian said the parking lane is being used -- construction equipment is parked there almost every night. Ken said bike traffic on Beacon seems to be back to what it used to be. He said we need bike facilities one way or the other on the upper part of Beacon.

- Timing of striping for Highland and Summer St
 - o Adam said Highland is basically done and working pretty well so far. Ian said it works really well but asked if we can put bollards where cars are turning right onto College Ave since a lot of cars are moving into the bike lane there before they turn. Adam will look into it but said it won't happen before winter. He will investigate if cones could be put down. Ian asked if there are plans for more green paint and Adam said there are no plans for more green paint. **Action item: Brandon said engineering will come up with a bollard design to help with this problem over the winter.**
- Summer street
 - o Adam said the striping is nearly all complete on Summer St, including bus stop markings. Ken said we should take photos of Summer Street and post in Facebook to tell people how to bike downhill toward Union using the sharrows. Ken asked about super sharrows going downhill toward Davis. Adam said they won't be added due to that section's pavement quality but that regular sharrows could be considered. Ken said it'd be helpful to have a brainstorming about where to add sharrows and/or fix faded bike lanes. Adam said Terry is on top of the maintenance aspect. Ken said we should think about new facilities where they make sense.
- Dane Street- Timing for re-paving in 2017 and current plans for bike facilities
 - o **Action item: Adam will send 100% plans for Dane St**, which are similar to what was discussed previously. There are bike lanes coming from both sections and then at the crest of the hill they turn into sharrows going downhill. Adam said there's a five-foot lane on one side and two 10-foot travel lanes. They city removed a few spaces by Extra Space Storage and others by Dane and Washington for sight line purposes. Tom said the plan is what we'd expected. Adam said the new lanes/sharrows should happen in the spring.
- Speed limit reductions:
 - o Adam said he is the point person on traffic calming: speed zoning, safety zones, traffic calming, neighborways. The city gets requests all the time for speed bumps from constituents and they want to make the process more transparent. Adam will make a "traffic calming 101" guide for residents and aldermen. Brian mentioned that most of the streets we work on are not traffic calming; they're getting people from place to place. Alan asked about the process for getting a school zone declared. Adam thinks it's through MassDOT but is not positive. Alan is wondering about getting two more streets designated as school zones near the Kennedy School. Ken asked Erica if Safe Routes to School has guidelines for speed. Erica explained a little more about SRTS and said funding offered for SRTS is more to give assistance in terms of education and less about construction.
- Powder House School:
 - o There's a meeting at the West Somerville Neighborhood School tomorrow night (11/16) to present the final design of the park at the Powder House school site, which includes a multi modal path. Everyone is encouraged to go out and support. Tom said he would be there and Adam passed around the plan.

Team Updates- 40'

- Encouragement

- Tour de Somerville in October- Review and ideas for improvement - Alex 5'
 - The event was Saturday, October 29, and had about 37 riders on a drizzly day. It was a quick route through the city covering places on the Scout's Honor list. The ride stopped for a break in Davis and ended at Aeronaut. Perks were the more casual element / socializing. Improvements: Earlier planning would be better. Sara added that three police officers were there and did a great job directing traffic so the group could stay together. Ken suggested combining with Cambridge or Medford next year to mix up the ride and make it longer. Brian said in the past the history ride was always shorter with a lot of stops and the tour de Somerville was longer with fewer stops.
- Illuminations Ride – Brian 5'
 - It will be Saturday, December 16. Brian has posters ready to be printed. He is thinking about relocating the start by the War Memorial building (high school library), to get away from the crowded area with the trolleys. Ken said that's a great idea since it's nearby but separate. Brian said last year there was also concern with cyclists overrunning all the snacks at city hall at the end. Should we finish someplace else? Can we end it with our own stuff at the same place? **Action item: Brian to decide where to end the Illuminations ride.** Brian needs to know by Thanksgiving.
- Education
 - Sara gave a recap of recent team meeting. Laura Borelli shared insight about starting an advocacy club for cyclists at Cambridge Rindge and Latin. The team will work on data collection about Somerville HS cyclists in early spring and continue to work on finding a liaison from the high school. Sara asked Erica about existing data about student cyclists. Erica said the Youth Risk Behavior Survey asks students how they get to school and is given every year. It alternates each year between being administered to middle school students and high school students. **Action item: Sara to follow up with Erica to get a contact person (Corey Mashburn) who can help with getting access to high school survey data.**
 - Sara briefly explained potential public safety campaign to decrease dooring, with the help of Ian's friend, Erez Yoeli, a behavior economist at Harvard. Erez would help design a Facebook campaign that would reach drivers (Dutch Reach) and would reach cyclists that we do not already reach (information about door zone). Erez may apply for funding from Harvard and Yale.
- Engineering- Brian 5'
 - Winter projects
 - Webster
 - Marhsall contraflow
 - Cutter Ave
 - College Ave improvements (general)
 - Elm street improvements
 - Community path terminus at Lowell
 - School Street improvements
 - Powderhouse rotary

- Brian said Powderhouse is one of the most dangerous intersections / most frequently ridden that isn't already being worked on.
- North / south route, working with evaluation
- Neighborways, especially on Gilman and Hancock.
- Design guidance for improvements so we're consistent in recommendations
 - Need to wrap in protected bike lanes; rapid improvement tactical urbanism
- Assembly / Sullivan/ Inner belt path
- Ken: suggests prioritizing and present at next meeting.
- **Action Item: Brian will make priorities survey of Engineering projects with Survey Monkey.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM