

SOMERVILLE BICYCLE COMMITTEE

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Dept. of Public Works
Stephen Winslow, Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development

Bob Trane, Board of Aldermen
Terry Smith, Traffic & Parking

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MEETING MINUTES	Tuesday, October 21, 2008, 7:00 p.m., City Hall
COMMITTEE MEMBERS:	Peter, Ron, Charlie, Brian, Alan, Enid
GUESTS:	Lauren Clayton
EX-OFFICIO:	Steve

1. Minutes. The Committee approved the September minutes.
2. Tour de Somerville. Ron reported on the 16th Annual Tour de Somerville, “Explore the City Limits,” held Saturday, October 18. Between 100 and 115 cyclists participated. Redbones provided refreshments at the mid-ride break. The Somerville Police provided an escort and traffic control. A few cyclists arrived after the ride’s posted start time. Ron said that, next time, the Committee may want to publish a gathering time 15 minutes before the actual start time of the ride, as is done in Cambridge. Another option is to have someone stay behind an extra few minutes to pick up stragglers. SBC may want more clipboards on hand to collect riders’ names and addresses. Next ride is in May. Ron will look into doing a ride focused on Somerville school buildings and history. Enid will send letters thanking the Somerville Police and Redbones for their help.
3. Somerville Ave. at Beacon. DCI has approved the idea of adding bike accommodations at the intersection of Somerville Avenue and Beacon as part of the redesign project at this location. Steve said that MA Highway must give its approval as well. Charlie said that the SBC proposal is conceptual. He wanted to know whether DCI or perhaps the MHD would be responsible for drafting the final design. Steve is awaiting a call back on these issues. Cambridge needs to weigh in on the design starting at the point where Somerville Avenue crosses over the Cambridge city line.
4. Assembly Sq. Bike Accommodations.

Alan said that the Assembly Square bike accommodations (IKEA multi-use path, I-93 underpass at Kensington, possible Lombardi Way redesign) are still part of the development design, but there have been changes negotiated with the Planning Board. Thirty bike parking spaces are still planned. Committee members agreed to keep watch for designs used elsewhere that might also work here.

Yellow flashing lights with crosswalks have been proposed for Kensington. Alan proposed writing a letter to Monica Lamboy. The letter would express concern that a crosswalk with flashing lights might not be sufficient at this locations and that something safer might be warranted. It would indicate that the Committee doesn’t know what this “something safer” might be, but that members understand there is an on-going study of the crossing and would like to be kept abreast of any developments before final decisions are made, if possible. Charlie seconded the motion to write a letter to Monica Lamboy. The Committee voted in favor of the motion.

The Lombardi Way redesign has a sidewalk, but only on the east side of the street. Charlie expressed concern that removing the west sidewalk will result in people walking in the bike lane. Ron will speak to Carrie Dancy (East Somerville Main Streets) to get a sense of what the neighborhood thinks about

this. Alan will send a copy of the current version of the Lombardi Way redesign to Ron. Charlie will write up an explanation of what changes might be made to improve pedestrian access and send it to Ron. Charlie may accompany Ron to discuss the Lombardi Way redesign with Carrie if a mutually convenient time can be found. If the neighborhood has no objections to the present version of the redesign, the Committee will table further discussion of the matter.

5. Community Path/ Green Line.

The Committee continued discussions about access from the to-be-extended Community Path to the future Green Line stop at Lowell Street. Current plans call for the Community Path, to “ramp up” when it reaches Lowell Street. The Committee has been debating where and how the Path should ramp up given a second design goal of ensuring reasonably easy access from the Path to the new public transit station. Alan distributed a series of sketches that showed a few basic options for the Committee to consider. The Committee expressed a preference for an at-grade crossing (option #2). Alan said he would write up and distribute a diagram and description of what he thought he heard from the Committee.

Ideally the City will provide comments to EOT indicating a preferred design for connection of the Path to the new station. EOT will then integrate the City’s design proposal into its own design work. Steve said that whether the City needed to hire its own design consultants would be a question raised at a meeting later in the week (with Monica and others) and that he would report on results in November. Steve also said that Cedar Street/Central Street construction is scheduled for 2010. He will hire a designer once a decision is made about a connection point for extensions of the Community Path and the Green Line at Cedar and Central.

6. Bike Lane Ordinance. Steve said he had sent proposed Bike Lane Ordinance changes to Stanley Koty for adoption at the next Traffic Commission meeting. Steve said he would attend the meeting to answer any questions that might come up. If he could not attend the meeting, he would make sure that either Alan or Terry (Smith) attended the meeting in his stead.
7. Bicycle Facility Guidelines. Discussion postponed one month. Members are asked to send any additional comments to Brian.
8. Street-By-Street Discussion of Bike Facilities. A sub-committee (Charlie and Brian) has been working on identifying bike routes throughout the city. The goal is to identify nodes/desirable connections for routes (for recreation, commuting, etc.) to help prioritize work on striping, sharrows, and signage. A related goal is to develop route descriptions and maps for distribution. Committee members are asked to make a special effort to provide comments to the sub-committee. The street-by-street discussion of bike facilities will continue at the November meeting, time permitting.
9. City Report Issues. (a) The Committee asked about changes involving the MBTA ROW at Davis and the Community Path. The 100% design is not yet available. (b) KSS is still committed to removing tracks and ties as part of its development, but is expressing concern about any associated hazmat obligation. Removing the tracks and ties will facilitate extension of the Community Path. (c) The City has appropriated money for Safe-START, most for East Somerville projects. (d) The 2010 Active Transportation Project could bring in funding for paths along Mystic River and more (“Trails to Transit”). More information may be available after December.
10. Alewife Brook Multi-Use Path. The Committee examined the latest version of MA DCR’s Alewife Brook Trail. The Trail is intended as a nature/walking path, but it will also be open to bicyclists. Most of the Trail is on the Arlington side, but a very small portion – from Henderson Street to Broadway – will be in Somerville. At meetings about the Trail, Steve will indicate the SBC’s strong interest in ensuring pedestrian and bicycle access along the Somerville side of Alewife Brook.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. The next meeting is 7:00 p.m., November 18, 2008 at City Hall.

Respectfully submitted,
Enid Kumin,
Secretary