



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives

Tom Lamar, Chair
Katie Pierce, Vice Chair
Emily Balkam
Ken Carlson
Ted Feldman
Kevin McGrath
Alan Moore
Mark Vollinger
Lena Webb
Ian Woloschin
Michael Weber

Ex Officio

Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility

Guests

Gregory Ely
Ellyn Thompson
Arah Schuur
George Schneeloch
Nate Kaufman
Audrey Orenstein
Brian Postlewaite, OSPCD Mobility
Jesse Moos, OSPCD Mobility

Thursday, December 5, 2019, 6:30-8:00PM, Somerville Public Safety Building Academy Room, 220 Washington St

Procedural, General Business & Updates (20 Minutes)

- Guest introductions and sign-in sheet
Reports of both good and bad snow clearance in Somerville, e.g. good on Broadway and particularly bad in Cambridge/Kendall area.
- Acting Secretary: Michael
- VOTE: Approve November Minutes
November minutes got approved.

- Zoning overhaul update – Tom/Arah
Arah: Version 5 overhaul meeting scheduled for Tuesday next week (Dec 10 2019). Of particular interest for SBAC are point 53 (removal vehicle parking minimum outside transit-oriented areas – accounts to ~2%% of Somerville, remaining area is within transit-oriented areas and already w/o minimum), point 67 (minor change to designing bike racks) and point 68 (change in bike parking spacing).
Tom: Reminder to send letters with comments before Tuesday meeting.
- Volunteer needed: social media point person – Ken
Ken: SBAC needs a social media person. Social media posts have fallen off significantly over the past months. Several members and volunteers should contribute, but we need a person coordinating the efforts. Anthony did it for a while and it is an important aspect of our education efforts and for announcing bike talks, among others.
Ian: Volunteering for a limited time.
Tom: Will provide Ian w/ account logins and other information.
- Upcoming events
Tom/Ian: SBAC January meeting scheduled for January 2 but will be postponed to January 9. Majority of SBAC members and volunteers and city representatives indicated a preference for January 9 over January 2.
Mark: Santa Cycle Rampage happens this Saturday, December 7.
Audrey/Arah: Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for January 16, 6:30pm, Somerville Public Safety Building Academy Room, 220 Washington St.
further down: Broadway meeting, Illuminations Ride

Focus 1: Washington St (25 min)

- Proposed Washington St design – Alex F
Alex Frieden could not attend this meeting due to a conflicting appointment. Presentation of the proposed design is moved to SBAC January meeting.

City Update (40 min)

- Central Broadway – Adam
Overhauled crosswalk installed at Fenwick/Thurston. Data collection to analyze impact of changed street layout started, partly due to push from residents. City will use these data to start and understand changes in traffic patterns including side streets. A company got hired and is working on it. First data is expected to go public next Monday. Month of September saw more crashes than average, October and November showed crash rates below average – decreased number of crashes overall. Average travel speeds were lower for that period. MBTA data on bus speeds and ridership will be included and first numbers are up by a lot.
The presentation was followed by a longer discussion involving Adam (It might take years to see positive effects – hard to predict.), Ted (Can we deconvolve anecdotes of more congestions? [Difficult]), Arah (Are side streets included? [Yes]), Katie (How does the study connect to broader efforts in Somerville?), Lena (Can we compare impact of bridge closures vs. new bus/bike lanes? [Difficult]), Ken (80% of cars are transient drivers and no residents – effect on those might be low. The city needs a signal engineer to adapt traffic lights to changes in street layout!), Alan/Ian (We need to encourage people to think about why they use their car.), Kevin (Focus attention and efforts on safety.), Arah (Will talk to bus riders at 7:30am and collect comments, members and volunteers are welcome to join.).
Meeting: Monday, Dec 9, 6pm in the Chambers

Ken: Join the meeting on Monday. SBAC received great positive comments on Broadway, but the public meeting might get heated and needs support from SBAC.

