

SOMERVILLE BICYCLE COMMITTEE
Joseph A. Curtatone
Mayor

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

Jim Gallagher
Dereck Mangus
Peter Coyle

Mike Buckley, Office of the Mayor
Aldermen

Bob Trane, Board of

Police Dept. (to be named)
Dept. (to be named)

Traffic and Parking

Dept. of Public Works (to be named)

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

MEETING MINUTES Tuesday, March 22, 2005, City Hall

ATTENDEES Alan, Ron, Greg, Peter, Steve
 Guests: Ali MacDonald-Tufts, Phil Goff

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

2. School St./on-road bicycle accommodations - Ali presented the preferred alternative that came out of the subcommittee meeting: a 14 foot southbound/uphill general travel lane, with a 4 foot northbound/downhill

contra flow lane, along with two 7 foot parking lanes on each side of the street, from Highland Ave. to Medford St. Greg remarked that 4 feet is considered substandard width for a bike lane against parked vehicles; and that 7 feet for parking lanes is also very narrow. He pointed out that prior discussions between the SBC and Traffic and Parking Dept. officials resulted in agreed upon minimum/maximum widths of parking, bicycle, and travel lanes, in consultation with the Mass. Highway Dept. design manual. Any changes from these designs must be vetted with the city's traffic engineer- a currently vacant position. Ron said he thought that this is an experiment worth trying. Steve observed that we cannot tell DPW to just paint lines a certain way after the street is resurfaced, and that maybe another street beside School should be looked at. Phil asked about parking conditions, and mentioned that going downhill, speed is a concern. Steve replied that cars seem to park all day on both sides. Phil said he thought a contra flow lane only makes sense if parking is eliminated on the side of the street where the lane is. Greg stated that safety must be a paramount concern whatever design is implemented, especially in trying to keep cyclists from riding in the "door zone". He repeated that the design presented contradicted agreed upon widths by T&P, and suggested that the subcommittee meet again. Steve replied that communities are trying new things that go beyond existing traffic engineering standards. He wants the subcommittee to be charged with identifying the best opportunity to target streets or an area for improvement. ACTION: The subcommittee will meet on Thursday, March 31, 6:30, Anderson Hall at Tufts University.

3. City Report -

A. Community Path - Phase 1, Cedar St. to Central St.: Steve said the design is on hold; that the MBTA has told the city it can go ahead with Phase 1 and solve the "pinchpoint" problem at Somerville Junction, proposing to trade its land for city land somewhere else in the rail corridor, to accommodate the potential Green Line extension; and that Guilford has accepted the money to pay for abandonment filing of the freight cutoff.

B. Davis Square crossing/busway - The MBTA Planning Dept. has signed off on the latest alternative, but bus operations still has to review the plans.

C. Meetings with bicycle businesses - Steve has met with Tyler Oulton of Paramount Bicycle Repair. Other meetings are planned.

D. Twin City Plaza - Peter and Steve took a look at the bike racks installed: there are 6 inverted U racks, one under an overhang.

E. New staff - Lisa LaPore has been hired as a Senior Transportation Planner in SPCD. ACTION: invite her to the April, or future, meeting. Also, the new engineer in Traffic and Parking starts on April 4.

F. Other business - Greg asked about \$315,000 in federal Community Development Block Grants that SPCD has committed to "East Broadway Streetscape Improvements"; and about the status of the Somerville Ave. reconstruction project. ACTION: Steve will check on both and report back.

- UNION SQUARE: Volunteer Tamara Metz will be invited to the April meeting to give a report.

- Steve said that a cell tower has been proposed along a portion of the path between Cedar and Lowell.

- Steve also said that the owner of the trailer at 35Rear Lexington Ave., which encroaches on the existing path was asking to lease the space. The land is zoned as open space.

4. Mystic River/Draw 7 Park to Route 99 path extension/Earhart Dam - No report.

5. Historic bike ride - A ride date of May 21 has been selected.

6. Maxpak site - Asher Miller, who is a member of the working group, gave a brief report. They want to see no blank walls in the development; they will come up with a series of recommendations to take to the developer.

7. Other issues - A memo from Jim Gallagher points out that the Mass. Highway project of the entire existing path corridor from Somerville to Cambridge/Belmont could be placed in the 2006 TIP if it's demonstrated that the plans will reach 100% within the next year. Also, the MBTA will lease the former Mass. Central Railroad right-of-way parallel to the Fitchburg Line to Belmont, for that portion of the project.

Also: May is Bike Month; committee members are encouraged to bring suggestions for activities, such as rides, to the April meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

The next meeting is Tuesday, April 26, at City Hall, basement lounge.

Respectfully submitted,

Greg Palmer, Secretary