



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

June 2011 MINUTES

Mayor Joseph A. Curtatone

Community Representatives:

Alex Epstein, Chairman

Charles Denison, Vice Chairman

Jim Gallagher, Secretary

Ken Carlson

Enid Kumin

Alan Moore

Ron Newman

Brian Postlewaite

Tim Talun

Ex-Officio:

Janice Delory, *Office of the Mayor*

Bob Trane, *Board of Alderman*

Commissioner Stanley Koty, *Department of Public Works*

Terry Smith, *Traffic & Parking*

Chief Pasquarello, *Police Department*

Kathleen Ziegenfuss, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development

(Bold italics = in attendance)

Day/Date: Tuesday May 21, 2011

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Location: City Hall, basement employee lounge

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM.

Procedural Business

1. Guest Introductions

Guests in attendance: Lauren Clayton, Melissa Kelly and Erica George (residents), Amanda Kersey (Somerville Patch), Nikhil Nadkami (transportation intern OSPCD)

2. Membership: old & new members update

No update

3. Approve Minutes: May 2011

Minutes approved unanimously pending Kathleen's proposed changes

4. Agenda templates and agenda item contribution

Alex has developed agenda templates for all 12 months in the year, which include items that are specific to each month. They can be easily updated to include updates from the last meeting plus any new agenda items. Each month's agenda will be available on Google docs and members can add suggested items. The agenda will be closed on the Wednesday prior to each meeting.

5. McGrath Working Group

MassDot has asked for a Bike Committee representative for a new Route 28 Corridor Study, to be called Grounding McGrath – Determining the Future of the Route 28 Corridor. Jim volunteered to participate, and to keep the committee updated. The first meeting of the group will be Wednesday, June 30.

6. Transition plan

Kathleen is leaving. Her last day is Wednesday, June 22. A job opening will be posted soon, and members were encouraged to get the word out. Michael will be taking over some of her responsibilities for the summer.

7. Budget, funds, and purchases

There is still no budget for SBC-related expenses. We should try to have City staff do as much copying, mapping, etc., as possible.

We skipped ahead in the agenda to Official City Nikhilbike parking and abandonment policy under New Business so that a guest, Erica George, could talk about her recent experience. Her bike (3 wheeler, cargo-carrying) was legally locked to a sign near her home (she has no off-street parking) but was removed and impounded by the DPW. In Somerville, bikes can be attached to sign poles, parking meters, light poles, but not trees or benches. There was no 311 work order found for the removal, the usual procedure, but eventually she tracked down her bike and it was returned.

In Somerville bikes are considered abandoned after being in place for more than 15 days. The DPW will monitor them after that and if not moved they will remove and impound. Potentially abandoned bikes can be reported via the City's 311 system. In Cambridge bikes are "tagged" so that owners may move them if they are still in active use.

The issue for the SBC is the city's bike abandonment policy and how it is followed. Cambridge has Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about bicycles on its web site – Somerville has had them previously but they don't seem to be on the redesigned website. Kathleen agreed that it can be

difficult for residents to find out the City's rules about bicycles and how they need to follow up if there is a problem, and will follow up internally.

The SBC would like the City's policy to include placing notification stickers on potentially abandoned bikes before they are impounded. Ron agreed to review the Cambridge and Somerville ordinances to see if there are other changes to these rules or policies that the SBC might like to recommend. We will discuss at the next meeting.

Education and Outreach

1. Bike Week and Bike Month, including Bike Breakfast and Historic Bike Tour

The Bike Breakfast took place on May 18 7:30-9 am in the Star Market parking lot on Beacon St. it was a rainy day yet over 100 cyclists stopped by. Information was given out on the Bike Committee, the City's count program, the map of bike facilities in the city. Patsi Pies and Star Market were great about donating food. We got 37 new names for the volunteer list. The main comment heard was on the poor condition of Beacon Street.

The Historic Ride was on May 22. Sixty or seventy riders participated on a 3 hour ride covering new historic districts and there were several impromptu, serendipitous stops. For next year Ron would like the ride to highlight the industrial history of Somerville, but that will require quite a lot of research.

The mayor also led a very successful ride on the Friday of Bike Week highlighting new infrastructure around the City.

2. Art Beat – volunteers for upcoming events

Alan asked if we wanted to have a table at ArtBeat on July 16, 11-5 PM. The Friends of the Community Path and STEP are already sharing a table so we probably cannot partner with them. Jim and Charlie volunteered to staff a table, Alan will check if there is still space available.

Ken passed around a sheet with upcoming potential SBC table events, including SomerStreets and Farmers Markets in Union and Davis Squares. Members volunteered and he will post the document on Google docs

3. Bike-ped safety campaign

No update

4. Bike Friendly Community Award and Feedback

We have not yet received detailed feedback from LAB. There will be at least two signs at entrances to Somerville noting the recognition.

