



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FEBRUARY 2022 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

Community Representatives

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

Ted Feldman
Alex Frieden
Mark Vollinger
Ian Woloschin

Ex Officio

Ben Ewen-Campen, City Council
Viola Augustin, OSPCD Mobility
Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility
Eric Weisman, DPW

Thursday, Feb 3rd, 2022, 6:30-8:00PM

GoToMeeting link for computers, tablets, and smartphones: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/814574693>

GoToMeeting dial-in number: +1 (408) 650-3123, Access Code: 814-574-693

Procedural, General Business & Updates (10 minutes)

- Guest introductions and meeting logistics
 - Kate White
 - George Schneeloch
 - Arah Schuur
 - Roberto Fischer
 - Petru Sofio
 - Nate Kaufman
 - Stephen Mackey
 - Deniz
- Acting Secretary: Ian
- Approval of January meeting minutes
 - **APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY**
- Upcoming events
 - Tom Lamar – March SBAC meeting will be joint with SBAC, PTAC & Commission for Persons With Disabilities
 - Tom Lamar – Bike Network Plan Workshop – 2/9 @ 6:30pm
 - Ted Lester – Bike Talk 2/16 @ 7pm

Focus 1: Pearl St feedback (20 minutes)

- SBAC Engineering feedback
 - Ted Feldman presented the Pearl St Feedback slide deck
 - Pearl St is a case study in the need for a bike network plan
 - Combination of upcoming improvements in Gilman Sq will drive Pearl St to be an important connector
 - Pearl St is a flatter option from Community Path to Sullivan Square
 - Improvements should consider redirecting traffic flow and facilitating “local street” concepts
 - Any planned work on Pearl St now should not preclude future addition of bicycle infrastructure
- SBAC discussion and vote to endorse comments

- Greg – Are permeable filters [forced diversions for motor vehicles] on the table for Eastern Pearl St?
 - Adam – Long term yes, short term no
- George - ADT may climb over time with the development going in near East Somerville. Though I'm not sure if Pearl St is a natural desire line for cars for this new development
 - Ted F – Eastern section traffic numbers are borderline for Bike Boulevard treatment
 - Adam – Speed humps can decrease this by discouraging through-traffic
 - Greg - huge endorse of speed humps. They are great on Morrison.
 - Ted L - Speed humps have also been working well on Powderhouse
- Petru - I think referring to this project as a Neighborhood greenway would be more popular than "Bike boulevard".
- Roberto - A comment, not much of a question: When watching the presentation on Jan 19, I came out with the impression there were few objective criteria that guided specific design decisions.
- Roberto - Are there not any curb bulb treatments that allow for future separated bike paths installed? Either with street-level protected paths or curb-level separated paths?
 - Adam – There are options to do floating curb extensions but Somerville rarely has the width to accommodate and there are potentially drainage impacts
- Greg - Was pearl street on the handlebar survey this fall?
 - Tom – Yes, it was on the section I led
 - Tom - It was considered more stressful than the other neighborway streets on our route, especially crossing McGrath, where it felt like the green light wasn't long enough for folks to bike across.
- Ted F – Does the City have its own set of criteria or design standards to select between traffic calming or more aggressive bicycle infrastructure?
 - Adam – No, we're starting to get there but not right now
- Ian – Did the City reach out to families at ESCS?
 - Kate – Yes, we worked with the PTA about safety on Pearl St, starting to work with ESCS Administration now as well
 - Adam – The fact that Kate is now on the team is the reason this sort of community engagement is happening now!
- Ted F – Moves to endorse engineering recommendations
 - Ted L – Seconds
 - **UNANIMOUS APPROVAL**

Other business (35 minutes)

- Discussion of priorities for quick-build projects – Ted L
 - City requested SBAC identify the top 5 Quick Build properties in 2022
 - Initial Options
 - Mossland
 - White St
 - Elm St
 - Broadway (Bus/Bike Lane Extension from McGrath Highway to Cross St)
 - PBL Materials Trial (Concrete Curbs, Armadillos, Water Barriers, etc)
 - Lower Broadway (Cross St to Mt. Vernon St)
 - Powder House Blvd
 - Park St
 - Western Pearl St (West of McGrath Highway)
 - Petru - I know this would be a pretty tough one, but Beacon really makes sense to me. Going back and properly doing a quick build parking protected lane, now that Somerville has a better network. Cambridge is finishing the Inman Square redesign and is considering a quickbuild Hampshire PPBL this year, so that could be a connect the safe cycling network project.
 - Roberto - +1 to Beacon St and to coordinating with Cambridge plans
 - Tom – Big impact, might be too much community process for a Quick Build

