



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE SEPTEMBER 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives:

X Tom Lamar, Chair
Katie Pierce, Vice Chair
X Ted Lester, Secretary
X Ken Carlson
X Gregory Ely
X Ted Feldman
X Alex Frieden
X Kevin McGrath
X Mark Vollinger

X Lena Webb
(X) Ian Woloschin (joined later)
X Michael Weber

Ex Officio:

X Katjana Ballantyne, City Council
X Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility
Deputy Chief Steve Carrabino, Police Department

Guests:

Justin Schreiber
Nate Kaufman
Zach Rosenberg
Arah Schuur
Brad Rawson

Thursday, September 3, 2020, 6:30-8:00PM

GoToMeeting link for computers, tablets, and smartphones: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/286443605>

GoToMeeting dial-in number: +1 (646) 749-3122; Access Code: 286-443-605

Procedural, General Business & Updates (15 Minutes)

- Guest introductions and meeting logistics
- Acting Secretary: Michael
comments from GoTo chat will be included in minutes if relevant
- VOTE: Approve August Minutes
no comments, motion to approve by Ken Carlson, seconded by Alex Frieden, minutes approved
- (Automated Enforcement – Greg)
skipped this time, waiting for more concrete proposals
- Upcoming events and calls for volunteers
Ken Carlson: next virtual bike talk by Dominic Tribone (BlueBikes) on Wednesday September 9 at 6:30pm, virtual bike talk in October without Bikey Face, instead talk regarding state of Mass Bike (<http://www.somervillebikes.org/bike-talk-social-hour.html>); Mass Bike declares September bike month, looking for bike stories, several events (https://www.baystatebikemonth.org/bay_state_bike_month_2020)
Lena Webb: Mass Bike commute challenge September 19-27, everyone should join and log miles for Somerville (<https://gomasscommute.com/#/pages/massbike>)
Arah Schuur: found volunteer for social media management, Michael will get in touch

Focus 1: Holland/College Deep Dive (30 minutes)

- Presentation of current plans, Feedback so far & open discussion and possible vote on recommendations
- Tom Lamar:* lots of interest from many people, long discussion expected
Adam Polinski: not going to show every detail today, was presented during virtual meeting with many

members of SBAC attending on August 13

presentation can be reviewed at <https://somervice.somervillema.gov/hollandandcollege>

brief overview of August plan with peak hour bus/bike lane going into Davis Square, several new crosswalks, bump-outs and more

attendances of August meeting raised concerns about parking removal, consensus was that current plan is not going far enough to protect more vulnerable members of the road

department updated plans based on feedback

Lena Webb: SBAC does not have concrete plans or cut sections for suggested improvements just yet thanks to Adam and entire department for taking on this project, grateful for any improvement

however, there seems to be much focus on parking preservation

SBAC would advocate for 24/7 rather than peak hour lanes, maximize parts with protected bike lanes

Nate Kaufman: bump-outs are great for shortening distance that needs to be crossed, but other cities managed to combine those without preventing protected bike lanes

Tom Lamar: bump outs create permanency, SBAC should push hard to make infrastructure as safe as possible

Adam Polinski: new proposal featuring more 24/7 facilities and protected bike lanes, focus on connecting alternative side streets and community path, but several stretches with mixed traffic remaining

Tom Lamar: thanks to taking feedback into account

Ted Feldman: major improvement, great to see connector to Community Path, how about bump-outs with channel or striped only?

Adam Polinski: channel or something similar might be on the table; probably not for this project, especially because of drainage challenges, but don't know details

Gregory Ely: can we have asphalt speed table on Wallace Street? How will you convey the idea of temporal bus/bike lanes to road users?

Adam Polinski: we have similar concerns and aim for combination of lots of signs and pavement markings, we try to move away from temporal facilities; additional traffic calming not guaranteed for this project, but discussions are ongoing

Lena Webb: concerned about dangerous pedestrian crossing Holland at Cameron

Adam Polinski: corridor will be narrowed down to 40ft, add bump-outs, bus stop, big bump-out on South side

Ted Lester: can we have Wallace St as contraflow?

Adam Polinski: Yes

Ted Lester: width of sections with combination of parking and bike lane?

Adam Polinski: 5ft bike lane, 7ft parking

Mark Vollinger: speed tables on Cameron Ave would help reduce travel speeds downhill

Adam Polinski: agreed, but this project is a lighter reconstruction and has no capacity to change drainage

Arah Schuur: echo thanks to taking feedback from meetings and conversations into account, big improvements; transitions between different infrastructures for road users, e.g. bus/bike lane to intersection? Did you consider alternative parking in side streets?

Adam Polinski: alternative parking will be focus for 2021, will evaluate meters on side streets or the use parking lots

Tom Lamar: will continue this discussion at the expense of the general bus/bike lane discussion

Alex Frieden: mixed traffic lanes – how will that work for people who are less confident on a bike?

Adam Polinski: trying to connect alternative routes with safe infrastructure, e.g. connect to Park and Wallace to reach Broadway

Ted Feldman: how will transition out of protected infrastructure on to non-protected Teele Square work?

Adam Polinski: signage required, will be tough transition as it converts to two lanes (left lane for general traffic, right lane for buses and bikes)

Tom Lamar: what are the next steps?

Adam Polinski: department will present final design in public meeting in late October or November

Ian Woloschin: is there a solution for horrible street conditions during current gas work near Hodgkins Park, e.g. advisory bike lane in the middle of the road?

