

Cambridge Bicycle Committee, January 2017

Minutes recorded by MP: Mike Proscia and AMB: Anne Marie Biernacki

[initials; \* = in attendance]

JA: John Adams \*  
SB: Steve Bercu \*  
AMB: Anne Marie Biernacki \*  
AF: Amy Flax \*  
JG: John Goodman \*  
CJ: Caroline Jaffe  
MVK: Mechthild von Knobelsdorff  
JL: Jen Lawrence (CDD staff)  
SM: Sean McDonnell \*  
MN: Matt Nelson (CPD) \*  
AO: Ari Ofsevit  
MP: Mike Proscia \*  
JR: Joseph Raser  
RR: Ruthann Rudel \*  
DS: David Soares \*  
JS: Justin Schreiber (CDD staff, SRTS)  
MS: Melissa Shakro \*  
CS: Cara Seiderman (CDD staff) \*  
RS: Randy Stern \*  
PS: Peter Stokes  
KW: Kathy Watkins (DPW) \*  
AW: Andrea Williams \*  
JW: Jim Wilcox (DPW) \*  
JB: Joe Barr (CDD) \*

## **I. Agenda review, Approval of Minutes, Introductions**

No minutes from December joint meeting

Item III, development projects, will be moved to a separate meeting due to a lengthy agenda

## **II. Pilot Separated Bike Lanes**

1. CS along with DS, KW, and JB present the pilot separated bike lane initiative.
  - a. City is looking to do more streets in spring/summer 2017 with longer stretches of street.
  - b. The question is production: how long does it take to implement a protected lane?
  - c. Hampshire Street will be repaved in the summer (partially) and can be done after that.

- d. For Cambridge, Broadway, and Hampshire parking would have to be removed on one side.
  - e. Mass Ave (Putnam – Bow Sts) and Brattle (Mason – Elliott) near Harvard Square are being planned for separated lanes as part of a previous participatory budgeting.
2. MP: If one of the goals of this study to collect data, should we compare bike traffic on the side of the road with the protected lane to the side without the protected lane?
    - a. JB: the idea was to get the existing pilot lanes in as quickly as possible (before winter). The new installations this spring will be installed on both sides of the street where possible.
  3. SB: could a more permanent barrier be installed? The flex posts are taking a beating in Boston.
    - a. DS: They are more durable than they look. Plus the idea was to be fast, flexible, and inexpensive.
  4. RS: have there been many complaints about parking in the current pilot lanes?
    - a. JB: complaints have been minimal. The city is working with Harvard Epworth Church to find spots on Sundays. There are questions about how we should handle buses. Typically there would be a boarding island in the area where the parking is, but if there is no parking how do we handle that? One idea is to swap parking / no parking to different sides of the street where there are bus stops, but that would remove even more parking spots overall.
  5. CS: Which pieces of the network should be build? And in which order?
    - a. Proposal is a triangle of Cambridge Street, Broadway, and Hampshire Street.
    - b. SB, RS: agreed! With an emphasis on protected infrastructure around the high school.
      - i. Cambridge Street is also a high crash corridor, so prioritize this first.
    - c. RR: Broadway from Quincy to Ellery should be a priority for the library and high school.
      - i. AW: add up to the Longfellow Building
    - d. RR: Hampshire, due to high volumes of bike traffic, is also a priority
      - i. KW / DS: patching work will be done first
    - e. RR: what about Cambridge Street from Inman to Lechmere?
      - i. JB: The City is trying to figure out from these pilots how fast these lanes can be installed, how to best install them, how to maintain (plow) them, then make it standard practice. After a few more lanes are installed, we will know how many more we can do, and when.
    - f. RR: Can we do Mass Ave in non-median areas? Also, how does this fit in with the Envision Cambridge / Mass Ave public process?
      - i. CS: Envision Cambridge meetings on Mass Ave will start soon. City is doing part of the one-way approach of Mass Ave into Harvard Square under a separate initiative.
      - ii. AW: Will this be one-way or two-way for bikes?
      - iii. CS: TBD
  6. SB: do we have / will we gather metrics on how this will impact retail?
    - a. KW: time frame is too short to get a good measure
    - b. SB: other cities use sales tax revenues to determine impact
    - c. CS: we could also do an intercept survey
    - d. KW: lanes should be 6'-7' wide for maintenance

