



SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 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*

Nikhil Nadkami, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development

(***Bold italics*** = in attendance)

Day/Date: Tuesday July 19, 2011

Time: 7:00-9:00pm

Location: City Hall, basement employee lounge

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM.

Procedural Business

1. Guest Introductions

Guests in attendance: Lauren Clayton, Jeremy Mendelson (residents), Amanda Kersey (Somerville Patch)

2. Membership: old & new members update

No update. Jeremy is interested in applying for membership and will submit his information soon. Alex will remind him of the procedure.

3. Approve Minutes: June 2011
Minutes approved unanimously pending one typographical edit.

Education and Outreach

1. ArtBeat - recap
SBC shared space with The Friends of the Community Path and STEP. Charlie, Alex, Enid, and Jim helped out at the tables. There was a great turnout, lots of questions. All the (outdated) Somerville bike maps ran out early. We will try to get more items to give out at future events.
2. Bicycle crash stats for 2009-2011
Amanda has prepared a Google map showing the locations of reported bike-car crashes for 2009-11. Only the total number of crashes is presented, but additional information is needed to determine trends or causes. Alex will distribute the map link to SBC members.
3. Bike-ped safety campaign
Posters were prepared for the previous SomerStreets event and will be used in the future. Additional posters and fliers are under development.
4. Annual Bicycle Accident & Incident Report
No update.
5. Outreach to businesses on bike rack requests
Tim had prepared a draft letter in the spring to explain bicycle programs available to businesses and the Chambers of Commerce in Somerville. A version of that letter will be adapted to publicize the various bike parking opportunities and Mike Lambert will approve it for distribution. This letter can then be used in the Chamber's newsletter, by the East Somerville Main Streets program, etc.
6. Grounding McGrath workgroup – update
Jim reported on the first meeting, held June 30. MassDOT reported on previous studies, introduced the consultant team, led by Nelson Nygaard, and presented some of the available information on existing conditions in the corridor. The next meeting is August 3, at 4 PM, at the Capuano Early Learning Center. Jim asked for a SBC volunteer since he will be out of town that week. We were also reminded that there is a larger group of advocates covering the whole Route 28 corridor from Medford to Boston that is meeting to develop a consistent vision for the corridor.

The possibility of Somerville making short-range changes to a state-owned road was also raised, and Nikhil will check on jurisdiction issues to see what is possible. Ron also noted

that old pictures of the original “parkway” would be useful to show what is possible in the corridor.

7. Comprehensive Plan-related route planning

Tim has replaced Alan as a member of the Comprehensive Plan Advisory Committee (Ron and Jim are also members). At the last Comprehensive Plan meeting, as a detailed land use map for Somerville was being developed, the idea was raised that we need to develop a comparable transportation investment plan. Tim suggested we develop the bicycle plan portion. We had begun work on a plan a few years ago but never finished, and we recently had a mapping subcommittee to update the Somerville Bicycle Map. We agreed to revive the subcommittee, put the bike plan on future agendas, and work on completing the plan.

Events

1. SomerStreets – July 24 – Kidical Mass

The next SomerStreets event is July 24 on Highland Ave. Kidical Mass will encourage kids to bike safely and will culminate in a ride at the end of the event. SBC will also have a tent/table to distribute information. Several members/friends volunteered to help.

2. Spring Bike and Pedestrian Counts

Nikhil has begun going through the data. At least upon first glance, it looks like volumes were up in the spring. There will be a formal presentation of results some time in August. Volunteers will be needed for the fall counts.

3. Tour de Somerville – discuss possible themes

The ride is scheduled for October 15, starting at 10 or 10:15 AM. We discussed possible themes. A ride along murals and monuments was suggested, or between Somerville's oldest businesses, or the locations mentioned in famous books about Somerville, or the residences of famous Somerville residents. A ride along the Mystic River or thru commercial areas have also been previously suggested. Any further ideas please send them to Ron.

