

Cambridge Pedestrian Committee
Draft Minutes from June 27, 2013, 6-8 PM

Attendees: Victoria Farr, Helen Rose, Andrea Yoder, Benjamin Williams, Ryan Westrom, Joseph Rose, Elizabeth Bierer

City Staff: Jen Lawrence (CDD), Bill Dwyer (DPW), Juan Avendano (CDD)

1. Introductions

2. Bill Dwyer Reports from DPW

a. 2013 Construction Update Review, created to notify construction firms of ongoing projects, problems, and upcoming events. High points:

i. Huron B project (soup-to-nuts) starts in about a month, and will cost about \$26 million.

ii. The Harvard Tunnel area will be closed July 19-20, allowing for paving.

iii. Huron A project: identified all double utility poles, moving forward with the plan.

iv. Oxford @ Garfield Street is 98% completed.

v. Broadway projects: Making good progress on sidewalks on both projects

vi. NSTAR Electric projects overlap some city efforts, so some redundancy in efforts. Hoping to coordinate these.

vii. NSTAR is moving on to street restoration from its cooling pipe project. Runs from Bay Street through Harvard Square, Putnam Ave, and on across town. Should start July 6th, with a goal of completing by late September.

b. Q&A

i. Longfellow Bridge construction: Unsure how pedestrian access is planned for the duration of the project, but can email project head and find out. It's the general impression that pedestrian access will be maintained for the duration.

ii. There's a large pothole on Sciarappa near Otis or Thorndike St.

iii. The intersection of Broadway and Trowbridge by the Public Library is awaiting some litigation before the sidewalk can be repaired.

3. Juan Avendano, Traffic Calming presentation

a. Cambridge uses traffic calming to reduce vehicular speed, increase safety, and reclaim streets. Projects are generally added to projects included in DPW's 5-year reconstruction plan. Major projects use a community process to decide upon improvements and prioritization. Cambridge wants to promote sidewalks for public uses in addition to transportation and for all users.

b. Keeping slow improves safety. Vehicle stopping distances reduce dramatically between 30 and 20 mph (78' to 45'). Pedestrian deaths and fatalities are reduced significantly by lowering speeds. At 40 mph, 85% of pedestrians involved in the accidents are killed; at 30 mph, 45% of pedestrians involved are killed and 50% are injured; at 20 mph 5% of pedestrians involved are killed and 65% injured.

c. Traffic calming tools include: narrowing the road through cycling facilities, street trees, changing parking spaces, and on-street markings; horizontal improvements like chicanes and crossing islands; and vertical improvements such as raised intersections and raised crosswalks.

i. Curb extensions in Cambridge begin 20' before the intersection and extend 3'-5' into the road to increase pedestrian visibility. Turning radii are important, especially with regards to buses.

ii. Crosswalks in Cambridge use either thermoplastic or inlay zebra striping, and cover all crossing directions if feasible. Some raised crosswalks and intersections do not have zebra striping at the moment, but Cambridge is working on a standard that includes them.

Example: Oxford Street.

- iii. Raised crossings are very effective but not very popular with drivers. Raised intersections are more popular, and still very effective. “<” markings indicate a shift in elevation to drivers, and are used in conjunction with zebra striping marking pedestrian areas.
- d. Service vehicles get input into the traffic calming process. The fire department often has the biggest concerns, so traffic calming projects are coordinated with the fire department’s response routes.
- e. The 85th percentile vehicle speed generally does drop after traffic calming projects. Perceptions of safety by residents and cyclists also tend to increase.
- f. Q&A
- i. Traffic calming on Columbia in Area 4 may have shifted traffic to Windsor St. Cambridge has not encountered these shifts often, and most studies find this problem is uncommon.
- g. Projects
 - i. Waterhouse Street: Removing the signal at Concord and raising the intersection, adding in curb extensions on Follen and Garden Sts, and changing the turning radius for Moss Ave.
 - ii. Scott Street @ Irving Street: Irving will directly go to Scott, with a left turn required to continue on Irving. The intersection will be raised and zebra striping will be added.
 - iii. Longfellow Road: Raising the street to sidewalk level and removing about half of the onstreet parking to create a shared street. The third shared street in Cambridge, and the first residential one!
 - iv. Fulkerson Street: Building a sidewalk-level contra-flow bicycle track between Charles Street and Spring Street, to help cyclists who currently are biking in the street in that zone. This will also make room for a more visible Do Not Enter sign. This project does not include the intersection of Fulkerson and Cambridge Street. It may be helpful for cyclists and pedestrians to have the cycle track on a third level between the sidewalk and street, but that would make maintenance more challenging.

4. Jen Lawrence – Sustainability Planner

- a. Climate Change Survey! Take it at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/climateprep>
- b. Presentation slides will be emailed out to the committee list-serv. In short, Cambridge is kicking off a planning process to discuss mitigating and adapting to climate change, and would like our participation.
- c. Keep in touch at <http://www.cambridgema.gov/climateprep>, through Facebook, or on Twitter (@ccd344). The committee meets the 3rd Thursday of each month.
- d. Q&A
 - i. Climate change may not be being discussed enough at public meetings, nor are residents being asked to adapt in the name of climate change. If there are any ideas on how to change this, contact the head of the climate change planning, John Bolduc, jbolduc@cambridgema.gov.
 - ii. Cambridge is currently using ICLEI products, and is looking at the STAR Communities Index or EcoDistrict for Kendall Square.

5. PARK(ing) Day ideas

- a. PARK(ing) Day is September 20th. Email Jen Lawrence with any ideas or proposals by August to get an official permit, jlawrence@cambridgema.gov
- b. Brainstorm potential Ped Committee spot ideas
- c. Parking spaces will be permitted from 7a to 7p, to allow for more set-up time and to allow participants to stay out as long as they desire.
- d. Businesses can get permits to use the spaces. They can give out samples or put in seating, but cannot conduct any transactions/sales in the public space, and the space has to be open to the public.
- e. Cords cannot be run to the space across the sidewalk or the roadway.