



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
SEPTEMBER 2010
MINUTES
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives

Brian Postlewaite, Chairman
Charles Denison, Vice Chairman
Enid Kumin
Alex Epstein
Jim Gallagher
Alan Moore
Ron Newman
Steve DaSilva

Ex-Officio

Janice Delory, Office of the Mayor
Bob Trane, Board of Alderman
Commissioner Stanley Koty, Department of Public Works
Terry Smith, Traffic & Parking
Kathleen Ziegenfuss, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development
Acting Chief Cabral, Police Department

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday September 21, 2010, 7:00pm, City Hall

Community Representatives in attendance: Enid Kumin, Jim Gallagher, Alan Moore, Ron Newman

Ex-Officio members in attendance: Kathleen Ziegenfuss

Guests in attendance: Lauren Clayton, Scott Clark, Ken Carlson, Jeremy Mendelson, Claudia Murrow

Procedural Business:

- Meeting called to order at 7:10
- **Secretary:** There is no current secretary. Jim Gallagher volunteered to serve this role for the next four meetings; there were no objections.
- **Chair:** The Chair has been absent from the last few meetings. Alan Moore will speak with the Chair and Vice Chair to designate an acting Chair in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting.
- **Membership:**
 - There are not enough committee members present for a quorum (no minutes can be approved, no voting can take place).
 - It is believed that a quorum only occurs if at least half of all committee members are present. Kathleen will verify this and also find out if Ex-Officio members may count toward a quorum.
 - Some members may be resigning or unavailable soon.
 - Steve DaSilva has discussed the possibility of resigning but continuing to assist the committee with maps; Kathleen will ask him about his intentions.
 - Ron Newman is considering resigning around the end of this year.
 - Attendees discussed ways to attract new members in order to ensure a quorum in future meetings.
 - OSPCD can solicit interest via the city's web site, including a press release to be released in about one week. Other options include reaching out to community bicycle-related groups such as MassBike and LivableStreets, as well as through local printed media such as the

Somerville News and Somerville Journal. It was agreed that it would be desirable to have a representative from a bicycle business such as Ace Wheelworks or Open Bicycle.

- Members may be appointed by the Board of Aldermen if recommended by the Mayor. Candidates must first submit a letter of interest to the committee, which can then make a recommendation to the Mayor.
- **Open Meeting Law:**
 - Attendees discussed the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, which requires that minutes, documents and online discussions be publicly available.
 - An agenda is due by the Wednesday prior to the meeting.
 - Minutes must be made available by the following Tuesday. Supporting documents must be archived along with meeting minutes.
 - Emails and committee discussion lists are considered a public record. Such communication need not be posted on the city's web site but must be made available if requested. No deliberations may take place via email.

Infrastructure:

- Fall installation of bike lanes and sharrows
 - Sharrows will be painted tonight and Thursday night on the following streets:
 - Holland Street, between Teele and Davis Square
 - Elm St, Davis Square to Cutter Street
 - Washington St, between Somerville Ave and McGrath Highway
 - Dane Street, from Somerville Ave to Washington Street
 - Bow Street, all
 - Tufts St, Washington Street to Cross Street
 - Cross St, McGrath Highway to Broadway
 - Bike lane will be painted on Cedar St between Highland Ave and Elm St
 - Discussion is ongoing regarding the placement of sharrows or bike lanes on Somerville Ave between Washington St and McGrath Highway (for future installation)
- The City plans to issue a request for proposals within a month for construction of the Community Path extension east to Lowell St. This segment has been approved to proceed by MassDOT and will have grade-level access to Lowell St (independent of planned development at the MaxPak at that location).
- The city has applied for federal Tiger II funding to extend the Community Path eastward along with the Green Line Extension project. The City has received letters of support; however there were over 2,300 applications submitted so the chances of receiving funding are unknown. A decision may be made in mid-October.
- The city will soon publicize the on-street bicycle parking program in its upcoming press release. Initially the program will be based upon installation requests from interested businesses.
- All bicycle parking racks funded by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council have been installed (81, spring/summer 2010).
- There is a shortage of bike parking at the Market Basket grocery store on Somerville Ave. The Historic Preservation Commission has complained about bikes parked on the recently installed fence adjoining the Milk Row Cemetery. The committee discussed requesting that Market Basket install new well designed racks in front of their store to supplement and/or replace the existing poorly designed rack.
- Somerville Ave lane painting is nearing completion.
 - Kathleen reports that of six narrow bike lane segments previously investigated, three are 5 feet wide (standard), while the others are 4 feet 2 inches. She is checking with the contractor to inquire why the decision was made to widen some segments and not others.
 - Jeff Rosenblum of the Cambridge Community Development Department is working to connect the new bike lanes to the existing bike lanes on the Cambridge segment of Somerville Ave. This is expected to happen soon.

