

Notes: 4/21/21 Joint Bike/Ped/Transit Committee meeting

Attending:

Committee Members: Randy Stern, Debby Galef, Jim Gascoigne, John Attanucci, Magda McCormick, Mark Boswell, Olivia Mobayed, Pam McLemore, Allison Harris, Robin Bonner, Sandy Goldberg, Saul Tannenbaum, Wade Smith, Bill McAvinney, Jenny Turner-Trauring, City Staff: Greg Hanafin (CDD), Andrew Reker (CDD), Cara Seiderman (CDD), Kathy Watkins (DPW); Adam Shulman (TP&T), Jim Wilcox (DPW); Patrick Baxter (TP&T)
Guests: Gavin Lund, George Schneeloch

Mid-Mass Ave (Patrick Baxter, Engineering Manager, DPW)

- Quick build, separated bike lane project from Trowbridge St to Inman St
- 41' wide at west end, need to eliminate parking, 5 ft bike lanes
- 3 blocks in, 44.5', room for floating parking
- Shared bus stop/bike lane. A floating bus stop would require capital construction work, which is not part of the quick-build projects. "Temporary accessible platform" is almost as expensive as full reconstruction.
- Shared Bus/bike lane near Putnam Ave. was part of the previous Inner Mount Auburn project (the bus lane approaching from the west needs a receiving lane on the east side of the intersection)
- Curb side accessible parking/loading at senior center before the post office
- Outdoor dining near Hancock St heading east. Need to add a standard bike lane around the dining area that is in the street.
- Q - sidewalks will remain the same? A- Yes.
- Q - What will happen east of Inman, most complex. A - Plan for capital project to reconstruct Mass Ave in Central Sq. will be underway soon; it would not make sense to do a quick build there for both technical and practical reasons.
- Q - Flexpost location? Within the buffer by 1 foot from travel lane, 7 feet from curb
- Q - Is there a guarantee that the bus stop will be returned to where the restaurant space is now when it is removed? A - Yes, that is the plan (unless the MBTA has a different idea, but that has not been expressed by them).
- Q - Is there a positive impact on dining by having a quiet bike lane next to dining, rather than motor vehicles? A - Yes, could be.
- Q - Flexposts adjacent to parking, safer for people bicycling if they further away from parked cars to avoid "dooring."
- Q - better concrete barriers, rather than flex posts? A - looking at them because they could be beneficial, but experience in Boston has been problematic with the specific design (motorists have hit them; at least one car to flipped entirely).
- Q - Could be double parking in the buffer next to curb parking at the senior center? A - lots of parking control officers are in that area, but will have to watch it.
- Q- can the bus stop near city hall be moved forward to make bus access easier? A – the important bus shelter is further back, and would be a serious undertaking involving construction to do so, so not at this time. This design does not preclude that from happening in the future

- Q - Very wide buffer next to parking at the senior center, can part of that become a buffer on the motor vehicle side of the bike lane? A- will look into that.
- Public Comment - Please maximize parking being pulled back near intersections and crosswalks for visibility for right turns.
- Q - What was feedback like? A- Wide variety of feedback, businesses were contacted individually, keep bus stop in front of city hall

DPW 5 Year Plan, 4/2021 Update (Kathy Watkins, City Engineer)

- Will be on website in a week or two
- Emphasis on complete streets, cycling safety ordinance compliance, vision zero
- Among other factors, streets in City bike network vision are one factor to make reconstruction a higher priority. Also sidewalk conditions, and proximity to transit.
- Some key projects
 - River St
 - Port streets
 - Central Square (\$38M project) - better bike/transit
- \$13.5 M/year on complete streets (\$5M/yr for separated bike lanes starting in 2022)
- Sewer and drains work - Charles River and Alewife Brook water quality is significantly improved over last decade
- Supporting Urban Forestry Master Plan - better and more tree planting
- More raised side street crossings, fewer ramps
- As much as possible, maintain safe and well-marked pedestrian and cyclist access, and bus stops, during construction
- Q - Liked cool corridors map, could bike network be overlaid on construction plan? A - Yes good idea
- Q - how to plan for future separated bike lanes when putting in features like rain gardens? A - [City is committed to plant 1000 trees/year](#). But e.g., won't plant in curb extensions
- Q - Sidewalk conditions, how often is it updated? A - It's done internally and is one year old. Maybe not completely accurate. Need to standardize ranking.
- Q – What is in the 5-year plan for the constructed separated bike lanes? - A. Inman Sq, River St, Huron Ave near FPP, Binney/Galileo, Central Sq Mass Ave, Kirkland St (all), First/O'Brien/Cambridge Intersection. Also, projects that may be constructed in conjunction with building development would be added once confirmed.
- Q - How to keep people from planting gardens around trees, which harm trees? A - education
- Q - Snow clearing near trees - salty snow hurts trees? A - Definitely try to protect trees
- Q - Does this go to the city council? A - Shared with CC but not for approval or review.

Green Infrastructure - Public Works (Jim Wilcox)

- Climate Change Adaptation Program
- Storm Water Management Program
- Rain gardens, porous pavement, leeching catch basins, green roofs

- Alewife constructed wetland (4 acres) during Alewife Brook sewer separation project of 300+ acre area near Huron Ave
 - Storm water goes to Fore Bay, then small ponds, then into Little River then to Alewife Brook
- Bio-basins - street runoff into local basin, with plantings above, require specialized maintenance, e.g., cleaning overflow drains, removing invasive species
- Could all sidewalks, parking, cycle lanes, and bus stops be built porous? Specialized sweeping, vacuum sweeper
- Coming soon to Webster Ave, Chestnut St, Park Ave, Port Neighborhood, Willard St
- Pollinator gardens - 80% native species, [plants, grasses, self-sustaining, partner with residents for maintenance, in medians, and sidewalk gardens
- Q - Groups to maintain gardens, problem with “do-gooders” cutting stuff down in the fall... A - Training a big part of the program.
- Could all bike lanes, parking, bus stops be porous? A - Much more expensive to build, Vacuum sweep needed, life not as long as standard asphalt?
- Could there be signage on rain gardens and pollinator gardens explaining what is going on and you should and should not do? A - There is signage at larger projects. But it’s a good suggestion.

MBTA Updates (Andy Reker, CDD)

- MBTA-MassDot Silver Line extension - developing alternatives, public meeting 4/27. Could extend to Cambridge and Somerville.
- Fare payment verification - on buses and Green Line - public meeting 4/29
- Concord Ave Transit Signal Priority project- consultant to start looking at this in May
- Q - Will the city take a position on the new fare infrastructure, contactless payment - eg on buses that should be fareless? A - City has not taken a position. MBTA relies on fare money to exist.

April 30th webinar on history of the MBTA Map, design and design standards go to this page to register - <https://www.ctps.org/calendar/day/2021-04-30>