



Appointed by Joseph A

Curtatone, Mayor

Date: Thursday, September 16, 2021

Time: 6:30-8:00pm

Location: Virtual Meeting using GoToMeeting: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/539724445>

Community Representatives:

*Ted Alexander

*Ginny Alverson – Vice Chair

*Laura Evans

*Paola Massoli

*Audrey Orenstein – Secretary

*Vitor Pamplona

*Zach Rosenberg – Chair

*Julia Toof

*Emily Vides

Ex-Officio:

*Katjana Ballantyne, *City Council*

*Alexandra Kleyman, *Mobility Division, OSPCD*

*Justin Schreiber, *Mobility Division, OSPCD*

*Kate White, *OSPCD Mobility, Community Outreach*

*=present

Acting Secretary: Julia Toof

Call to order: 6:30 PM

Agenda Item 1: Procedural Business (10 Minutes)

* Meeting Guidelines

* VOTE: Approve August Minutes

Laura Evans motioned to approve, Ted Alexander seconded

Minutes approved unanimously

Agenda Item 2: Subcommittee Updates (20 Minutes)

Education and Outreach -- Aud drafted a letter posted on social media advertising PTAC, 7 responses so far, also in Somerville Times

Engineering - Subcommittee didn't meet

Policy --

Ted they discussed snow clearance, challenges and issues. Zach and Ginny met, too. Would like more perspectives, will send to SASS for input. (next step) Trying to get in touch with Somerville PD to be a liaison -- since they want enforcement. No good responses yet.

Parking study -- Vitor update. He also sent to us. It's going really well, looking at the data moving forward, data collected about 80k people in Somerville, 50K have permits, only have 16K spaces, is it private parking spaces? This is FULL TIME RESIDENT spaces. 42K permits for visitors. Q1 this year -- 25K spots issued -- way more permits than the city can support! Another interesting data point, about 35% of Somerville workers are commuting to Boston, after that, it's Kendall and Harvard Square. Most residents get to Cambridge by biking. Vitor to send the slides. Laura commented on whether parking policy shapes how much parking you need. Tom asked what next steps are?

SLX - Julia T. talking - still analysis phase, public meeting coming up on 9/28, survey still available. Will share all by email and in the chat because they are still seeking user input

School zones - Julia brought up possible effort to have automated enforcement. This is used in NYC and now there is a new policy in Salem, MA that could be a model.. Ted suggested that we discuss next meeting, put together a letter to support. Zach agreed.

Tom Lamar put in chat that there is an upcoming bike meeting -- FYI Bicycle Advisory Committee is hosting our monthly Bike/Walk Breakfast next Friday (Sept 24) 8-9AM at the Whole Foods on Beacon St. Feel free to join us if you're interested, either to co-host, or just drop by. Whole Foods provides the food, we hang out to distribute flyers / answer questions about biking and walking

Agenda Item 3: City Update (50 Minutes)

VZero Working group update - Justin said that the VZ working group formed in April. They are getting everyone up to speed with VZ language and action, building relationships. Approving 1-2 new safety zones every month. Trying to cover entire city by end of 2021. Lots of actions that are 0-2 years.

Pearl St design status - Justin said there have been 370 survey responses, general support for pedestrian and bike infrastructure. Feedback from SBAC, PTAC, SCPD. Focus on traffic calming at mid block intersections and priority intersections at Mt Vernon and Cross. There will also be new signal timing next year at McGrath when there's a lane drop. Vitor - asked when the resurfacing would happen - wasn't it supposed to be this summer? Justin said yes, surfacing and bridge work needed to be done

Brief GLX update - Justin said Lechmere and Union will open soon, December. School Street bridge open for pedestrians.

Zach: - is medford st bridge going to open to cars, or only to pedestrians and emergency vehicles?

Justin: - it will be open to general traffic when it opens, but it could be limited in the future. The issue is that it's not owned by the city, so we would need to coordinate with the state. They had not coordinated with local residents about that, so would need to speak with them.

