

Cambridge Bicycle Committee, October 14, 2015

Minutes recorded by AO: Ari Ofsevit

Present: JA: John Adams; AF: Amy Flax; JG: John Goodman; MS: Melissa Shakro (MIT); JR: Joseph Raser; AO: Ari Ofsevit; MP: Mike Proscia; CS: Cara Seiderman (CDD); JW: Jim Wilcox (DPW); AMB: Ann Marie B; Megan Ramey

Guests: Jeff Roberts (CDD), Stephanie Groll (CDD), Adam Shulman (TP&T), Lesley Kraemer, Allison Quach, Arthur Strang, Micky Chech, Sharon Ron, Preston Hollis

I. Agenda review, Approval of Minutes, Introductions

September Minutes approved

II. Overview of Development Process

Jeff from CDD: Zoning regulations, meant to treat all lots with district equally. In some cases, zoning says “maybe” but in those cases there is review and approval process. Some small (i.e. you can seek a special permit to reduce a parking requirement). 50k floor area or more requires a special permit (discretionary permits, reviewed by appointed body), based on planning criteria. Urban design & transportation impacts. 7 criteria, one says “must be bike/ped friendly.” Not just creating facilities/space, also providing street edge, active use, etc. Applicant must have a transportation impact study (TIS) via Adam Shulman, submit to planning board. Guide for staff and planning board. If project is approved by planning board, special permit is approved with conditions to mitigate impacts.

Adam Shulman TP&T: How much leeway does BZA/Planning board have to change other parts of the project? Jeff: When a project comes to PB, it is of a scale that benefits from a holistic review. Waive parking requirement for a garden, BZA, what specific relief are they asking for, mitigation, conflict with abutters. PB looking at the project as a whole, looking at, say, a parking reduction and a variety of special permits (residential conversion, etc). Cara: this committee is focused on looking at larger projects undergoing Sect 19 review that have a TIS.

Adam: TIS is triggered for most large projects (50k+ sf, other thresholds). Submit a scope to TP&T: this is what we plan to study. City has guidelines (see links on agenda) and City can make changes to the scope. Proponents hire traffic consultant, submit to TP&T, 21 day review for completion and accuracy, accept or send back for further refinement. Look at current and future conditions (other buildings, etc), traffic impact study, criteria established by planning board: trip generation, traffic on residential street, bike/ped conditions, traffic queuing / LOS at intersection; evaluated against thresholds. After certification, applicant can apply to PB for approval. First hat: get an accurate traffic study. Second hat: we know what impacts will be, what is appropriate mitigation (as proposed by TP&T and/or applicant). Letter to PB with mitigation applicant supports, so PB and TP&T agree and it is incorporated in to special permit. Some instances where there is disagreement between applicant and TP&T, and PB makes decisions. Usually, they will ask applicant and TP&T to come up with resolution.

Adam: 1) infrastructure, 2) help minimize transportation impacts.

Stephanie Groll: Parking and Transportation Demand Management Officer. Triggered when parking is increased by more than the registered number. Negotiate with PTDM officer to develop PTDM plan, only then can they get any other permits. Submit a plan with a cap on % of drive-alone trips. Previously based on 1990 level -10%, but now incorporate on other ways. TDM measures (free T passes for employees, no longer get extra credit for bike parking), from a menu of things. All types of sites (schools, etc). Annual monitoring with a survey, how do people get there, and monitoring in perpetuity, data to base other transportation policy decisions.

If a property owner is out of compliance with any part of the ordinance (mode split, not conducting reports, not implementing TDM measures). City can shut down parking and charge \$10/day/parking space until they are in compliance. Haven't had to enforce, and they don't want to enforce, so if people move in the right direction they'll allow for it.

Average SOV target is 45%, 2014 results is 40%. Goal already a reduction from anticipated. PTDM is separate from planning code. Not every project requires both zoning and PTDM review. Planning and PTDM work together.