5. Annual Bicycle Accident & Incident Report

We need to develop a plan to follow-up and update this information. The current information is based on crash information up to 2007. 2008 data is now available from MassDOT but has not yet been analyzed or mapped. The Somerville police will have more up to date information but someone will need to go thru their records. The City can do the data analysis but an SBC volunteer could help to evaluate the results. Ken volunteered.

Events

1. SomerStreets – July 24 – Kidical Mass

Brian and Carleen Campbell are working on an event as part of SomerStreets that will help kids learn to ride and feel more comfortable. Contact them if you want to help.

2. Spring Bike and Pedestrian Counts

The data is being entered and should be available for presentation to the Committee soon.

3. Somerville Climate Action event

This is an item from last year at this time. No one was aware of any event this year.

4. Tour de Somerville

The date was set for Saturday, October 15, with a rain date of October 16. This ride has fewer stops than the historic ride and should take about 2 hours. Ron is looking for ideas on the ride's theme. Among the suggestions – a tour of Somerville's commercial areas, maybe visiting ice cream shops (there used to be an ice cream factory in Boynton Yards), ethnic restaurants, perhaps a comparison of conditions on Somerville Ave. Contact Ron with ideas.

Infrastructure

1. On-Street Bike Parking & Bike Racks

75 new Somerville bike racks have been ordered. A spreadsheet with existing and potential new bike rack locations is being finalized and will be brought to the next meeting. Requests from businesses and residents are welcome. The Main Streets programs and neighborhood Chambers of Commerce can help publicize there availability.

3 bike corrals have been ordered and seasonal approval has been received from the Traffic Commission. Two will be placed in front of the Diesel and Bloc 11. Tru Grounds had also expressed interest and the City will follow up.

2. Bike parking at Market Basket

The City's Historical Commission is still working on a solution to bikes being locked to the new fence around the cemetery. Some suggestions were discussed about how to

improve bike parking at the store, but it was agreed the the Committee would not get involved with making recommendations to just a single business.

3. Bike Lane & Sharrows Update

5.5 miles of the 11 planned for 2011 have been done – School St. and the last piece of Medford St. will be done in July, and the bike lane on Assembly Square Drive will also be completed in 2011. There are another 2 to 2.5 miles to go which can be decided based on SBC-suggested priorities. Among the suggestions:

- Prospect St, where a developer's mitigation could be responsible for sharrows, and a new bike lane from Webster to Somerville Ave.
- thru Union Square, including Bow Street
- make Broadway as continuous as possible
- sharrows on Central Ave. and Walnut St.
- Temple Street should be repaved
- the residential street next to the McGrath overpass, between Washington St. and Somerville Ave.
- Medford St. on Winter Hill
- maybe Laurel St. as part of a one-way pair

There are also bike boxes planned as part of the Union Square long range plan.

4. Bow Street resurfacing

Bow Street will be resurfaced soon. Members expressed a desire to have a bike lane striped as part of that project.

5. Davis Square Busway update

Construction has started and should take about a month. Another month for the work planned in the parking lot behind Rite-Aid. There will also be a new bike cage and additional bike parking at the Davis Square station but this is part of a separate project.

6. Hubway Bikeshare update

The Boston portion is scheduled to start in July. Somerville, Cambridge, and Brookline are all working to add locations by the fall. Maybe 5 in Somerville to start. Still trying to determine locations, likely some adjacent to Cambridge for connections, others dispersed in City.

7. Beacon Street

Members expressed a desire for striping to fill in the missing connection between Oxford Street to Somerville Ave. The design process for the Beacon Street reconstruction project probably starts in the fall. The City is aware of the cycletrack proposal from the Committee and others and it will be considered. SBC should be involved in the future public process.

8. SSG Development Bike Storage Room

No update, still looking for City feedback.

9. Wayfinding Network
No update.

New Business

1. Official City bike parking and abandonment policy – see above.
2. Support letter for Minuteman Northeast Extension in Bedford
Alex distributed information about the proposed project and the local group's request for a letter of support. The project would extend the existing path to additional locations in Bedford and therefore allow Somerville residents to have direct, off-road access. Members voted to write a letter of support.
3. Google Groups
Alex suggested that we moved from the Boston Coop group, which we have used for years for member communications, to Google groups. Google groups should be easier for members to update and we agreed to ask Steve DeSilva to create a members list and do the move.
4. National Night Out
National Night out is the first week in August and Somerville usually has an event at Foss park. The question of where SBC should participate was brought up.

Everyone thanked Kathleen for her hard work with the Committee and wished her well on her move.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,