



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 2019 MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives:

*Tom Lamar, Chair

*Katie Pierce, Vice Chair

*Ted Lester, Secretary

*Emily Balkam

Ken Carlson

Alex Epstein

*Ted Feldman

*Alex Frieden

*Kevin McGrath

*Alan Moore

*Mark Vollinger

* = Attended

Guests in attendance:

Zachary Rosenbery

Nate Kaufman

George schneelock

Greg Ely

Brad Rawson

*Lena Webb

*Ian Woloschin

*Michael Weber

Ex Officio:

Jill Lathan, Office of the Mayor

Katjana Ballantyne, City Council

Commissioner Stan Koty, Dept. of Public Works

*Adam Polinski, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Dev

*Deputy Chief Steve Carrabino, Police Department

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

Starting late

Procedural, General Business & Updates (15 Minutes)

- Guest introductions and sign-in sheet
- Acting Secretary: Mark Vollinger
- VOTE: Approve August Minutes Tom and Ian motion, approved
- VOTE: Memorial Drive Alliance proposal DCR going through design process. Changes asked by many advocacy groups. Large redesign asking, road diet, more trees larger path.
 - Ted asks if we can join this Alliance, Tom says not joining, but voting to be in favor for Alex asks, does this have something to do with BU bridge, Tom says this is only a high level statement
 - Ian, what does this have to do with Somerville, and how can we make it. Tom says we have many cyclists from Somerville who ride it
 - Lena is in favor of DCR road diet, as it could help other DCR road diets

Kevin this vote is in line with past initiatives with getting groups in the area to sign on.
Tom motioned, Alex seconded, approved

- Zoning overhaul update - Tom
introduced for the 4th time
in the past we have supported this
only 22 homes are currently in compliance
meeting coming up, first public hearing Sept 19th at city hall
We hope people should attend, @ 6pm
City member says we have fed funding to do this, or this was in the past
parking maximums mentioned
this zoning overhaul will give a rule book to the private sector for what the city
wants to go with developments
- Upcoming events
Michael: historic ride Oct 6th, it will be awesome, Tracking the T is the theme
Education team is doing a back to school event, (going home route) using Blue bikes,
kids get month free membership. Organizing with Ward 7. Shape up Somerville involved. Helps
kids with bus schedule. Target date, this month, Steve knows when it is. 25th at 2pm
Lena asks if there is a flyer to post around. Katie is not sure
Emily, mentions about minimum age for blue bikes, this has a mitigation plan in
motion
50 students bikes spread out in Somerville, looking for mechanics, looking for
volunteers, speak to Katie
this initiative to get the bikes in working order
program is called cycle kids
SPD involved to partner
maybe a budget. repairs are can cost money

Focus: Lessons from Beacon Street (30 min) –Ian and Ted

- Lessons learned with the pole: how can we prevent this from happening again?
- Checklist of items that need to be handled before sign off on project
Ian says the pole has been moved!!!
Globe reporter kicked this off and the story hit the TV, then the pole got moved
really quickly.
How to prevent this from happening,
It was in the plan
We need to know the process to call out plan items that were forgotten
naming and shaming works, but it does not feel great
Brad Rawson - History of Beacon St told from city perspective
city staff turn over twice
Eversource said things needed to be upgraded
design changes were not shown to the public
documentation on changes and impediments did not get sent out for

SBAC review.

We need to have more oversight, with good knowledge. <- identified as lesson learned

Katie asks what [sbc] can do to help. Staff answers with, anyone has the right to name and shame, drop dimes with city first. Staff wishes to be at sub meetings to help identify issues.

Alex asks is there a way for [sbc] to come to the staff rather than vice versa. Ted adds [sbc] documents most things in memos and emails, is that the best way? Ted adds should there be a phone check in as a follow up to the meeting? Alan verifies with Brad that someone that DOT signed off to leave a poll in the middle of the track

Ian reads off Ken's memo about items to make sure Beacon is 100% green paint, completed before project signed off as done. Enforcement on traffic rules happens. Raised crosswalks.

All these items are in the original plan, SBC wants to make sure that they finish the project. -> Brad points out he is having these conversations right now and looks forward to reviewing this memo with stakeholders. Brad says DOT is committed to finish this right. Brad recognizes that problems with DOT is indistinguishable to the City in the eyes

Ted moves to vote on memo, Alex moves to vote on memo with changes, Ian seconds vote on memo with changes-> approved.

