Somerville Climate Forward
Transportation Working Group Meeting #3
May 22, 2018

Attendees

- Adam Polinski, City of Somerville
- Jocelyn Newhouse
- Phil Baraona
- Fritz Holznagel
- Jonathan Klein
- Dan Flynn
- Hannah Payne, City of Somerville

Facilitating equitable low-carbon transportation

1. Work with MBTA on bus rapid transit and signal prioritization for buses.
2. Create more protected bike facilities
3. Reconfigure parking to meet low-carbon mobility needs

- Strategy is missing the connection to climate adaptation. Include a plan to deal with extreme weather events for buses, bike lanes, and sidewalks. Good opportunity to blend adaptation and mitigation.
- There is little space for protected bike lanes on many of Somerville's roads. In order to add many more facilities, will have to take out street parking. City has already put bike lanes on most of the main roads where parking didn't need to be removed.
    - The parking census is really key in this solution – highlight this more because we will need to make the case for less parking.
- 0-5 year implementation schedule isn't ambitious enough and actions were vague.
- Include Vision Zero commitment and complete streets in call out box.
- Set a goal for bike lanes that is something people can understand and the city can measure (i.e. # of miles)
- Not all streets need bike lanes—paint, planters, and signage work well for low traffic streets.
- Make stronger argument against parking in write-up.
    - Allow for more underground parking within zoning – save public space for public uses – not parking of private vehicles.
- Bring more car sharing services into the city and expand Blue Bikes.
- What about dockless bikes? Somerville has an exclusive contract with Blue Bikes.
- The precedents listed are helpful. An international comparison could be helpful for providing a more ambitious example.
- Having safe biking lanes will actually change hearts and minds—more people will change how they get around.

Establish roadmap for electric vehicle charging infrastructure build-out.

- Good emphasis on equity and thinking about people who don't have access to a driveway or off street parking.
- How would we fund a low-income, shared EV program? If there isn't a clear funding source (like the CA examples have), the write-up needs to mention that there isn't a clear funding source for a pilot.
- Important to have car share pilot focused on low-income residents.
- Maven Car Sharing is putting a lot of EVs on the road. How do we make it easier for them and other EV car sharing companies to operate in Somerville?
- Interest in the shared autonomous electric pilot.
    - This is the future, so Somerville should be preparing for it.
    - nuTonomy ran a pilot in Fort Point in partnership with Lyft – Assembly Row area would be a good place to have a pilot.
    - At a minimum, the plan should have a line or two about this so it can be used to attract tech companies that might be interested in piloting tech in the city.
- Question: What is the vision for what each street will look like for EV charging? Will every driveway have a charger? Every street?
    - Put in some ideas of what it might look like to help people understand where we are heading, even if full vision isn't clear yet.
    - In the absence of a comprehensive vision for the future of EV charging, the all of the above strategy works for now to see what works best in Somerville.
- What are options for faster charging in public areas?
    - EV owners would likely pay for charging on fast chargers.
    - Electric charging doesn't have to be free.
- Lamppost/ curbside example – Would there be a meter? The example costs might be incorrect.
- For the public charging stations: How much power do we supply now? How much does it cost?
- Are there any practical limitations (energy demand) to significantly expanding charging demand?
    - Curbside charging would mostly be at night when there is less demand.
    - Utilities see benefit of EVs because widespread adoption will result in more electricity use.
- Implementation schedule: 0-5 years is all evaluation without implementing, could do more sooner. Should be more ambitious.
- EV charging station with solar panels?
- Could there be incentives for installing charging at home?
    - Work with permit/ building code people to make it easy to get high voltage panel – 240 volt don't need permit.
    - Make simple resource for residents about EV ownership in Somerville (what do you need to do to charge at home, public options, etc.)

    - Make sure there is extra capacity in panels for charging—don't preclude charging infrastructure to be installed.
- Include EV readiness in point of sale/lease disclosure. Putting it in there will make developers think about it.
- Air quality argument is really compelling to folks against driving. Could pull this out to highlight additional benefit to EVs/ not driving.
- Look to what Somerville has control over to manage parking and vehicle emissions. For example, Somerville has control over parking permits. Can we regulate through more expensive permits for high emissions vehicles?
- Additional Tier 2 solution under state lobbying: keep CAFÉ standards.

Metrics and Targets

- The goals and actions are not ambitious enough.
- 1-5 year implementation steps are either too vague or we are already doing them.
    - Need to set more aggressive and more specific goals.
    - Might help to break 0-5 year range into 1-2 year and 2-5 years.
- Realistic goals are helpful because the city can demonstrate that it get things done. Builds confidence in city capacity.
- Aggressive goals that we might not meet are motivational.
- Make is clear how much these actions are reducing emissions and how far they are getting us to carbon neutrality.
- EV Metrics
    - Is the 21% emissions reduction in EV solution coming from 100% renewable electricity or from current grid?
    - Metrics that get us to carbon neutral for EVs are helpful for advocacy.
    - Add metric about charging station installations.