4. Somerville Climate Action (SCA) bike ride – Sept 24

There is a ride proposed for September 24, with the intent of encouraging businesses to encourage their workers to bike to work. The event would be in conjunction with 350.org events on that day. It was suggested that moving the event to a weekday (the last Friday of the month?) would allow employees to actually commute as part of the event.

5. Joint SBC-SCA - August 16 meeting at Growing Center

Since both organizations will be meeting on the same day, and have many common interests, a joint meeting was proposed. Concerns were raised about a potentially very

long agenda and holding a meeting outdoors (which the SCA does). Alex will check with their chair (Maureen) to see what is possible.

6. Union Square Farmers Market update

The SBC had a table at the recent farmers market. We collected additional names for our email list and provided information to people who stopped by. We will probably set up a table again in the fall. There is also a new farmers market at the Mystic Housing project on Saturdays.

Infrastructure

1. On-Street Bike Parking & Bike Racks

There will be 3 new on-street bike parking corrals, each holding 14 bikes (replacing one auto parking space). One will go in front of the Diesel Cafe in Davis Square, another at Bloc 11 in Union Square. For the third location, True Grounds in Ball Square has expressed interest in the past and Nikhil will contact them. Also suggested was in front of the Independent in Union Square, where bike parking is urgently needed. But we need to remember that the corral location should not interfere with other activities, like the Farmer's Market in Union Square.

2. Bike facility updates and issues

Medford Street between Lowell St and School is getting sharrows this week – the rest of Medford St. will be done in the fall. Somerville Ave thru Union Square may get a bike lane in the fall. The last connection along Beacon Street, to Somerville Ave., is also proposed for the fall. Assembly Square Drive's bike lane has also been completed.

3. Update on TIGER III grants

The City is now investigating using a TIGER III grant to finance the remaining section of the Community Path Extension along the Green Line.

4. Community Path extension update

There will be a public meeting for the 25% design in September.

5. Bow Street resurfacing

There will be resurfacing this week. Sharrows at least are planned, and Nikhil was asked to investigate whether a bike lane could be painted along the length of Bow Street.

6. Hubway Bikeshare update

Nicole Riales, working on the program for the Somerville Health Department, gave the update. The Boston portion is scheduled to start at the end of July. Somerville, Cambridge, and Brookline are all working to add locations by the fall. There may be 6 stations in Somerville to start, each will hold 11-19 bikes. Potential locations include Davis, Porter, and Union Squares, City Hall/High School, Conway Park, and the Beacon St/Washington St intersection. Specific sites need to be determined. The City hopes to sign a 3 year contract in August, with a plan to double the number of stations every

year. After the contract is signed it could take 16 weeks for the stations to be delivered but the City is hoping to speed up the process so that they can be used this year (the normal schedule would be to remove the stations in late November and put them back in March). It is recognized that some neighborhoods (Winter Hill, East Somerville) are missing from the first round, but there is a need for connectivity (to Charlestown and Cambridge) which will limit the initial availability in some neighborhoods. The stations can be moved later if redeployment is needed, but the operator will charge the City \$2000 per station.

Policy:

1. Official City bike parking and abandonment policy – no update.
2. Parking meter removal policy

In Union and Davis Squares, with the new parking system recently installed, many of the parking meters have been removed, replaced by lower poles which are not suitable for bicycle parking. Nikhil will check if some old post and rings remain unused, and the new City Powderhouse racks can also be used to make up for some of the lost spots.

New Business

1. Bike Friendly Community feedback was distributed by Alex. Most of the suggestions were things that the City is already pursuing. The need for a citywide bike plan is one suggestion. Complete Streets was another suggestion, and Nikhil will check on whether the city has actually adopted a Complete Streets policy. For enforcement there was a suggestion to couple that with a ticket diversion program (get safety training instead of a ticket) which could build bicyclist/police interaction.

The meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM

Respectfully submitted,