



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE JANUARY 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives:

Tom Lamar, Chair

Katie Pierce, Vice Chair

Ted Lester, Secretary

Ian Woloschin

Emily Balkam

Michael Weber

Ken Carlson

Ted Feldman

Alex Frieden

Kevin McGrath

Alan Moore

Mark Vollinger

Lena Webb

Ex Officio:

Katjana Ballantyne, City Council

Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility

Deputy Chief Steve Carrabino, Police Department

Thursday, January 9th, 2020, 6:30-8:00PM, Somerville Public Safety Building Academy Room, 220 Washington St

Guests: Alex Epstein, Lillian Worth, Zachary Rosenberg (member of the Pedestrian and Transit Advisory Committee), Greg Ely, Rachel Gottlieb, Nate Kaufman, Arah Schur

Procedural, General Business & Updates (20 Minutes)

- Guest introductions and sign-in sheet
- Ice breaker question- what are the Streets we would most like to see worked on in 2020?
 - Highland Ave- Six votes
 - Elm St- Five votes
 - Powder House Circle- One vote
- Acting Secretary: Ken Carlson
- VOTE: Approve December Minutes- unanimously approved
- Annual report for 2019
 - Team Leads encouraged to start thinking about your Team section
 - First draft due date to be determined
 - Final Draft due by March meeting
 - Kevin and Katie volunteered to edit the Annual Report
- Team Leads- Start working on their sections
- Volunteer needed: Somerville Bicycle Committee Newsletter
 - Katie- will do February, looking for someone else to take over. Ken to help Katie get up to speed
 - Jan 25 Bike Lash Training- BCU
- Upcoming events

- Neighborways update request- Ian mentioned how much he has enjoyed the Hancock St Neighborways on his new commute route. We'd like Mark Chase come to a future meeting Central St- One vote

Focus: White St (10 min) - Alan

-There is a strong desire to have contra flow on White Street. Already many people who bicycle contra flow on White Street (as many as one third of the bicycle traffic) as it is a major desire line for bicycling. White Street is a low volume street (300 cars per day) and is shared between Somerville and Cambridge (Cambridge owns the street and side walk on the west side and Somerville owns the sidewalk on the east side). What's needed is to add to the existing "Do Not Enter" sign at the intersection with White Place, an "Except Bicycles" language wording.

-The Engineering/Evaluation Committee met and came to consensus about contra flow design for White Street: 1) To propose that the City asks Cambridge to install signage for contra flow without taking the step of bringing this to the Somerville Traffic Commission; 2) To not switch parking from east to west side of street, despite a small gain in parking spots from the switch since such a switch will require more approval

-The Committee and Adam recommended that we bring this through the Traffic Commission process. We should get this on the February TC meeting agenda. Support from City Councillor and coordination with Cambridge and action by Cambridge will clearly be needed.

-Action- Alan to determine if Mark Neidergang is in support of the contra flow proposal and if so, Adam will submit a request to support contra flow to the Traffic Commission and to have such support communicated by the City to Cambridge.

City Update (30 min) – Adam/Viola

- Link to Adam's slides can be found [HERE](#).

-The Mayor announced in the State of the City Address that the City will be forming a Department of Transportation. This will result in a New Director Level position

-The Mobility Division, led by Brad Rawson, will be spun out of OSPCD and into the new DOT. The Parking department and some divisions of DPW could eventually be brought under the DOT as well, but those decisions will not be made anytime in the near future.

-Many details still need to be worked out. The City will be enlisting help from NACTO which has helped other, mostly larger, cities form DOT's

- Look ahead at 2020/2021 projects

-Adam showed his running table of ongoing and planned projects (see his slides)

-Beacon St- A request was made by Ken Carlson for crosswalk markings to be applied at Forest St at Beacon St. The crosswalk markings were not completed before the Winter construction moratorium but have created an extremely unsafe condition as many drivers are not stopping at the stop sign and endangering pedestrians and bicyclists. Adam said no crosswalk is planned to be painted until Newport comes back in Spring. Ken strongly requested that the City work outside of the Newport contract and put down temporary markings. Adam said the City's ability to paint street markings has been greatly hampered by MassDOT's review of HiWay Safety Systems contract following the death of a 13 year old girl by one of their drivers. **Action: Adam will bring this request to Brad to see if something can be done in the interim**

-USPS driver consistently parking in bike lanes. Ken Carlson raised the issue of a USPS driver consistently parking along the Beacon St cycle track despite repeated conversations with the driver over this past year and previous years when he was parking in the bike lane. There are

other cars parking along the cycle track too since the mountable curb provides little disincentive to motorists. Adam said the City is considering solving this issue by adding flexposts along the mountable curb. The Deputy Chief said this is actually a Marked Lanes Violation and a ticket could be written against the driver personally. *[Note after meeting- Deputy Chief reached out to the driver's superiors at the Post Office and is confident the driver will not be parking along the Cycletrack]*

-Holland St and College Ave are high priority projects this year- completion could extend to next year. An expedited Community Outreach process will be enacted

-Powder House Blvd- More community engagement will occur. The City feels that Option E conversion is possible

-Lower Medford- Low hanging fruit to finish the protected bike lanes on this street

-Powderhouse Circle- Design is wrapping up and next step will be community outreach

-Clarendon Hill Rotary- City got a significant grant, early design ongoing

-Spring Hill Utility and Streetscape Improvements- Design underway. First public meeting in late Jan/early Feb

-Gilman Square and Ball Square- Re-design of squares is ongoing in light of future GLX stations

-Somerville Ave Utility Work and Union Square Plaza- Lots of construction work ongoing in the square

-Grand Union Blvd- Paint for bike lanes is faded entirely- City is exploring opportunity for protected bike lanes

-Shore Drive- DCR funding is available to improve existing path. City will talk with DCR about widening path for multi-use or adding green buffer with bike lane to the street

-Washington St resurfacing and potential improvements between Union Square and Beacon- Likely 2021 target

-First Meeting of Ped/Transit Advisory Committee is Jan 16

-Vision Zero Action Plan- Open houses in late January/early February

-Gilman Square Re-design meeting will be in February

-Neighborways wayfinding signage has been installed. They City is excited about this

- Washington St underpass design

-Viola reviewed the design showing the bridge, community path and station

-Sidewalks will be re-done

-The design is for two travel lanes in each direction, but because of that we will lose the current dedicated bike lanes. The two travel lanes are somehow mandated by the Environmental Assessment. The City said it is choosing its battles and decided to not fight this for fear of slowing down the project, but the City fully intends to put the dedicated lanes in after the GLX work is complete. Ian strongly objected to removing the dedicated bike lanes and said we should raise this issue with other advocacy groups to protest the design. The Committee is in complete agreement with Ian and will act towards fighting this. **Action: Viola to circulate the Environmental Assessment to the Committee and to ensure the Mayor understands this design issue**

2020 Focus (15 min)- Tabled to next meeting

2019 In Review (15 min)- Tabled to next meeting