



## SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE JULY 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

### **Community Representatives**

Ken Carlson

### **Attendees, Members:**

Gregory Ely

Ted Feldman

Lena Webb, Vice Chair

Ted Lester, Secretary, Acting

Chair

### **Attendees, Ex Officio:**

Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility

Thursday, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 6:30-8:00PM

GoToMeeting link for computers, tablets, and smartphones: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/800744765>

GoToMeeting dial-in number: +1 (872) 240-3412, Access Code: 800-744-765

### **Procedural, General Business & Updates (20 minutes)**

- Guest introductions and meeting logistics
- Acting Secretary: Ted Feldman
- Gaps in upcoming acting secretaries – Ken (tentative) confirmed for Aug, Lena to chair
- Approval of May and June meeting minutes
  - There was a noted correction of the title of the minutes from Agenda to 'Minutes'
- Upcoming events: Time was allotted for discussion of ideas/leaders for encouragement and/or education events
- One event discussed was an upcoming Bike breakfast on July 30<sup>th</sup>, 8 – 9 am at Whole Foods on Beacon. Ian confirmed the event.
- Additional volunteers were requested, and the Teds tentatively volunteered, will confirm ahead of time
- Ken raised the upcoming Bike Talk, the following week (still virtual) to be given by Phil Goff, who will discuss bike facilities in Arlington
- Ken asked if August's can be in person. He already got the okay with the event host, Aeronaut. Adam to confirm with the city, Ken will plan for in-person
- Ken mentioned that Bay State Bike Month was re-scheduled for September on account of the Pandemic. Ted L would like to see a couple of events. Lena raised the issue that it is a large task for just one person. Ken pointed out that it has been a historic problem of Education and Encouragement to have insufficient human power to coordinate and plan events. Ken would like to see "all hands-on deck" for Sept events. Galen Mook [executive director of MassBike] has scheduled several events. Lena suggested we collaborate and table at these events – Ken will ask Galen. Arah will provide minutes from last Education and Encouragement Subteam meeting, which has been dormant, also on account of the Pandemic.

### **Focus 1: Pearl + 6 (20 minutes)**

- Adam Polinski presented plans for updated intersections near the Pearl St reconstruction.
- Adam explained that typical programs have either been state-supported capital programs requiring major investments and on the other end of the spectrum quick build projects involving markings and paint.

- With improvements to Powder House, this City has begun a new approach under Chapter 90 funds for maintenance as mobility has worked more with engineering and other city departments. The Pearl + 6 package represents the first set of projects in this portfolio and under this approach.
- The City Engineering and Mobility Departments are collaborating on the inception of a new contract for street resurfacing and streetscape designs. Features of the projects include:
  - Improved focus on safety improvements
  - Informed by community feedback and crash data:
  - The first package to be constructed is named, Pearl St plus six high-value nearby intersections:
    - Temple at Heath/Sewall – choice informed by crash data
    - Cross St at Everett Ave – informed by crash data and will include a raised crosswalk
    - **Additional interventions are designed to improve permanence and to transform paint and post into more durable traffic calming interventions, more proactive:**
      - Walnut St at Gilman St – will create a bicycle path to facilitate bike access in park and a dedicated bike path with access to Community Path extension
      - Cross St at Gilman St/Oliver St features a raised intersection
      - Glen St and Oliver St will include a mini-roundabout. City staff are checking to ensure compatibility for all vehicle types. The roundabout will be 15 ft in diameter.
      - Franklin St @ Oliver St + Franklin Ave – raised intersection, curb extensions
- Discussion of results and suggested next steps – all
  - General Questions:
    - Ted L. suggested adding wayfinding
    - Ken suggested attention be paid to beautifying Oliver St as a neighborway and making it a shining example of neighborway or street painting. Adam will discuss with Mark Chase.
    - Ken asked about how the City plans to make Cross more bikeable. Adam replied that there is no official position from City on Cross
    - Ken also asked if there are any updates on Pearl. Adam explained that the City’s survey recently closed and that there are no updates to share today.

**Focus 2: Dangerous Intersections (20 minutes)**

- Discussion of unsafe intersections in Somerville
  - Examples of good and bad intersections
- Engineering/Evaluation approaches including raised crosswalks
  - Ted F discussed NACTO references and double edge sword of raised crosswalks namely that they alone do not impact vehicle speeds
  - Lena pointed that even at protected intersections, turns should be hardened to reduce traffic speeds
  - The discussion then turned to good/bad protected intersection examples (slides sent by Ted L)
    - Ted F: highlighted good examples including the W. Somerville Neighborhood School
    - Bad Examples discussed included Beacon and Oxford and Beech and Elm Street
    - Ken raised point that could use Ruby Lake make drivers aware of bikes. Ted F. seconded this point
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- Education/Encouragement/Enforcement/Equity approaches
  - Use of beware of turning car signs was discussed. Mixed opinions about the effectiveness and whether this will be interpreted to place the onus on cyclists.
- Suggested next steps
  - Engineering and Eval will come up with a list of 3 – 5 dangerous intersections prioritized using review rubric and will present to Mobility (e-mail to Adam).

### **City Update (30 minutes, presented by Adam Polinski, OSPCD)**

- Updates on summer construction projects (including SAUSI, Lower Medford St, Wellington Bridge, Washington St Underpass, and Powder House Circle) were presented
  - Paving was delayed by weather scheduled for early week of 7/12
  - Striping to begin following week

#### Lower Medford

- Flexposts were installed. Final striping was delayed by rain but will hopefully be conducted within the next week

#### Wellington Bridge PBLs

- Waiting on date from contract to put finishing touches – signs, flex posts, symbols
- Ramp work expected this summer – needs DCR approval

#### Washington St Underpass

- Sidewalks/retaining walls completed mill/pave between Tufts and Joy
- Crews installed markings last couple of weeks final red bus lane application scheduled for next Monday.

#### College Ave

- Sidewalk reconstruction underway South. Powder House Circle
- Link to story map <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/3aac59b5ced24ddc89c182a7718fbf90>
- Adam explained that Holland reconstruction likely won't begin until Spring 2022
- Changes from community meetings and feedback have incorporated into plans
- Needs to be approved by Traffic and Parking commission, to be presented next Thursday, July 15th

#### Powder House Circle

- Contract being finalized goal to have implementation begin and end in August, dependent on contractor's schedule and crew availability
- Expecting to release a storymap next week as part of final outreach. Working to have message boards places on at least one or two approaches to help increase project awareness.

#### Update on expedited Mystic/McGrath improvements by MassDOT

- Adam explained that the new crosswalk across McGrath at Blakeley installed
- Raised crosswalks planned at four locations in vicinity of Kensington Connector as well as spot ADA improvements at different locations within larger intersection area. Design has begun, but the final timeline is not yet known.
- MassDOT committed to a feasibility study for noise wall along I-93
- None of the changes will come out of original 6M budget

#### Boynton Yards streetscape design

- No updates were added by Adam/the City
- Ken asked what is plan for cart width/issue? He feels that there are opportunities for additional bicycle network connection that are currently missing from the plan.