

**Cambridge Bicycle Committee**  
**June 10, 2009**

**Present:** Ellen Aaronson, Viola Augustin, John Burckardt, Joan Friebely, Ken Field (chair), Nicole Freedman (visitor), Megan Krey, Catharine Hornby, Tom Meek, Steve Miller, Sgt. Kathy Murphy, George Perkins, Chris Porter, Brian Postlewaite (visitor), Andrew Prescott, C.R. Rogers, Cara Seiderman (city of Cambridge), Adam Serafin (MIT), Karen Sommerlad (Harvard), Peter Stokes, Gerry Swislow, Scott Walker, James Wilcox (DPW), Walker Willett.

**I. Minutes, Agenda Review**

1. No changes to May minutes
2. Conversation with Nicole Freedman (Boston's director of bicycle programs) (with responses from Nicole)
  - a. South Bay trail; Options for linking new Greenway to Charles River (Walter)
    - i. Boston hired group to work on network plan. Priority is to reach casual- and non-cyclists – eg with off-road options
    - ii. Trail anticipated in ~15 months. Path: along Melnea Cass and portion of the SE Expressway to near the Children's Museum
  - b. Bicycle Parking (Peter, Gerry)
    - i. Boston has annual goals for new bike racks but struggles to offset effect of removed parking meters. Some neighborhoods want less street furniture.
    - ii. Back Bay – priority area – but limit there is one bike rack per 200 ft
    - iii. No bike racks at MFA expansion (Gerry) – not yet a priority to build bike racks into building permits because other bike rack efforts thought more fruitful
    - iv. Building permits: in process of developing rules for bike parking requirements
  - c. Responses on bike sharing programs? (Scott, Ken)
    - i. Very detailed request for proposals (RFP). Three responses – evals in process.
    - ii. Coordinating with local cities and towns, DCR, MBTA
    - iii. See advantages to setting up a regional system – Metropolitan Area Planning Council coordinated RFP and will select vendor – on terms that other cities/towns can join (at pre-arranged rates) at later date
  - d. Bike facilities on bridges – esp River, Western, Anderson Memorial (George)
    - i. Not now a focus area – but acknowledge bridges are key to network
    - ii. DCR hired firm for bike/ped planning for bridges/approaches (Cara)
  - e. Connection North Station to Cambridge across tracks? (George)
    - i. Legal requirement, but funding an issue (Cara, Steve)
    - ii. General goal to connect Greenway to Charles R. – but no immediate plans
  - f. More on bike sharing:
    - i. Cambridge will coordinate with universities on joining bike sharing (Cara)
    - ii. Potentially transformative increase in cycling – Paris saw +400% (Nicole)
  - g. Contraflow lanes? Some very awkward connections in certain directions (John)
    - i. Riding against flow of traffic very common – measured at up to 33%
    - ii. Low acceptance of official contraflow lanes – but might experiment, maybe with Marlboro and/or Beacon Sts
3. Conversation with Brian Postlewaite (chair of Somerville Bike Committee)
  - a. Bike signage (Harvard/Minuteman)– how did that come about? Could Somerville join?
    - i. Concern about designated generic routes where implication is parallel roads are not for bikes. Rather – signing should be for specific origin-destination routes and wayfinding (Cara)

- ii. Potential to meet/coordinate – particularly for routes that cross city lines such as BU Bridge to Union Square
    - iii. Agree – esp connections from Davis, Union Squares to Cambridge spots (Brian)
    - iv. Somerville can be hard to navigate – more signs would be good (George)
  - b. Update on Somerville Community Path? (George)
    - i. State has agreed to do design work in conjunction with Green Line T extension
    - ii. Construction money not yet identified – but path with likely happen with or after Green Line extension – not before
    - iii. Better to build T and bike path together – maybe with Mass Highway \$ (John)
- 4. General discussion: How do your organizations encourage bike advocacy? (Ken)
  - a. Annual public meeting at Boston Public Library (Nicole)
  - b. Livable Streets got REI grant to pay for Nicole to talk to mainstream audiences through businesses and civic groups. Developing day-long courses on street design (Steve)
  - c. Boston has huge database through Hub On Wheels – can target residents of particular streets to inform them of upcoming interesting meetings
- 5. Committee Rides
  - a. May 16 ride – Thanks Gerry! Thanks Cambridge Police Dept!
  - b. Fall ride (Oct 4) (Gerry)
    - i. Ideas:
      - 1. Bowtie ride – rerun of prior years – could tie in with Bike Fashion Show
      - 2. History ride – offer of help from Cindy Brennan of Cambridge Historical Commission to develop ride on political/social movements (abolition?)
    - ii. Need volunteers for fall ride leaders
      - 1. Members volunteered – Catharine, Megan, John.
      - 2. Plan to meet with Cindy Brennan in next few weeks

## **II. Committee Projects and Planning**

### **A. CitySmart Tours and Events (see [www.cambridgema.gov/citysmart/](http://www.cambridgema.gov/citysmart/)) (Cara)**

- 1. Thanks to leaders and participants
- 2. Ride to Minuteman cancelled for lack of participants
- 3. Family Day (Cara, Steve, George)
  - a. Lots of fun for all. Mechanic kept very busy
  - b. Participation initially light – but enthusiasm caught on.
- 4. Participation challenges.
  - a. Pre-registration requirement and late pamphlets may be reducing participation. (Cara)
  - b. Low participation at early events contrasts with generally enthusiastic response – large number of CitySmart responses have requested bike packages. Also planning a series of limited enrollment bicycling classes (Cara)
  - c. Changes to registration could encourage more casual participants to join (George)
- 5. Shop by Bike – any needs? (Scott) Just waivers from Cara (Catharine)
- 6. Bike Fashion Show
  - a. Delayed until spring (Joan)
  - b. LaSalle will take bigger role (Joan) but Bike Comm will still be in charge/involved
  - c. Citywide event – not just Cambridgeport (Cara)
  - d. Still need venue – MIT or elsewhere (Viola, Cara)
  - e. Will talk with MIT student groups – might be interest (Adam)

