

Cambridge Pedestrian Committee

DRAFT Meeting Notes

November 15, 2012, 6-8 PM

Attendees:

Cara Seiderman (CDD), Helen Rose (chairperson), Rose Billeci, Andrea Yoder, Debby Galef, Sean Peirce (note-taker), Elizabeth Bierer

1. **Minutes** from October meeting approved

2. **Updates:**
 - a. Debby Galef attended the Somerville public meeting on reconstruction of Beacon Street. Attendees at the Somerville meeting were divided on the city proposal for a cycle track due to concerns about losing on-street parking. The proposal is online and interested members can submit comments via Somerville Alderman Marianne Heuston. Debby Galef and other members noted that the pavement condition on Beacon Street is poor for cyclists and that there are numerous missing crosswalks, e.g. at Oxford Street.
 - b. Sean Peirce is reviewing and compiling survey responses from senior citizens about their experiences traveling in Cambridge.
 - c. Recent meetings and progress on the Huron Avenue project were discussed. The cycle track option is not being pursued, based in part on snow removal complexities, complications from the overhead trolley wires, impacts to on-street parking, and cost of full reconstruction. Unfortunately a message has been articulated that there is not enough space for both a cycle track and on-street parking on both sides, which is erroneous. Eliminating on-street parking on one side would be one way to achieve the cycle tracks, but it is not the only way. Elizabeth Bierer mentioned that residents had concerns about crossing Huron Ave. safely, and wondered why the plan does not include more traffic-calming. The Bicycle Committee is writing a letter to department heads. The Pedestrian Committee will compose its own letter dealing with both the substance of the proposal as well as concerns about the process in giving due consideration to the Committee's input. **ACTION:** Elizabeth Bierer and Debby Galef will work together on the letter.
 - d. Elizabeth Bierer reported that DCR will be holding a meeting on November 27, 6:30-8 PM, on repair issues at Lowell Park, which lies on both sides of Fresh Pond Parkway.
 - e. Cara Seiderman reported that Mass. DOT acknowledged our comments on the Longfellow Bridge project but did not adjust their proposal. Committee members noted that the final design is still much better than some of the original proposals.

3. **DPW 5-Year Plan.** This is the city's asset management plan for streets and sidewalks and is based on a computer model of pavement deterioration, although it is adjusted to account for pedestrian, bicycle, and other priorities. The Bicycle Committee met with DPW about having a more direct role in providing input into the plan for bicycle priorities. The Pedestrian Committee could do likewise,

e.g. by pointing out missing sidewalks, opportunities for shared streets, areas of poor sidewalk condition, and important pedestrian connections that are not otherwise major streets. Elizabeth Bierer is interested in working on this. ACTION: Cara Seiderman will check on whether DPW collects and analyzes sidewalk condition data the way they do for roads.

4. **iReport.** This is a mobile device application that allows users to report non-emergency maintenance issues directly to DPW, such as unshoveled sidewalks or broken streetlamps. The number of issues that can be reported is limited, and iReport is intended for near-term maintenance issues rather than a discussion of possible future redesigns or infrastructure projects. However, the program could be expanded to cover other maintenance issues that affect pedestrians, such as debris on sidewalks, loose bricks, improper construction signage / temporary walkways, and drainage issues. Cars that are blocking sidewalks should be reported to the Traffic Department (Police Department after hours) for more immediate action.
5. **Next meeting** is December 12, an informal joint meeting and potluck supper with the Bicycle Committee.
6. **Committee structure:** Membership is relatively low and solicitation of new members is unfortunately on hold while the City reconsiders the overall committee structure. As such, it does not seem to make sense to create multiple standing subcommittees as has been done in the past. Rose Billeci, Debby Galef, Elizabeth Bierer, and Andrea Yoder are interested in forming an *ad hoc* subcommittee to work with DPW on the 5-Year Plan. Their first meeting was tentatively scheduled for December 10 at 6 PM.

Link to the 5-year plan:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/engineering/aboutengineering/fiveyearplandescription.aspx>