- Greg - For existing quick build projects, what is the city's priority on maintaining/replacing the bike infrastructure? Cedar for example is missing all the flex post after the recent storm including bases. I think there are only a handful remaining unfortunately.
- Alex – Is there a specific spot of Elm St?
 - Ted F – Do it in segments, focus on Elm @ Beech St
 - Ted L – This intersection did get bollards recently
 - Nate – Plans are available (https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/16dyQvjYhEFWz-UqclOnYCiQJQrPvFLx_zXtUjbG6ULw/edit#slide=id.g7563dd4c96_0_2)
 - Ian – Elm is one of the only East/West connectors that doesn't go over the hills
 - Ian – Elm already had a very successful quickbuild on the uphill section
 - Petru - +1 to Elm. Would use this route if it had safe bicycle infrastructure.
- Roberto - One concern I always have with quick builds is what's happened to Washington St, all the way from McGrath to Dane St. What's the maintenance plan for this kind of build?
- Petru - Another idea. Highland and Davis square ? 2 way bike lane between Grove and College with a road diet from 2-1 lane. May be difficult to do, but it would connect the community path gap.
- Petru - Medford also keeps losing its flexposts, especially under the underpass for the GLX, so that would be a good one to do a PBL trial on.
- Committee Recommends (in rough order)
 - Elm St
 - PBL Materials Trial
 - Lower Medford St? Cedar St?
 - Beacon St
 - Broadway (Bus/Bike Lane extension, McGrath Highway to Cross St)
 - Powder House Blvd
 - Mossland
 - Ted L – Motion to vote
 - Lena – Seconded
 - **UNANIMOUS APPROVAL**
- ARPA funding opportunities
 - Tom – Survey by the City
- Introducing proposed resolution that “the city only create parking protected facilities if year round vertical separation can be achieved so that we don't get parked vehicles encroaching on the bike facility”- Ian
 - Deniz – Live on Washington St, cars park purposefully away from traffic to protect themselves
 - Deniz – Cargo bike doesn't fit around the corner by Ricky's Market
 - Roberto - The flexposts at Washington St were gone within a month, all of them (I live there, watched them go one by one)
 - Tom – Refer to Engineering & Eval
 - Ted F – **lan to write up a google doc and share with Engineering & Eval** (Last Thursday of the month)

City Update (25 minutes)

- Upcoming projects & general city update
 - Holland St working on final pavement markings plan
 - Pearl St community meeting on 1/19, feedback collection until 2/21
 - Western Washington Mobility Improvements meeting on 3/1
 - Gilman Square Redesign – Requesting Joint Committee Meeting to review plans
 - Parking & Curb Use Study has wrapped up
- Washington/Webster signal retiming and impact on biking
 - Signal operations were redesigned in 2017, concerns have been raised regarding the safety of the concurrent pedestrian phases
 - PTAC advised a new signal pattern with an exclusive pedestrian phase with a yield control on Bow St slip lane, SBAC will have an opportunity to weigh in

- Alex – School communities tend to favor exclusive pedestrian phases, also recommend bike leading interval to avoid right hooks
- Tom – Somerville Ave to Webster Ave or Somerville Ave are difficult on a bicycle without a leading interval
- Tom – The City should also look at the impact of two stage bike turns on how long a cyclist might have to wait
- Petru – Agree with Tom about getting stuck in a two stage turn box, leading transit intervals are also important
- Petru – PTAC might not agree but allowing cyclists to use the exclusive pedestrian phase might help with the high amount of bicycle turning movements
- Ted L – The slip lane should be yield control!
- Ted F – How does the City factor in pedestrian volume & street cross section when factoring in exclusive pedestrian phasing
 - Adam – Somerville has defaulted to exclusive everywhere, trying to explore best alternatives, looking to other regional partners are doing, will probably create our own policy
- Alex – Remove the slip lane
- Alex – This is an interim condition?
 - Adam – Yes, several years at most before more changes
- Alex – Why not both concurrent & exclusive phasing?
 - Adam – We explored that, but didn't factor in yield control on the slip lane so it didn't score highly, can redo the analysis, concurrent phasing requires long enough cycles for a pedestrian to cross which could decrease level of service
- Petru – Are any intelligent signals being looked at to adapt to current demand?
- Petru – Would exclusive phase be a scramble?
 - Adam – Crosswalk timing is timed fairly slowly, so scramble is fine for most, but not everyone
- Ian – What prevents cyclists from going through an exclusive pedestrian phase?
 - Adam – Nothing
 - Ted F – Many cyclists do not feel comfortable waiting for the green and contending with cars