

**SOMERVILLE BICYCLE COMMITTEE**  
**Joseph A. Curtatone, Jr.**  
**Mayor**

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

Jim Gallagher  
Dereck Mangus  
Bhupesh Patel  
Peter Coyle

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, December 21, 2004, City Hall

**ATTENDEES**            Alan, Ron, Greg, Jim G., Steve, Peter Coyle  
Guest: Philip Goff

**1. Minutes** - Alan Moore, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:45 pm. The November minutes were reviewed and approved. Peter Coyle has been sworn in and officially joins the committee at this meeting.

**Guest** - Philip Goff; originally from Keene, NH; architecture training/urban design; was on Portland, Oregon's bicycle advisory committee for 7 years; lives in Teele Sq.; occasional bike commuter to downtown.

**2. Davis Square crossing/busway** - Subcommittee met on 12/4/04 for a site visit to look at alternatives to using the MBTA busway as a bike/path route. One proposal, to route bikes in part of the driveway in back of the Highland Ave. retail stores will not be pursued because of the challenges of working with businesses to replace lost parking. Another scheme, advanced by Steve, would widen the sidewalk beyond what the T is planning to do, and create a 2-way path adjacent to it. This would require a crossover to the other side of the busway just before the station headhouse. Jim G. suggested another option: do the rest of the path improvements and leave the busway section for a later time. Steve said leaving a section out might jeopardize the entire project. Alan recalled that at the MassHighway 25% design meeting last May, the project manager said that there might not be enough money to finish the project if there were more design delays. A motion was introduced, and passed, to have Steve present the sidewalk option to MassHighway and the MBTA as a new option that the SBC and the city examined for the busway segment, but not to indicate that this was the "best" alternative.

**3. Bicycles on sidewalks** - Traffic and Parking has painted "no bikes" pictogram stencils in Davis Sq. Steve said proposed state legislation will address laws that make it unnecessarily burdensome for communities to enforce traffic regulations against bicyclists. Steve has prepared a letter for the mayor to send to the state delegation, urging support and passage of the "Bicyclists Bill of Rights and Responsibilities", drafted by MassBike. Greg mentioned that an education program will need to be in place as well. Steve mentioned that he and pedestrian advocate Greg Hill had leafleted Davis Sq. during the 12/4 site visit.

**4. City Report** - Steve Winslow

**A. Community Path - Phase 1, Cedar St. to Central St.:** Surveys of the right-of-way at Somerville Junction (Lowell St. active main line and freight branch) need to be resolved by the consultants working for the city, and those for the T.

**B. DCR meeting** - the state Dept. of Conservation and Recreation (ex-DEM, MDC) has set up an Advisory Committee on improving conditions for walking and bicycling on DCR roads and paths; Steve will be attending meetings. Ron asked if maintenance issues at the Alewife and Mystic reservations were brought up. Steve said this meeting was not set up to discuss specifics such as that. Greg asked if a Citizens Advisory Committee would be created. Steve replied that this was not addressed.

**C. Personnel** - The position of Traffic and Parking engineer has been advertised. Greg asked about the hiring of a permanent Traffic and Parking Director. Steve said that he had no information.

**D. Ecological project** - The earthworks behind City Hall and the high school are temporary, and should not interfere with Community Path plans.

Steve mentioned that the shopping carts have been moved away from the bike racks in front of the store.

**5. Bicycle legislation** - Steve reported that 4 bills have been drafted by MassBike for the current state legislative session. Alan said the SBC should write letters of support. Ron will write a letter from the SBC supporting the Green Line extension.

**6. Bicycle parking at Home Depot at Assembly Square** - Steve said the Planning Dept. is requiring a full special permit review for upcoming work by Home Depot, and that there is an opportunity to raise the issue of adding bicycle parking.

**7. Willow Ave. development** - Steve will follow up on the state of the proposed condo development adjoining the path.

**8. On-road accommodations** - deferred to January meeting.

**9. Bicycle parking ordinance** - The Planning Board plans a March 3, 2005, hearing on zoning ordinance changes. Steve would like to add the SBC-proposed ordinance at that time. He said this would be an opportunity to add other bicycle accommodation requirements for developments. Alan will contact Bhupesh to confirm the process of having an alderman introduce the ordinance. Alan will also revise proposed procedures for bicycle rack installation on city property (sidewalks and schools) and private property but for public use, and get them to SBC members for review.

**10. Draw 7 Park to Route 99 path extension** - The DCR wants Excelon, owner of the Mystic Station power plant, to hire one consultant to design both the Amelia Earhart Dam crossing and the bus yard corridor path. The contract is \$250,000. Steve said the Environmental Protection Agency is flexible on the start date for the project.

**11. Volunteer effort to start work on Community Path** - Jim has found at least two examples of similar projects: Wachusett and Cochituate. Steve said Guilford has indicated it will abandon freight rights on the branch line to Cedar St. Legal and filing fees are involved- it's unclear who must pay these. Alan will investigate how the rails and ties could be removed at no expense to the city.

**12. Maxpak site** - Another community meeting will be held in January: final "visioning". Steve will attend, and clear up any misimpression: the Community Path will be built regardless of what develops at the Maxpak site.

**13. Boston and bicycles** - Greg reported on his testimony before a committee of the Boston City Council in November regarding creating a Boston Bicycle Commission/committee. The meeting was very well attended, and received.

**14. Other issues** - Greg will invite Dorie Clark, MassBike Executive Director, to January's meeting. Steve would like to get bicycle retail and manufacturing people together for an informal meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

The next meeting is Tuesday, January 18, 2005, at City Hall, basement lounge.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Palmer, Secretary