### **B. Elections**

- 1. Nominations

- a. For chair – Catharine
- b. For vice-chair – George
- 2. Statements of intent
  - a. Catharine – want to pick up on Ken’s model of open communication, good conversations, and good flow to meeting. Serve as public face of Committee as necessary
  - b. George – serve generally as needed
  - c. Role in building relationships with city staff/officials? (Question from Walter to Ken).
    - i. Yes – important role – though can be delegated to other members (Ken)
    - ii. In past, members have sat down with councilors
- 3. Catharine and George elected by unanimous acclaim, as moved by Steve, and seconded by Ken
- 4. Secretary – absent nominations for secretary, responsibility for minutes will rotate (Cara)

**C. Bicycle Survey – report from initial meeting on what might be in a Cambridge resident survey**

- 1. Cara, committee members met with Silvia Thompson of Harvard Sch of Public Health on design of survey
  - a. Goal: to gauge support for and participation in bicycling – eg measure bike ownership
- 2. Survey design
  - a. Age included? (CR) Could be. Comments welcome – what demographics? (Cara)
  - b. Coordinate questions with national surveys to compare results? (Chris)
    - i. Yes – have examples of large surveys (Cara, Walter)
  - c. Ask “ever been in an accident”? (Steve)
    - i. Might color survey results
  - d. Sample size – trying to get good sample. May mail and follow up by phone. Participation always a challenge (Walter)
    - i. Offering prizes really helps – eg raffles for bicycle, iPod, etc (Adam, Karen)

**D. Cambridge Bikes Facebook Site: how can it best be used**

- 1. Participation (now ~90) driven by activity on site – so email events to post (Ken)
  - a. Goal is to have group that can be encouraged to participate in advocacy events (Walter)
  - b. No way to track who’s on site (George, Scott)
  - c. Post just local stuff or anything? (George) Anything of potential interest (Ken)
- 2. Hub On Wheels
  - a. Could Cambridge send info out to Hub On Wheels list? (Ken)
  - b. City of Boston manages list (Steve)
  - c. Could build Cambridge email list off Hub on Wheels list

**III. Reports, Updates**

**A. Development Projects**

- 1. Alexandria – coming up

**B. City Street projects**

- 1. Technical review, bike network meeting to be held June 15 at City Hall Annex – various streets

**E. DPW 5-year streets and sidewalk plan: follow up meeting June 15 (out of order) (Jim)**

- 1. Five year plan online at [www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/departments/engnr/fiveyearplan.aspx](http://www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/departments/engnr/fiveyearplan.aspx)
- 2. Updates (see handout for more detail)
  - a. Blanchard – progressing well
  - b. Brookline – closed during day for work
  - c. Common Manholes – separating sewer and drain systems around Central – finish ~Aug
  - d. Vassar – substantially complete – really multimodal
  - e. Ellery St – public meeting June 9 – work this summer/fall; last bits in spring

- f. Sidewalk/roadway – various sidewalk / curb cut / paving improvements. Next bidding round soon.
  - g. Community Development Block Grant bid opening this summer
  - h. Other upcoming large projects – on Broadway, Concord Ave , Western Ave., Whittemore area
3. Western Ave
- a. Citizen advisory committee in the works – it would be good to have cyclist(s) (Cara)
  - b. Bike lanes
    - i. Road conditions impeding application of paint (Cara (from Wayne))
    - ii. Good at least to have travel lanes moved left (Gerry)
  - c. Cycle track option? (Steve) Could be evaluated (Cara)
  - d. Public process would be helpful – like Brookline St (Walter, Cara)
4. Placement of utilities under road where bikes are a challenge – because utility repairs leave cuts in surface right where bikes are – but challenging to fit everything under urban streets (Ken, Jim)

**C. DCR projects – not addressed**

**D. Police Report (Kathy)**

- 1. 17 crashes in May, including:
  - a. 1 unknown – bike mechanical failure?
  - b. 2 doorings
  - c. Mass x State: 2 crashes. Turning cars failed to yield to oncoming bikes – 1 citation
  - d. Davenport x Mass: Turning car failed to yield to oncoming bike
  - e. Bikes struck in bike lanes
    - i. Taxi pulling out of 853 Main
    - ii. Car pulling into parking spot
  - f. Bike ran red light – hit
  - g. Hampshire St bike lane at Broadway light
- 2. Crash summary – nearly complete (Cara)
  - a. Most common – left turning car failing to yield to approaching bike continuing straight
  - b. Also common – car turning right into same direction bike continuing straight
- 3. Frequency of citations – how to encourage more? (Ken) Could have been some more (Kathy)
- 4. Reporting – what to do if see unreported crash? (Adam)
  - a. Encourage people to report crash – for statistical purposes (Ken)
- 5. Overall rate of citations? (Scott)
  - a. Low. Officers seem reluctant to expose drivers to big insurance premiums hikes (Kathy)

**F. Bicycle Parking – not addressed;**

**G. Other – nothing else**

**V. Announcements and Next Meeting**

Next meeting: July 15, 5:30-7:30pm at the Steve Miller's house (Barbeque!).