AW: How do we plan for the future? Evaluate existing conditions + determine trip generation = built condition. Then there's future condition: what else is in the pipeline, how will other projects affect the area. Also assume background road growth. 0.5% growth for 5 years out, added in. Projects not yet designed are not included until there is data; there's nothing to add in to other projects. Background growth includes this. And when the project does its TIS, it will incorporate other projects.

Cara: There is really a question about whether the modeled background growth actually takes place? Jeff: Kendall Square, for instance, has a larger study. TIS studies often overestimate since it's additive without taking in to account trends, shifts, changing mode split. Usually there are fewer people driving than the study assumes. Look back to former studies to see how accurate predictions will be. Assumptions for bikes have gone from 4% to 10%.

MP: Anything over 50k feet triggers project? Jeff: rare cases where a project might not, but most do. MP: are there instances where PB rejects something? Jeff: will generally work through it until it meets everyone's approval. A few cases where proponents have withdrawn applications. A few where projects have been very transformed in another direction. MR: Courthouse? Probably more time in PB than any other project. Special permit can be appealed if people have legal standing to appeal. Based more on is state authorized to take a building outside of zoning (state-owned) and can it be sold to private owner and use it for private use? MP: Is there a level where people want to provide minimum parking but not get in to PTDM levels? Adam: separate. PTDM separate from zoning. PTDM based on parking inventory in '70s and '90s. No min/max: if you're creating parking above 1990 level, subject to ordinance. Zoning: if x development, required to have min y parking and (sometimes) z max. Parking has to meet zoning and PTDM separately.

Stephanie: Provide incentives to not increase parking, not trigger PTDM, which is better if the parking doesn't exist in the first place. May have to apply for special permit to not trigger PTDM. Changed zoning in Kendall so it was less of an issue.

MR: residents with street parking permit who drive to work and park on the street, zoned street parking? Stephanie: everyone who comes to the site is surveyed, so we can see how many people park off-site, an option is residential street parking. A number of people do, but en masse they don't. Local employees have better mode split than others.

III. Projects

a. MIT PUD

Next meeting some time in November, not yet set. Now is the opportunity to come up with the letter. Pedestrian committee is drafting. Looking for someone to collect comments? (MP was volunteered.) Include comments from last September and tonight. Letter can be circulated for clarification and wording outside of a public meeting. Randy sent comments to be discussed at the meeting.

Try to focus comments on things relevant to committee. Two separate proposals: one for the building on Main St between Main and Broad canal, other for everything south of Main.

NoMa: State EIR already in place because it's near the water. City will request Hubway station as mitigation; there are not enough stations/docks to meet the demand and this project will increase demand – want to make it easy for people to use, not drive. RS: encourage this path through the development to/from the river: Broad Canal through NoMa to Main St to center of SoMa. Crosswalk across Main Street. City process (K2C2) envisioned better connections to river.

SoMa: Cara: In ped committee's discussion, they expressed a concern that the project was focused on lots of interior space stuff, not enough attention to edge streets and connections. Shared space environments have promise, but need to have details, i.e. Harvard overpass doesn't work, need clear ways for bikes to get through. Stationary activities should be separated from through activities. Like Main Street retail activity, but not enough of a sense of that that will be. Make sure to have good pathways through.

Randy's notes were read. Quick notes: needs better through transportation, more temporary parking, assure truck traffic with safety in presence of trucks. Seems like minimum for bike/ped, little for transit.

Need more bike parking, indoors and out. Trucks also an issue. AMB: Long vs short term parking. Students who are more likely to bike than others.

MR: cross-referenced with bike network plan. Most important element is Ames St, which is not addressed in proposal. Since Ames cycletrack is already being built between Broadway and Main, that MIT would build the rest of the Ames Street cycletrack as part of this, along with a

crossing to the river (which would be beneficial for all). 2-way on one side of the street, 14' wide. This should be done as part of the project; also the crossing of Memorial Drive.