Education and Outreach:

- Josh (intern) is working on maps of bike routes in Somerville. These maps will be similar in style to the parks and walking maps. Ken offered to share his map-making experience.
- Draft materials are complete for the street safety campaign. They will likely be unveiled in October.
 - Materials will include discussion of sharrows and other related info.
 - Kathleen will ask Communications Department about distribution methods. One suggestion is to include the information with parking permits which are renewed on a rolling schedule.
- Kathleen is checking to find out if “I Bike Somerville” shirts can be printed using city funds. An alternative might be to work with a community group such as Friends of the Community Path. They can be sold when the committee staffs a table at farmers markets and other community events.
- Kathleen brought design drafts for a committee banner to be used when tabling. Feedback was provided. Kathleen will update and bring to next meeting.
- Discussion has been taking place about whether a potential new pedestrian committee should stand alone or be combined with the bicycle committee. Attendees were divided but no one expressed strong feelings on the matter.

Events:

- Bike and Pedestrian counts
 - A release party was held last week for the most recent bicycle and pedestrian count data. It was a success. Kathleen will post her presentation on the web site.
 - Bicycle and pedestrian counts will be conducted again on October 5, 6 and 7 in 36 locations. Training for new and experienced volunteers will take place at City Hall on September 27 at 4:00 and September 30 at 6:30.
 - Kathleen will be presenting at the New England Bike Walk Summit, on October 7 in Providence, RI on the topic.
- The MassDOT is sponsoring a “Moving Together” conference on October 13 in Boston.
- SomerStreets will take place on Somerville Ave west of Union Square in October. The date has not yet been finalized but volunteers are being sought for tabling and bike valet.
 - Ken suggests having a bike rodeo for children at future events.
- The Tour de Somerville will start at Seven Hills Park (Davis Square) on Saturday, October 16 at 10 AM (rain date Sunday).
 - The tentative title will be “Paths, Present & Future: A Mystic River Ramble”. The ride will include existing off-road paths and follow the routes of planned paths.
 - Ron and Alan have tested the route and some attendees offered feedback.
 - Enid will contact the Somerville Police to make arrangements for assistance. Some of the ride will be in Medford but that is not expected to be a problem. Other issues include food and a location for a restroom break.
- The Davis Square bike race will not be happening this year due to lack of sponsorship.

Miscellaneous:

- Davis Square bike improvements will be discussed at the next meeting.
- The bike racks at Seven Hills Park have been removed due to construction.
- Claudia Murrow states that she is a resident, motorist and non-cyclist who has solicited and received feedback from other residents. She claims that many residents are disappointed in the redesign of Somerville Ave and wants to hear feedback from bicyclists. She states that she is petitioning MassDOT for a meeting to address her concerns.
 - Feedback from attendees was positive overall, although several noted that the street is not yet complete, and therefore some time will be necessary before a proper evaluation can be given.

- She states that many disabled pedestrians have difficulty using new brick crosswalks. She believes MassDOT does not approve the use of bricks in pedestrian areas but Jim Gallagher disputes this claim.
- She states that drivers are experiencing longer travel times. Ken Carlson says that this may be a positive effect of traffic calming treatments.
- She claims that the curb-to-curb width of the roadway has been narrowed in order to allocate additional width to the sidewalks, which she believes was not justified. However, members familiar with the design plans stated that the right of way did not change and that they believe the sidewalk was not widened. Scott Clark noted that the bike lanes often make the motor vehicle space feel narrower to motorists, a positive traffic calming effect that reduces motor vehicle speeds.
- She complains of delivery trucks parking in bicycle lanes. It was suggested that delivery times and loading areas may need to be modified.
- She notes difficult MBTA bus movements and vehicles queuing across railroad tracks on Park Avenue. It was suggested that small design fixes such as moving the stop line and posting signage may solve problems like this.

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 19, 2010, at City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeremy Mendelson, Acting Secretary