

Cambridge Pedestrian Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date/Time: Thursday January 22, 2009

Location: City Hall Annex

Committee Member Attendees (check mark indicates attendance):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Brian Culver	<input type="checkbox"/>	Eva Moseley	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Amanda Trombley
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thayer Donham (MITrep)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Larry Parnell		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Debby Galef	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sean Pierce		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rona Gregory	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Benjamin Rasmussen		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Peter Koff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Robert Ricchi		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	David Loutzenheiser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Helen Rose		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cana McCoy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Eran Segev		

City Staff Attendees (check mark indicates attendance):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Rosalie Anders	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill Dwyer	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jeff Parenti
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cara Seiderman			<input type="checkbox"/>	Michael Muehe
<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Anderberg	<input type="checkbox"/>	Juan Avendano	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sue Clippinger
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sgt. Kathy Murphy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephanie Groll		

Visitors: Neil Van Dyke, Mary Louise, Alex, Jim, Tom, Alan Green, Megan

Member interests:

Brian: built environment, fence ordinance

Ben: street trees & environment

Thayer: areas around MIT

Peter: all pedestrian issues

Amanda: social outreach projects

Debby: snow & ice clearance

Rosalie: climate action issues & how that intersects with pedestrian needs

Helen: Vassar Street

Rona: walking environment in general, problem intersections

Larry: community outreach

There were no changes to the December minutes

Agenda:

- I. Introductions, review of minutes
- II. DCR Bridges: Updates & next steps
- III. Oxford Street pedestrian crash
- IV. Seniors & walking
- V. Social marketing
- VI. Break
- VII. Subcommittees

Before the meeting commenced, meeting agenda and protocol were reviewed.

Addition to the agenda: Brief Announcements

DCR Bridges: The next meeting about the DCR Bridges (BU & Craigie) is Tuesday 1/27 (Helen has volunteered to go to the meeting). There's a slideshow that is available on the DCR website; Cara also has a hard copy, if people would like to review them in person.

If people would like to comment on this or other bridge projects, they may communicate to:

Rick Sullivan, Commissioner

Department of Conservation & Recreation

251 Causeway Street, Suite 600

Boston, MA 02114-2104

Richard.Sullivan@state.ma.us OR Rick.Sullivan@state.ma.us

In terms of all the river bridges, there was a process determining what order which bridges will

see repair first. In terms of mitigating traffic impacts of construction, it will be important to encourage people to use different methods of transportation, not just cars.

There will be ongoing discussions about the BU Bridge rotary (not connected with the BU Bridge reconstruction), which is not at present very pedestrian friendly.

The DCR plans to hold another meeting on February 24 about Magazine Beach pedestrian bridge.

The DCR bike/pedestrian committee is being reconstituted. It will be a statewide group, with quarterly meetings, and subcommittee meetings for each region.

Pedestrian Crash: still under investigation. There was a meeting discussing raised crosswalk with Agassiz Neighborhood Association. Sgt. Murphy reviewed the facts of the crash and will follow up with any additional information as it becomes available.

At the Agassiz meeting, it seemed that attendees understood that the crash had something to do with things other than the raised device. Separately, meeting attendees expressed frustration that motorists were not yielding as reliably as people expected and asked if there was any way to mark the crosswalks with zebra stripes. Sgt. Murphy says she doesn't think that zebra stripes would have made a difference, and that the raised crosswalk had very little to do with the accident either. Sgt. Murphy recommends that pedestrians make eye contact with motorists when crossing.

There have been studies (in other locations) done about raised intersections that show that yielding rates increased. The city did studies on the first raised intersections installed in Cambridge, which showed significant improvements in yielding, but generally did not do studies on those intersections built later. This will be revisited, with a plan for studying various crossings around the city.

Debby says before the raised crosswalk it was also very difficult to cross at that intersection. She observed that cars do drive more slowly now. There are motorists who do not realize that there is a pedestrian crosswalk there.

Jim, a visitor, said that there's an intersection at Concord Ave by the Armory that doesn't involve a raised crosswalk but is very safe [NB: this is the one with the crossing island].

Seniors & walking: city got a council order asking if Cambridge could launch a project similar to NYC's "Safe Streets for Seniors". A copy of the response can be found here:

The committee discussed issues for seniors and what could be done to ensure that people can easily choose to walk.

Snow & Ice removal: over 600 tickets issued so far this season.

Mary Louise says the hardest part about the intersections in this weather is poor conditions. She doesn't always watch what she's stepping in front of because of ice and snow. Jim says that raised crosswalks solve the slushy/puddle issue. He also likes countdown intersections. But brick sidewalks are a problem (not to mention more expensive). Rosalie points out that there are many problems on brick sidewalks with leaves, and that they freeze faster. Alan went to a talk about water drainage and said that bricks are more efficient in that regard. New brick sidewalks are installed with no drainage underneath. There is permeable concrete that is just as efficient.

Social Marketing: The project is moving forward to marketing walking, biking, transit. This will be done in various areas of the city, starting with Cambridgeport. Other cities have had a 10-15% mode shift, which is huge. Three potential names: Smart Trips (used elsewhere); Go Lightly; Easy Streets. Mary Louise suggested: Take It. Easy. Erav suggested: Foot Print. Mary Louise asked about celebrities. Have a famous person volunteer to take an alternative way to get places, e.g. take the bus.

Announcements: Cara sent out the announcements via email about various events and meetings.

Public Works: Bill Dwyer couldn't be here this month. There are some updates to the city construction contracts that will influence construction projects. If anyone sees something wrong with pedestrian access around construction sites they should contact Cambridge DPW.

City walk/run in April: Jeff Walker asked if anyone would be willing to participate in the planning. Anyone who wants to pitch in should talk to Cara. Amanda said in previous years that there wasn't much for volunteers to do.

Ben said there's a meeting in **Arlington about their Mass Ave improvements** from Arlington/Cambridge line to Arlington Center. Meeting is February 3 in Town Hall Auditorium at 730 Mass Ave.

Ben also said we'd try and do another **tree well event in April**, details to come. Rosalie heard from a local church willing to do a tree well project.

Peter: He's getting off of the **Logan Airport committee** as Cambridge's rep due to conflicts. Meetings are periodic; they haven't had one since October. Helen said she might be interested.

Next Meeting: Thursday February 26, 2009, City Hall Annex.