City Update (35 min) - Adam

- Central Broadway striping timing
 - new lines put down!
 - red is in the middle of process, 2 blocks per night. ASAP schedule.
 - parking seems to be great so far
 - installing signs coming soon
 - T&P doing warning tickets, seems to be working well
 - Ian asks if we have any data improvements yet, Adam says not yet, Maybe November.
 - Oct may be the first full month of complete use
 - Brad suggests to try it out!
 - Katie says this is safer than Medford street!
 - Tom says biking uphill is way better while in a PBL
 - signal control upgrades completed and retiming plans has been completed, waiting on contractor, taking longer than anticipated
 - Brad and Adam overseeing line painting personally, aka working nights out in the field
 - Tom wishes to look over timing plans, Brad agrees and brings up that the city is welcoming troubleshooting conversations
 - Temple gets to keep concurrent protected ped signals
 - concurrent at school street,
 - Main Street had too old of a controller and it is too much money to replace.
 - New signs will be put in place too
 - Adam: Credit goes out to Kittle, to better the City designs. Great breath of fresh air
- Powder House Circle plan
 - Mayor wants to get paint down this year
 - Adam had call with consultant today: looked at proposal that engineering team presented, expert said some of that plan can be used, but still needs some work. Balance

between everything between car through put and not allow people to do stupid things. Avoid fast exists. Timeline known in a few days. Moving for fall implementations, but it may slip into next year, may be the last project of the year.

30% less cars with bridge closure, Brad said, we must do this now.

E&E: no further action items right now

- Powder House Boulevard striping (upgrading to Option E ASAP; and making sure that doesn't preclude Option D)

recent speed humps installed

changes in intersection -> 4 way stop. just a pilot right now

Long lines for uphill bike lane installed, Option B.

We have a plan for option E, take the 7 foot bike lane and swap with 7 foot parking lane and add one more line. Looking to do it soon, depending on flex post ordering.

Q: centerline? A: looking at not installing, city is finding streets are calmer. Center line used when road tapers and other transitions.

Option E will have an unusual problem, lack of parked cars most of the time. We need the separated.

Q: What's the community process to get safe bike lane in both directions A: still need larger staff meetings. [city] to figure out workflow, more community meetings to hash things out. additional parking study, and outreach to neighborhood institutions

Q: is the city committed to safe bike lanes in both directions A: City is committed to Option E this fall. City is open to working with [SBC] for next options. City wants to get to Option E first before moving forward.

Q: SBC worried about the city looking like they did a bait and switch with some of these plans, and be in the same place publicly in 6 months to a year. A: City is looking forward working SBC on this -> week long trial? not 1 day

"If you build it, they will come" vs "No one uses it, why are you building" discussion. Make sure the community is aware when this happens. Work with schools and parents know about this(mom groups).

Most viable opposition heard -> sidewalks an inch short to being a multi use path when recently replaced. Lessons learned -> let's not miss these opportunities for a great grade separated path. Adam says we are optimistic in the future so this will not happen again (praise to city employees)

Alex: The city is a Vision Zero city. Every city project needs to live up to the Vision Zero commitment, there are certain options that are just not viable that were proposed.

Parking is not king

-> ex given already in meeting, sacrificing a right turn lane for bike lane.

Q is 4ft bike lane, 2ft buffer, going to be a somerville standard, is this ok? A: We are taking this on a case by case basis. Brad: powderhouse is going to be 4ft lane and 3ft buffer

- Beacon street

poll removed, more possible to be moved

updates on parking changes and new bike lane

thermoplastic going down tonight South of Washington

Ped times change now functional

Ian: North bound still under construction, are they going to complete it all and pave, or do it in sections. A: in sections.

Q: Park st, ped concurrent should be exclusive. A: Already in motion

Alex Q: Wash Ped timing, last meeting we asked about both exclusive and concurrent, A: tabled for now, it would be too long of a cycle.

- Poplar St planter-protected sidewalks
 - How can we start using planters to protect bike lanes?
 - painted bump outs in june,
 - planted added last week
 - will look at other ops for other places, but must be carefully considered
 - Hoping to test additional tactical materials in 2020
 - Planters have additional maintenance issues (also need additional 3 feet)
 - Expensive vs flex posts.....a worry about cars running into them.
 - Winter will tell more, maybe store them on the sidewalk.
 - ACTION ITEM to members, look for 3 ft buffer, so we can pilot here
 - E&E are talking about this, armadillos are cool

Education & Encouragement (10 min) – Michael

- PSA
 - video shown, clapping occurred
 - looking for people for passion projects to film one ad hoc
 - There is a list. but we want volunteers, actors, etc.