Tom: Medford St was supposedly definitely staying closed to cars? There is a concern that reopening it, cars would get used to being able to use it again. Justin said for sure that it would open to general purpose traffic in October.

Community path will open when all of Medford line opens

311 topic:

Justin presenting who does different 311 requests.

Jessica Bellow - if you call 311 by phone, they will accurately route the ticket. If you do it on your phone, you might not PICK the right topic. If the request type that is selected isn't the correct one, sometimes it takes a while to make it to the right department.

Jessica Bellow - if you are using a crosswalk and the marking has faded, can be addressed ASAP due to paint. If there aren't curb ramps, that takes a lot longer. Crosswalk needs to be redone.

Jessica: anything that changes built infrastructure takes time. Justin -- sidewalk repair requests - he's talking of things like sidewalk panels.

Ted asked - uncleared sidewalks in winter -- who should take those? Generally, is the city responsible for fixing the sidewalks? Justin : usually the sidewalks are the city responsible, not the adjacent property owner.

Emily Vides: a street like Mystic or McGrath highway, who controls the sidewalks? Justin: MassDOT, it's a MassDOT road. Emily: the people who live on those streets are second class citizens.

Jessica Bellow -- snow removal goes to different people -- some snow removal goes to ISD for ticketing, DPW gets snow removal clearing

Laura Evans - if users cannot input info correctly, that's an interface issue, not a user error

Jessica - agrees ' "we are working on it"

Zach - do you have any analytics on 311 requests? Could you pull top 5 requests?

Justin: they can't yet, but could pull that

Laura: for ADA issues, some confusion -- do you do an ADA request in a form online, or do you use 311?

Justin: will look into it further. Doesn't want to misspeak

Zach: committee for persons with disabilities discussed this at their meeting - current route is 311. There isn't an ADA specific topic, so the topic was still confusing

Call for new PTAC members -

Received 10 applications so far. Planning to interview and looking for diversity - geographic, demographics, travel modes, age.

Project / Planning updates: (given by Justin)

College Ave: Main sidewalk resurfacing is continuing. Traffic commission decision has been appealed, public hearing expected this fall.

Powder House: In progress. Most infrastructure completed, traffic signals still on flash, working with DPW to bag signals soon. Flex posts will be next.

Highland Ave: Highland Streetscape pulled from Spring Hill Phase 1 scope. Surveys and business outreach ongoing. Community engagement process details to come this fall.

Parking Study Task Force meets 9/14

Vitor: on powder house circle, he noticed a lot of close calls because the design is not done yet. Caused by speeding. On the high school, he just passed by - the sidewalk is too thin for the amount of people. Maybe moving forward, we need more space there - the line was huge for the bus.

Zach - at powder house circle as well, thought it was working well. Seemed chaotic at first, but there was more yielding, cars yielding to other cars. Single lane of traffic helps. College Ave -- is plan for bump outs that will remove existing spots - does that need to wait? Justin: that work can go forward - there can be changes during construction

Jessica had talked to Brian Postlewait, director of engineering -- curb work should be done by end of construction season this year. Asphalt / pavement to be done next spring. Kinks to be worked out by final traffic commission decision

Blue Bikes being piloted for free for City and School employees

1400 Somerville High School students receiving pre-loaded Charlie Cards for unlimited travel on subway, bus, commuter rail zones 1-2 this fall

Bike / Ped Counts coming soon!

Agenda Item 4: Other Business (10 Minutes)

Jessica asked if there were a preference for Steve to be guest -- 311 decision or GLX to be discussed by guests? DPW or Mobility? Vitor -- 311 seems to need more help. Aud - lots of GLX info out there. Jessica -- could someone compile this information for Steve so he comes prepared to answer 311 questions? (people nodded) Zach will send out a note for people to send out specific questions.

Aud -- there is a guest -- could you intro yourself? Steven Mackey? Silence!

Zach --anything else anyone would like to hear about? Vitor: utility posts -- how does the city decide when to move them? Jessica Bellows says that Jesse Moos is the construction coordinator -

Meeting ended: 8:00 PM