Main St is a city project, MIT doesn't think they have anything to do with it but they will likely have impacts to it, especially during construction. Question was raised about whether a protected bike lane could be added as part of this work (MR). In original design, the issue was snow clearance as constraint for protected lanes. Question: could MIT be required to clear snow here?

Bike parking initiative/contest: could we apply that to this project for more compact parking, etc. Look at parking space density. Comment: we would like more parking. Ask for a temporary, short term, large parking area. AW: Good to have indoor spaces, but we would like to see more short term outdoor parking. 90-10 seems quite high (indoor-outdoor). What are zoning requirements, and could they be brought down. Additional short term bike parking. Additional Hubway stations. Pressure on limited short-term parking in Kendall now, pent up demand.

In MIT study, it was demonstrated there is not enough bike parking in Kendall Square. Cara: right now it is even more of an issue because of Main Street project; there will be more after project is done.

JR: Truck and vehicle safety, truck and bike safety. On NoMa: exit on to Broadway needs good traffic control on and off of Main Street. Make sure it is safe interacting with the cycletrack. On the SoMa side, make sure sightlines are addressed for safety on/off of Hayward.

MR: Public space for biking through. Science Plaza at Harvard is a mess, don't repeat. Need designated routes through with signs to inform people that it is a shared space. Dedicated bikeways through the shared spaces, visually mark it, paint, pavement styles, etc. Good wayfinding through shared spaces and in to indoors bike parking. Wayfinding to parking so that people know where parking exists. Bike parking signs. Overall an issue for Kendall. Coordinate with bike parking elsewhere in Kendall and in the city.

One building might exceed distance requirement to bike parking.

Access through MIT Medical not open 24/7 for pedestrians. How do you get to the site along Amherst Street from Ames, around Media Lab. Media Lab-Wadsworth relatively rough, needs lots of utilities. Bicycle facilities, slow speed, shared street, etc on Amherst St from Ames to plaza.

Make connection across Mem Drive improved. More and better places for people to cross Mem Drive, especially at Ames St.

Wind impact mitigation.

Lots of temporary spaces at MIT Museum

AMB: priorities:

- Safety interacting with traffic

- Bike parking

Cara: the Committee will submit official comments, but anyone may submit comments to Planning Board.

b. DPW updates

Paving for the next few weeks “all over the place.” Mass/Western/River. Second St, Putnam, Magee, Kinnaird, Mt Auburn near hospital, redoing bus stop at Mass and Dunster, concrete pad. More sewer separation at Alewife. CRA hopes to have Main-Broadway paved by the end of the year. Ribbon cutting in spring. Community meetings for next year’s projects for small projects. A4 infrastructure cookout w/ police, fire, etc. Good turnout. Several meetings upcoming. Epicenter: Bishop Allen and Columbia (sewer separation and stormwater management). City still 60% combined, started in the 70s. MR: people are speeding on new pavement. Neighborhood refused traffic calming, does neighborhood determine what happens on the streets. Mass Ave striping starting soon.

IV. Committee work

a. Driver behavior and safety for buses, uber, and taxis.

Decision to have a subcommittee to discuss this. Outreach to ride providers, taxis, buses, etc. Awareness to drivers, etc. Outreach with license commission. AMB and AO point people for this.

b. BowTie Ride

We will discuss with Matt in November. ~180 people.

V. Announcements

a. Bike plan is now online (see agenda). Committee meeting at City Council Tuesday at 3:30 next week. It is an important opportunity. If you can’t come, send in a comment. Committee will have continuing opportunities to provide detailed comments or refinements. For Council, we want people to support more biking.

b. Another meeting October 27 for DCR paths, 51 Staniford, will be announced.

c. Next meeting Nov 18 (Nov 11 is Veterans Day)

d. December meeting: Joint bike/ped meeting? Social meeting? Etc? Dec 9, regular meeting with extra food. Meet off location?