Adam Polinski: gas work was supposed to be done close to the project to prevent repeated repaving, now project is delayed, might be hard to get anything done to improve situation, will pass question to engineering – maybe sharrows?

Ian Woloschin: sharrows might be fine, anything would be helpful

Tom Lamar: updated plan is a significant improvement, appreciate focus on all-day infrastructure and connecting side streets; this project also highlights the need for a bike master plan; should SBAC vote on high level principles now?

Ted Lester: give us some time to look at the plan first

Arah Schuur: what is the schedule on decision making?

Adam Polinski: design will be finalized in October

Tom Lamar: how and when should SBAC send feedback?

Justin Schreiber: please send feedback before next meeting via Engineering

Focus 2: Bus/Bike Lanes in General (10 minutes)

- How safe/comfortable is biking in a bus/bike lane?
- When should we prioritize bus lanes vs protected bike lanes?

(skipped today in favor of Holland discussion)

Ian Woloschin: can we have a plan of all bus and bike lanes that also includes bus routes?

Adam Polinski: will look into it

City Update (35 min) – Adam

- *Adam Polinski:* improving bus transit is a city priority, plans on the table include extension of Broadway bus lane into East Somerville and continuation of Washington Street bus lane; goal is to have paint down still this year

- Washington St West update (rapid response pilot)

Adam Polinski: plans and priorities changed due to Covid-19

Washington Street with bus 86, Somerville's most heavily used route

protected bike lanes in both directions, parking removed on one side, bus slip lane approaching Webster Ave

need to move forward fast to get it done before end of year

Ian Woloschin: how are bike lanes protected?

Adam Polinski: hope to put flex posts down, maybe in spring

Tom Lamar: happy to hear things are happening sooner than expected

Alex Frieden: lots of support for this project, exact placement of bus lanes will have big impact on success of the project

Ken Carlson: can we leverage school located on this route?

Alex Frieden: it already is a safe route to school project

Brad Rawson: Ken is right, and we get many requests from school parents

Arah Schuur: would be great achievement if this project can be realized this fall

Brad Rawson: we will do as much as we can

Adam Polinski: 30% plan will go out to Engineering team next week

Tom Lamar: shall we have mid-month meeting in about two weeks to provide feedback for this project and Holland?

Alex Frieden: yes, could be crucial to make the project happen this year

Adam Polinski: would be happy to support

Tom Lamar: will move forward with the idea

Lena Webb: did the city receive complaints to remove parking in the name of saving restaurants?

Justin Schreiber: yes, some

- SBAC requests
- Speed hump on Properzi Way approaching Beacon St

Adam Polinski: will be put in place this fall

- Average mobility staffer workload

Adam Polinski: detailed overview of time spent on projects, example Central Broadway project: 650 hours of my time, additional 500 hours for consultants

- Install flex posts on Beacon St mountable curb and other buffered bike lanes, and possible vote on recommendations + Flex post maintenance on Webster + issues with delivery vehicles in bike lanes

Adam Polinski: database established to monitor flex post contingent

map of candidates for flex posts including Cedar and Beacon

Ian Woloschin: how long will it take to install flex posts on the streets shown?

Adam Polinski: next year is the goal, need to consider DPW workload and their ability to maintain the posts

Ken Carlson: will Beacon St flex posts get installed in 2020?

Brad Rawson: Beacon St will probably be priority

Gregory Ely: a lot more delivery vehicles recently, mountable curb deteriorates

Brad Rawson: situation will get better, e.g. snow plowing got better / more gentle for curbs

Katjana Ballantyne: are flex posts the only way to keep delivery vehicles out of bike lane?

Adam Polinski: not much will stop person in a vehicle dedicated to enter a bike lane; curbs are the best option; we have no experience with flex posts on such high traffic streets, but flex posts are next best thing

Katjana Ballantyne: did you talk to other city departments regarding other solutions?

Adam Polinski: will take a closer look

- Medford St striping plans

Adam Polinski: will be paved next week, sidewalk reconstructed, new bus stop, curbs, super sharrows, but no bike lanes

Alex Frieden: making the best of the situation, thanks

Adam Polinski: project did not get a lot of attention – disappointing, we will have another shot later

- Powder House Circle update

Adam Polinski: project deferred until 2021

Alex Frieden, Ted Feldman: SBAC prefers to have rather have the project delay and fully implemented

Adam Polinski: glad to hear

Ian Woloschin: which month in 2021 are you aiming for?

Adam Polinski: aim for first half of year – should have more clarity in early 2021

- Additional project updates

- Shared streets update

Adam Polinski: Morrison Ave and Winslow Ave will be completed tomorrow, additional traffic calming treatments upcoming

Nate Kaufman: thanks, awesome, additional signage will help a lot

Gregory Ely: where will signs be attached?

Justin Schreiber: up on utility posts

Ian Woloschin: someone put flowers and signs on flex posts – great

- GLX Bridge update

Adam Polinski: Broadway bridge will receive paving next week, striping will follow, Grand Union Blvd has new striping between Mystic Ave and Revolution Drive, will have flex posts by end of the year

Ken Carlson: in general, consider amount of bike traffic to prioritize where flex posts should go

Alex Frieden: flex posts seem difficult to get, any way SBAC can provide support?

Adam Polinski: deliveries became more regular, we are getting better in managing this

Katjana Ballantyne: how long will 400 posts last?

Adam Polinski: depends on location, post along block will hold up well, posts tasked with traffic-calming close to intersections will not last long

Tom Lamar: meeting over, will keep people updated on mid-month meeting

Tom Lamar to Everyone

7:43 PM

I hope "interwebs" makes it into the minutes