



## SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES – APRIL 2021

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

### Community Representatives

X Tom Lamar, Chair  
X Lena Webb, Vice Chair  
X Ted Lester, Secretary  
X Ken Carlson  
Gregory Ely

X Ted Feldman  
X Alex Frieden  
Mark Vollinger  
X Ian Woloschin

### Ex Officio

Katjana Ballantyne, City Council  
Viola Augustin, OSPCD Mobility  
Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility  
Eric Weisman, DPW

*X=Attended*

Thursday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 6:30-7:30PM

GoToMeeting link for computers, tablets, and smartphones: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/989889573>

[Technical difficulties - switched to Google Meet <https://meet.google.com/jvv-fxry-cfg> ]

GoToMeeting dial-in number: +1 (872) 240-3212, Access Code: 989-889-573

### Procedural, General Business & Updates (5 minutes)

- Guest introductions and meeting logistics
  - Guests: Arah Schuur, Gavin Lund
- Acting Secretary: Ted Lester
- Will approve minutes for both April meetins at next meeting

### Letters to endorse (10 minutes)

- Signing on to NSC Vision Zero letter – Ken
  - <https://www.nsc.org/road/resources/road-to-zero/call-on-president-biden-to-end-traffic-fatalities>
  - To President Biden endorsing Vision Zero
  - Endorsed by lots of mayors, Mass Bike, lots of individuals
  - Ken motions, Tom seconds. Passes unanimously
  - **Action:** Ken will fill out online form to sign on behalf of committee
- Support for Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant for Highland Ave reconstruction - Tom
  - City staff suggests letter of support
  - PTAC sending an endorsement letter
  - Our letter includes emphasis on bike lanes to support climate
  - Arah: Does accepting grant include anything that would preclude protected bike lanes?
    - Tom: unknown
      - Suggest adding language to letter about protected bike lanes
  - Ted L: Tie bike lanes to climate change, details on permeable pavements

- **Action:** Officers to finalize letter endorsement by adding protected bike lanes and permeable pavement
  - Tom motions, Ken seconds. Unanimously passes

**Focus: Final Spring Hill Project Area 1 feedback (45 minutes)**

- North/south corridors
  - Covered at previous meetings
  - Tom proposed language in slides
    - Less specific than before. Includes criteria and suggested routes

Following up on our north/south routes memo, we request that Mobility identify two north/south bicycle routes, one in the vicinity of Central St and one in the vicinity of Prescott/Quincy. Given the current lack of north/south routes, we believe two routes in the Spring Hill area are necessary. We recognize that part of those routes extend outside Project Area 1, but request that Project Area 1 build the relevant portions of these routes and not preclude future implementation of the remaining routes. These routes should both meet the following criteria:

- extend from Somerville Ave to the Community Path extension, with plausible further extensions in both directions.
- meet Level of Traffic Stress Level 1 criteria. i.e. any portion on arterial roads (Summer, Central, School, or Highland) should be in a protected bicycle lane; on lower traffic streets, a shared lane with traffic calming is acceptable
- when crossing arterial roads, provide a signalized intersection or a raised crossing
- are as direct as possible, minimizing mileage and elevation changes

We suggest the following implementations (but would accept equivalent routes that also meet the above criteria):

- Continue the Central St PBL further south along either Central or Laurel.
  - If Central St, remove parking and bumpouts on Central St for PBL, including the bumpout at the southwest corner of Central and Summer.
  - If Laurel St, remove parking and bumpouts on Summer St between Central and Laurel for PBL
- Provide a low-traffic "neighborway"-style route on Prescott and Quincy that allows two-way biking with extremely low traffic volumes and speeds.
  - Allow two-way bicycling on Quincy
  - Make room for a southbound bike lane at the intersection of Prescott and Quincy, preferably a curb-separated bike lane through the large bumpout
  - Ideally, prevent through car traffic, by adding a median at Summer or by cul-de-sac'ing one or both streets.