- e. Guest: other cities have done this study, Cambridge should too
- 7. AF: we should encourage commuter routes with these protected lanes, not side routes
  - a. Also expressed support for the triangle idea by the high school.
- 8. RS: agreed on emphasis for main routes
  - a. If the median on North Mass Ave is an issue, note that protected lanes will reduce crossing distances for pedestrians.
  - b. JB: the median could be reduced to only a pedestrian crossing island in spots
  - c. AW: the median could help prevent U-Turns
- 9. Guest (lives on Broadway and Lee): does the bike traffic justify these proposals?
- 10. JA: data should advise which streets need accommodations. Where are the schools and places of interest? What is the speed of the road? What is the bike volume? Supports the idea of protected lanes on Cambridge Street and the data can help justify this.
  - a. KW: bike counts and crash data was used
  - b. CS: level of comfort data from the bicycle plan was also used
- 11. JG: for Harvard Square to Porter Square, Oxford Street is a good alternative. If it was repaved this is a good short term solution for Mass Ave.
  - a. KW: the wikimaps survey confirms that Oxford is seen as a good Mass Ave alternative
  - b. CS: the level of comfort survey rated Oxford as not very comfortable to ride on
  - c. SB: maybe it's the pavement condition and number of pedestrians?
  - d. JB: If separated lanes are added to Mass Ave where there is a median, you either need to take out a lane or remove the parking. There isn't room for all three.
- 12. SM: East Cambridge has a good grid system but then Cambridge Street is your only way out. We should plan and make this important street part of the protected network.
  - a. CS: The bike plan identified Cambridge Street for improvements.
  - b. DS: It will be hard to implement the bike plan all at once. Rather, the city is filling in gaps one puzzle piece at a time.
  - c. JB: agreed! Don't wait, do the pieces you can now.
  - d. SM: People will complain about parking being removed on Mass Ave. Oxford could be a good alternative and Green a good Central to Harvard alternative.
  - e. CS: the bike plan prefers main routes to side routes for infrastructure improvements.
- 13. SB: what is the community process?
  - a. JB: We will frame the discussion as 'we are doing this' and then discuss how best to mitigate concerns in a detailed discussion. We must demonstrate the world will not end and the challenge will be with retail and parking. Retail is already pressured from forces outside the city's control, this will be another thing that could add to that.
  - b. KW: we must emphasize safety (schools, crashes), that is a winning argument
- 14. Guest: Is there an easy street to do this? One where there are no bump outs, few businesses? Maybe Main Street @ Columbia or Mt Auburn from JFK to Putnam?
  - a. DS: street pavement conditions are poor which makes permanent marking difficult
  - b. KW: it is very difficult to identify a location where we can provide a buffer without taking away lanes or parking. Main Street and Mt. Auburn have narrow cross sections; there is not room to just flip the parking and bike lane.
- 15. Guest: what about Mass Ave at MIT? All: Good idea.
- 16. Guest: This should also include the DCR Parkways and Mt Auburn studies.

- a. CS: The city is already involved.
- 17. CS: Don't forget the Inman Square redesign is underway, there will be a public meeting on 1/24, see the bike report for details.
  - a. JB: this is conceptual and your input is needed. To be constructed later in 2017.
  - b. *Update: TriCommittee Meeting to Review Inman Square 2/13*

### III. City Plan and Cambridge DPW Updates

- 18. Upcoming public update/input meetings:
  - a. Inman Sq options
  - b. Lighting – Watertown Cambridge Greenway
  - c. Cara to send meeting information to listserv next week
- 19. DPW updates from Jim Wilcox
  - a. Alewife sewer separation – some wrap up most work shut down for winter
  - b. Goal of completing Huron this year – between March and Thanksgiving
  - c. New roadway and sidewalk contracts
    - i. New streetlight/signage on Putnam
    - ii. Contract 20 and 21 , water main on Thorndike
    - iii. Coming : Dudley (on bike plan as a slow speed and shared lane markings), Healy and Parker
    - iv. Sewer separation starting on Roseland, then Newport
    - v. Between Willard and Brattle – sewer, revision of roadway to preserve trees

### IV. Development Projects

- 20. Cara suggested another shared committee meeting for joint review of projects
  - a. EF project
    - o 2 current buildings with plan to build 3<sup>rd</sup>-turning the immediate area into another whole mini-campus
    - o Environmental impact study posted (link shared on agenda- ref to renderings and site layout)
      - Building impact to path
      - Parking
  - b. King Open School
    - o Design presented
  - c. Additions to North Point
  - d. RR: Question about bike lanes, addition and impact of these in development

### IV. Legislation

- 21. Ebikes – probably too much for this agenda, topic deferred for more in depth discussion
  - a. Different types – range from pedal assist to near moped level
  - b. Attempts to define clarity on use on public infrastructure
  - c. Someone is working on state legislation in Boston – want comments from the public

- d. PS: Question if this includes or excludes motorized skateboard, segways, etc – discussion of scope
- e. Background reading – from People for Bikes on what is being proposed
- 22. Bike lane fine legislation was passed \$50
  - a. Enforcement question to Matt – standing versus parked? Stopping in a bike lane counts
- 23. Street code – final copy distributed
  - a. Still discussing use cases for distribution and use
  - b. Discussion of distribution – budget

#### **V. Committee Work, Bike Committee Activity**

- 24. December meeting recap and discussion of topics at breakout tables
  - a. AW- discussion and learning about transit
  - a. SM– Mt. Auburn accommodations – discussion of width and accommodation for weather conditions, designated path and impact for improving throughout, impact of bike bus on mt auburn stretch) - sidebar discussion on the mechanics of the shared bike/bus lanes
  - b. General discussion about multicommittee meeting – regular versus project or topic focused, opportunity for annual brainstorming
- 25. Examples of subcommittee activity and planning ahead – further discussion deferred to next meeting due to time
  - a. Ahead Transit / uber etc
  - b. Social media
  - c. Participation in Envision Cambridge, Vision Zero effort
  - d. Vision zero
  - e. Cambridge Bike Rides
    - i. John Goodman stepping down- general appreciation for his impact and efforts to date. Will help transition but not run Spring Ride. RS requested a download or summary or “how to” for institutional knowledge transfer.
    - ii. Discussion of when new people will be on board for Bike Committee (April?)
    - iii. Date for ride - May 20 Saturday
    - iv.

#### **VI. Announcements, Upcoming Meetings**

- 26. New or ongoing committee work deferred to subsequent meeting due to time

#### **VII. Adjournment**

- o SB moved, AW seconded