

SOMERVILLE BICYCLE COMMITTEE
Joseph A. Curtatone, Jr.
Mayor

Alan Moore, Chair
Ron Newman, Vice Chair
Greg Palmer, Secretary

Jim Gallagher
Dereck Mangus
Bhupesh Patel

Mike Buckley, Office of the Mayor
Board of Aldermen

Denise Provost,

Jim Hodgdon, Police Dept.

Traffic and

Parking Dept. (vacant)

Dept. of Public Works (vacant)

Stephen Winslow, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (SPCD)

MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, November 16, 2004, City Hall

ATTENDEES Alan, Ron, Greg, Jim G., Steve, Peter Coyle, Judy Jackson, Lukas Best-Tufts Univ. student

1. Minutes - Alan Moore, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. The October minutes were reviewed and approved.

2. Committee Meetings - Alan made two recommendations for better managing monthly SBC meetings: 1) In general, discuss only items that have changed status or need action, and 2) Issue an Action List no later than one week after the meeting. Steve suggested that the Action List be summarized at the end of each meeting. Members were in general agreement about Alan's recommendations. Steve also said he would call the Chair one week in advance of monthly meetings with agenda items. The Committee also agreed to change the monthly meeting date from the 4th. Tuesday of the month to the 3rd. Tuesday of the month, effective immediately.

3. City Report - Steve Winslow

A. Somerville/Cambridge/Belmont path improvements - Steve met with MBTA bus operations, Phil McDonald, MassHighway project manager, about the Davis Sq. busway segment of the project. Use of the busway by bicycles is not viewed favorably by the T: buses need room to pass each other. Also the sidewalk is only 3 feet wide- too narrow for the considerable number of pedestrians that use it to get to and from the Red Line station. Steve outlined several options for bicycle accommodations on the busway: 1) remove trees to get more width for a dedicated path; 2) improve pedestrian access by widening the sidewalk, and defer bicycle improvements until much later; 3) do nothing. Ron suggested building a contra flow lane on the busway. Steve said that the City is asking the T to sign a legal document for access to the busway, forcing the issue. Greg asked that a subcommittee meet to discuss what options are available. The subcommittee will consist of Steve, Greg, Ron, Joel Bennett, and Lukas Best. They will also look at the on- road bicycle routing in terms of signs and stencils, for which Lukas plans to apply for grant money [VERIFY].

B. Bicycles on sidewalks - Capt. Robert Bradley, acting director of Traffic and Parking, is open to stenciling a 'no bicycles' pictogram on handicap ramps in the business districts. Steve will talk with Lt. Paul Upton of the Police Traffic Bureau about enforcement issues, and Greg Hill, pedestrian advocate.

C. Community Path - Phase 1, Cedar St. to Central St.: Steve reported no progress on resolving potential conflicts at the so-called pinch point at Lowell St. that would have to accommodate the proposed Green Line extension along with the path. Alan asked if letters would be help; Steve said not now. A extension for the MassPike grant has been granted.

D. Stop and Shop - Steve mentioned that the shopping carts have been moved away from the bike racks in front of the store.

4. Draw 7 Park to Route 99 path extension - Steve said that the state Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will bid out the design work. Excelon, owner of the Mystic Station power plant, will hire the consultant. Alan asked if there's time to do this in the next three months, to meet a deadline in the consent decree between the MBTA and Environmental Protection Agency? Steve replied that it was a good question, and would find out the answer. Alan passed out an action plan that details the parties involved and proposed action to take.

5. Bicycle rings/racks in city, at schools - Alan passed out proposed procedures for bicycle rack installation on city property (sidewalks and schools) and private property but for public use.

6. Bicycle parking ordinance - Steve reported that the revamp of the City's zoning ordinance is moving ahead. Alan has a call into Alderman Denise Provost about introducing the bicycle parking ordinance, and will follow up.

7. Volunteer effort to start work on Community Path - Jim proposed that volunteers start work on clearing the Path site from Cedar to Lowell St. Steve said that once a lease agreement is signed with the MBTA, it might be possible to do some work at the site. Greg suggested that we contact other groups that have worked on rail trail clearing projects; Jim agreed to make some contacts. Ron said it will be important that a cleared Path site not dead end before the Lowell St. bridge. Greg pointed out that re-construction of the bridge, supposed to start next year, will preclude getting very close to the bridge. Steve added that Guilford still has freight railroad rights on the spur; he was unsure about abandonment of the track. He said the City will continue to press ahead to get a lease from the T for the Path route down to Central St.

8. Bike lanes - The subcommittee has not met; it will try to meet with Tufts student Ali McDonald soon.

9. Maxpak site - Alan passed out a draft "visions" letter from the SBC to Mayor Curtatone, Ward 5 Alderman O'Donovan, and SPCD Director Kostaras about redeveloping the site roughly bordered by Warwick, Clyde, and Lowell sts. There will be an SBC member at each of the two remaining community meetings, on Nov. 17. and Dec. 1, about the site.

10. Misc. issues - Bicycle commuting classes, sponsored by Groundwork Somerville in conjunction with MassBike, will be given next year. Greg spoke about the neighborhood meeting held about renovating Dilboy Field and building new stands and support buildings. Jim mentioned that the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) will update the Regional Bicycle Plan, the first time since 1990. Steve said that the DCR is planning a meeting about bicycle issues.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

The next meeting is Tuesday, December 21, at City Hall, basement lounge.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Palmer, Secretary