- **Bike network plan – Adam**
*The city started internal scoping meetings and now has a staff of mobility planners to move forward with designing a bike network plan. Some of the main questions: The city has a budget of \$40,000 – how should this be spent? Upcoming costs include for consultants, among others. How much do we have to include bus riders and pedestrians? Should the plan be for mid-term (specific construction plan) or long-term (visionary plan)?
The external kickoff will happen in early 2020.*
- **Citywide parking study – Adam/Greg**
*Data collection study including an inventory of loading zones and types of parking got initiated. Remaining money will be used to evaluate next steps. A cool/awesome smartphone app for tracking parking utilization is coming up.
Ian: When can we see first results? – Greg: City is aiming at a quick turnout.
Ian: Are best practices for snow removal/parking included? – Greg: Yes.*
- **Vision Zero Action Plan**
*The plan is almost complete. First draft of a Somerville map with a layer showing a “high injury network” of streets including Highland Ave, Somerville Ave and Broadway.
Nate: How does this connect to the bike network plan? – Adam: Something to discuss. A strong correlation is expected. The main arteries are used by both motorized vehicles and cyclists. The city needs to work out how to provide a safe network of bike routes.
Ken/Jesse: The last stretch of Cycle Grip on Beacon St is scheduled to be applied next week.
Mark/Adam/Jesse: Flex posts are coming back to the corner of Somerville Ave and Washington St.*
- **Short overview on who is working on what – Brian/Jesse**
*Brian: Working on how to prioritize street/sidewalk reconstruction, plus sewer work.
Jesse: Communicating and coordinating construction projects w/ companies.*
- **Eversource’s 2020 schedule – Jesse**
*This is the first time Somerville gets a list of planned gas work from Eversource for the upcoming year. The plan includes 25 streets, e.g. Vinal Ave and Summer St. In general, resurfacing will not happen, as that is typically scheduled for the year after the gas work. If a street is about to be resurfaced within the next 5 years, Eversource needs to do it right after the project is completed. This will for example apply to Cherry St. Bike infrastructure needs to be renewed by the contractor. Now, the city has the staff to make sure it gets done.
Arah: How can we help to track down not-renewed bike infrastructure? – Jesse/Adam: Report to 311, especially if it isn’t done by July.*
- **National Grid’s 2020 schedule – Jesse**
*Brian: The rough dividing line between Eversource and National Grid is the new GLX route, with Eversource covering the South, National Grid the North.
The National Grid plan includes 7 streets, e.g. Cross St, Pearl St and Gilman St.*
- **Communication with construction team – Jesse**
Reminder to sign up for the construction newsletter – send an email with “Signup” to construction@somervillema.gov. If you have any questions – reach out by the email mentioned before or by phone: 617-625-6600 x 5400.
- **FY2020 street reconstruction projects – Brian**
*Holland St & College Ave
The city proposes to install temporary bus/bike lane towards each of the squares, respectively. Parking lanes would be closed during commuting hours (typically 6-9am and 4-7pm [tbc]).*

Outside of those hours, parking will be allowed and a bike lane will be available. To accommodate this, the shared bus/bike lane will be painted w/ a dashed line that marks marking the border between parking and bike lane.

Ian/Mark/Ellyn: Please visualize the shared bike/car lanes outside of this special pattern as it is done on lower Medford St (advisory bike lane).

Elm St

Sidewalk reconstruction is planned for next year.

Additional work on College Ave from Powderhouse Sq to City Line might get done if enough money remains.

Ian: What is the schedule for the proposed projects? – Brian: The projects start as early as June/July (in which case they might be done by winter) and in autumn at the latest (then they will not be done by winter).

Ted: Is the pilot on Holland St still happening? – Brian: Probably not if we do the temporary bike lane anyway.

Emily: Why is Powderhouse Circle missing? – Brian/Adam: The draft plan is here, and the paint-only version might be done in spring, but no repaving.

Tom: What is the deadline for SBAC's input on bus design? – Brian: Provide any comments rather sooner than later, otherwise design and construction might get delayed.

- *Five-year plan for street reconstruction – Brian*

The plan is under review and scheduled to come up in January/February. The city is working on prioritizing streets. Still pending are the inclusion of vision zero and the bike plan.

Education & Encouragement (5 min)

- *Illuminations Tour – Arah/Brian*

Ride happens on Saturday, December 14 and starts 6pm at City Hall. SPD will provide escort. Ride is expected to take about 90 minutes.