



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 2011
MINUTES
Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives

Brian Postlewaite, Chairman
Charles Denison, Vice Chairman
Ken Carlson
Alex Epstein
Jim Gallagher
Enid Kumin
Alan Moore
Ron Newman
Tim Talun

Ex-Officio

Janice Delory, *Office of the Mayor*
William Roche, *Board of Aldermen*
Commissioner Stanley Koty, *Department of Public Works*
Terry Smith, *Traffic & Parking*
Chief Thomas Pasquarello, *Police Department*
Kathleen Ziegenfuss, *Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development*

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, March 15, 7:00 pm, City Hall

Community Representatives in attendance: Brian Postlewaite (chair), Charlie Denison (vice chair), Enid Kumin, Ron Newman, Alex Epstein, Alan Moore, Ken Carlson, Tim Talun

Ex-Officio members in attendance: None

Guests in attendance: Lauren Clayton (Somerville), Melissa Kelly (Somerville), and Amanda Kersey (Cambridge and representing the Somerville Patch)

Procedural Business:

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm. Quorum was met.

1. **Secretary:** Ken Carlson volunteered to serve as secretary.
2. **Approve Minutes:**
 - Minutes approved for the February 2011 meeting.
3. **Officer Elections:**
 - It was decided that the SBAC should hold officer elections at the May meeting with officer nominations taking place at the April meeting. Ideally this process should happen in January/February during the slower winter months. Brian stated that he is considering stepping down as chair or taking on a more limited role due to current time constraints.
4. **Meta Agenda:**
 - It was discussed that the SBAC should put together a Meta agenda or annual calendar populated with events and activities that are the same each year. Alex volunteered to create a meta agenda.

Events:

1. **Banner:**
 - It was asked if we knew the status of the SBAC banner. Ken to check with Kathleen on banner.
2. **Tufts bikeshare event:**
 - Tufts Univ. is rolling out a new bikeshare program with a kick-off event April 1st, Tufts Bikes Opening Celebration, 4-6 pm Hotung Cafe, Campus Center. The SBAC was invited to have a table at the event. Alex and Ron to staff an SBAC information table.

3. **Bike month:**

- Ken and Tim talked presented their ideas about National Bike Month/Week/Day and everyone contributed ideas. National Bike Month is May, Bike Week is May 16-20 and National Bike Day is Friday May 20. In addition to a suggested event on Bike Day (see below), SBAC members discussed several other events to promote for bike month and bike week. The New England Bike Expo at the Armory on May 7/8, the Mystic River Watershed bike event on May 15, and the Somerville Historic Ride on May 22. There may be a SomerStreets event in May as well. We discussed putting a flyer together to capture all the events for Bike Month. Tim to draft a flyer for bike month.
- It was asked what the Mayor's involvement will be for Bike Week. Ken to check with Kathleen on Mayor's plans for Bike Week

4. **Bike Day:**

- For Friday May 20, Ken and Tim suggested linking up with BostonBikes bike commuter convoys that are starting or coming through Davis Square and which end in Boston City Hall Plaza in a celebration. Somerville residents could join these rides and commute along with the convoys to whatever destination they choose along the route. One ride starts at Davis Square at 7AM and heads down Elm to Mossland to Somerville Ave to Oxford and goes through Harvard and Central Square on its way to Boston. Another ride comes through Davis at 7:40 on its way from Lexington. This ride goes down Elm to Somerville Ave to Park to Beacon Street to Hampshire on its way to the Longfellow Bridge and Boston. The latter ride might make more sense for the SBAC to focus on, as it spends more time in Somerville and starts at a more reasonable hour for most bike commuters. The SBAC could arrange with a local restaurant (Red Bones, True Grounds, Pet's Pies, Broken Yoke) to provide food at Davis Square. Tim and Ken to arrange a detailed plan for Bike Day. Brian may be able to help on the day of the event.

5. **Historic Bike Ride:**

- Ron said this will be Sunday May 22 at 1PM leaving from City Hall. Ron to organize.

6. **Advertising SBAC and biking events:**

- Ken asked if the SBAC could set up a blog and link it to our Facebook page to notify residents about bike-related events. It was suggested that Ken contact Steve DaSilva about our web site and Facebook site.