- Ian: For Central Street what about intersection with Somerville Ave? That intersection will be difficult for left turns
  - Ted L: Could add something about "addressing Somerville Ave intersection" to Central St. bullet
  - Tom: Any other intersection issues?
    - Ian, other roads should be more normal for left turns.
    - Gavin: In Cambridge, Elm St crossing Cambridge St is adding a refuge island to help with left turns.
    - Tom: Suggest adding "refuge island" to arterial road crossing point
- Tom: Everyone ok with us not including School Street?
  - Ian: ADA requirements for some of the bumpouts
- Ted L: What format will these be delivered?
  - Tom: Suggest consolidating them into a memo with the specific recommendations approved by the committee
- Ted F: Engineering Team also had a point about contraflow lane on Vinal St.

- Tom: Like Putnam, it is not being reconstructed. Can still include, but not critical
  - **Vote** to endorse with amendments to crossing arterial road section and Somerville Ave intersections.
    - Tom motions, Ted F seconds. Passes Unanimously
- Central St Protected Bike Lanes (PBLs)
  - Cross section – 5’ PBLs in both directions with 1.5’ buffers.
  - Sidewalk level with vertical curb
  - Lowers down at driveways and some unsignalized intersections
    - Ian: Issue isn’t dips. Concern is concrete/asphalt intersections causing bumps and unevenness.
  - Alex E – some concerns on slopes. Might be similar to Beacon St.
  - Want to ensure same asphalt cycletrack surface across driveways
- Summer St & mountable curb
  - Suggest two stage left from Central to Summer
  - Why do PBLs start so far back on Central? Likely due to bus turning
- Other Spring Hill Project area 1 feedback
  - Ian: Can Avon St be raised even with bus turning? At least ask for it.
    - Alex F: More info on bus operations would help the committee
  - Alex F: Why are crosswalks further back than straight?
    - Could be traffic calming? Turn radius.
  - Intersection at Highland, why does bike lane go to ground?
    - Like to see it raised
    - Ian: Makes a 13’ speeding lane
    - Ted L: Will also turn into a right turn lane for cars
  - Protected intersection at Central/Highland?
    - Alex F: Start doing some protected intersection treatments even if on 2 corners
    - Tom: Two stage lefts should be enabled
    - Tom: Also ensure don’t preclude continuing on Central northbound
- Recommendations for endorsement:
  - At Summer St, accommodate southbound bikes by removing the curb extension at the SW corner of Summer/Central and adding a left turn box
  - At Summer St and at Highland, keep the cycletrack raised the whole way. Otherwise, we worry it’ll become a right turn lane. If it absolutely has to be lowered, at least keep the travel lane narrower.
  - At minor intersections and driveways, keep the cycletrack fully, uniformly raised, and continuous with asphalt not cement at driveways.
  - We recognize the 85 bus needs to run, but we suggest raising southern section if possible.
  - Build a protected intersection at Highland. At least build out some corners.
- Tom motions, Ken seconds. Passes unanimously

#### Summer St Mountable Curb

- Ken: Cycletracks running along a street with no parking, a mountable curb makes sense. Potential injuries going off a curb. Safety issue.

- Vehicles blocking is a nuisance and a safety issue too
- Ted F: Also uphill so greater speed difference between cyclists
- Ken: If mountable, will reduce (but not prevent) vehicles stopping
- Ian: Can do more with enforcement – get tickets 2 minutes after 8am street sweeping. Use parking enforcement not police.
  - Tom: Unarmed!
- Ian: If mountable, need to ensure people can get off and on
- Lena: Should spring for thermo-plastic green paint since it lasts longer
- Proposal:
  - "While we often have concerns with mountable curbs, we are fine with a mountable curb on Summer St given the constraints, when coupled with proper parking enforcement.
  - - Make it safe for people biking to enter leave the cycletrack as needed without needing to "hop" a curb
  - - Use green thermoplastic to clearly mark the bike lane
  - - Keep moving cars out of the bike lane, even if it's harder to keep parking cars out."
- Ted L motions, Alex F seconds – passes unanimously
- Ted F: Make dipping recommendation generic to whole project

Ended 7:40pm