7. **New England Bike Expo (NEBE):**

- Rob Hill is organizing the New England Bike Expo, which will be held at the Armory May 7/8. This is from the web site: "NEBE is all about bringing together people that love bicycles, alternative transportation, or folks that are looking to learn about how vibrant the bicycle industry is in our region. NEBE will be hosting some fabulous Bicycle companies and organizations in Somerville and we welcome any and all participation as we plan for this event. The event will include exhibits, panels, discussions, classes and more." Brian to coordinate invitations to local municipal bicycle organizations for the NEBE.

<http://www.artsatthearmory.org/Events/EventsCalendar/tabid/80/vw/3/ItemID/258/d/20110507/Default.aspx>

OUTREACH

1. **Bicycle Safety Program:**

- Alex gave the committee an update on the Bicycle Safety Program that the City of Somerville's Communications Office is sponsoring. This is being run by an ad hoc committee chaired by Jackie Rossetti and includes Mike Meehan, Kathleen Ziegenfuss, Alex as a representative from

the SBAC, and representatives from Tufts University and Groundwork Somerville. Deliverables of the committee include posters and flyers that will be distributed at bus shelters and local schools focused on delivering messages relating to bicycle safety such as “ride four feet from the door”, “ride with lights”, and one of the key messages targeting the central business district, “don’t ride on sidewalks” (which appears to be the motivation behind this campaign). It was suggested that the SBAC retain some of these posters for our information table.

FACILITIES

1. Road conditions:

- Charlie shared a draft of the letter he wrote to the Mayor regarding the current deplorable condition of Beacon Street, particularly between Somerville Ave and Washington Street. In the letter, the SBAC requests that the egregious areas be re-surfaced or at the very least re-surface the bike lanes.

2. Bikelane conditions:

- Amanda Kersey from the Somerville Patch came to the meeting on assignment from her editor to find out what is happening with the current poor state of bikelanes in the city. The SBAC reviewed with Amanda the different types of bike lane striping in the city (thermoplastic or paint on bikelanes and sharrows). Many of the bikelane stripes are faded or badly chipped. The thermoplastic stripes are raised and can get chipped by snowplows, but are supposed to last for three years. The painted stripes are expected to last 1-2 years and should be re-painted every year or every other year. Residents should call 311 to report faded bikelanes.

3. New bikelanes:

- The SBAC recommendations for new bikelanes for 2011 was submitted to the City. The City agreed with our recommendation that Medford Street, between Somerville Ave and the Cambridge line be added to the list and that Summer Street should be removed. Our proposal for Washington Street bike lanes east from Union Square under McGrath Highway and the railroad tracks to meet up with the existing Washington Street bike lanes in East Somerville will require MassDOT permission as they control the stretch from McGrath Highway to the railroad underpass.

4. Community Path:

- Alan updated the committee on the recent decision by the City to transfer \$3.5M designated for the Community Path towards the construction of the Assembly Square stop on the Orange Line. This was a use-it or lose-it decision by the City as it was clear that this money could not be spent on the Path by the spending deadline of this fall. Alan would like the committee to send a letter directly to the MPO requesting that the \$3.5M be re-programmed in the future to the Community Path. We will need to ask the Mayor’s permission to send a letter directly. If permission is not granted, we will write the letter and give to the Mayor to submit to the MPO. A second letter should be written requesting that Community Path be put on a list for long range planning at the MPO. Alan to write both letters.

5. Wellington underpass:

- The SBAC should write a letter to MEPA stating that there will be a minimal environmental impact for the construction of a path and boardwalk under Route 28 and Wellington in Ten Hills. Alan to write.

6. On-Street Bike Parking:

- A few committee members checked with local businesses about their interest in participating in the City’s on-street bike parking program. Tim checked with the manager of Bloc11 who seemed

receptive. Tim also spoke with Red Bones who have a bike valet program and don't seem to need on-street parking. Ken spoke with the manager of Pesti's Pies who felt they didn't have enough bicycle traffic to warrant on-street bike parking, but mentioned they would be interested in a few more bicycle parking rings. Ken to check with Sherman's Café. We discussed the need to have a boiler plate letter of interest that businesses could use to express their interest to the City in the bike parking program. Alex offered to write the boiler plate letter.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, April 19, 2011, at City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Carlson, Acting Secretary