

## **Joint bicycle, pedestrian, transit committee minutes 7/29/20**

Bicycle Committee Members: Joel Anders, Jon Anjaria, Julian Astbury, John Ellersick, Amy Flax, Alison Harris, Dien Ho, Gloria Huangpu, Todd Robinson, Christine Smaglia, Randy Stern

Pedestrian Committee Members: Robin Bonner, Debby Galef, Sandy Goldberg, Ian Henneberger, Elka Kuhlman, Pam McLemore, Sean Peirce, Wade Smith, Erik Tillman, Theresa Tobin, Olivia Turner, Jenny Turner-Trauring, Alanna Williams

Transit Advisory Committee Members: John Attanucci, Matthew Coogan, Kristiana Lachiusa, Bill McAvinney, Sylvia Parsons, Katherine Rafferty, Robert Ricchi, Saul Tannenbaum, Melissa Zampitella

Staff: Greg Hanafin (CDD), Stephen Meuse (TP&T), Andy Reker (CDD), Cara Seiderman (CDD), Adam Shulman (TP&T), Jim Wilcox (DPW)

Guests: Crystal Cheng, John Hawkinson, Alexander von Hoffman, James Mahoney, Julie Ray, James Williamson

## **City Projects**

**Major Projects Underway** - Andy Reker - Links to websites from graphic on CDD site

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/>

</media/Files/CDD/Transportation/Projects/majorroadwayprojectsunderway3420.pdf>

## **River St. Reconstruction**

- Met on 7/22, next meeting 8/18 (Traffic and Transit Circulation Analysis, Carl Barron Plaza Urban Design)
- Updates
  - Now at 25% design
  - Public meeting #3 planned for end of Sept 2020, #4 in Feb 2021
  - Construction start March 2021, thru 2023
  - Rt 64 bus has moved off Magazine St, gas work is beginning
  - One general travel lane, plus bus lane
  - Right side sidewalk level, separated bike lane
  - Left side flex zone for loading, parking. Lighting, streetscape and street trees
  - Bluebike station on Blackstone at River
  - More details on urban design, trees being added/removed, giant tree pits
- Flex Zone
  - Formerly mostly unregulated parking and some metered parking
  - Proposed - curb extensions for eateries, street trees, bus stop space (floating on right side, with no other use on left), a bit more metered pkg, and 15 resident spots (no more unregulated pkg, still 89% of existing in spot count), 4 more loading spaces
- Public Art
  - Ritsuko Taho -- Multicultural Manifestoes
  - Terracotta panels with bench-like bases, with cherry trees nearby

- Some re-purposed from Central Square
- Tubman Square
  - Previous concepts - #1 maintain Kinnard St, #2 close Kinnaird St. #2 Chosen.
  - 2 basic layout and furniture/landscape options
- Detailed plan proposal at [https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Transportation/Projects/riverstreet/WG09/riverstwg9rollplan\\_072220.pdf](https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Transportation/Projects/riverstreet/WG09/riverstwg9rollplan_072220.pdf)

#### **Inner Mt Auburn St, Quincy/Bow/DeWolfe**

- Public meeting soon
- Close to 100% design
- Engineering and design work is progressing
- Implementation expected this year

#### **South Mass Ave**

- Working with MBTA to improve bus times - existing design did not meet throughput goals, lane width a bit tight, but some delay issues on outbound side which has no bus lane
- Expect to add 2 new floating bus stops - at Albany St and 84 Mass Ave across the street; Conceptual designs in progress
  - Committee comments: positive about the value of floating bus stops
- Some city thinking about ideas for extending quick-build redesign from City Hall to Putnam Ave
- This was really complicated by the construction projects on South Mass Ave; the bus delays from Boston to Cambridge were at times critical and there on ongoing conversations with the MBTA

Grand Junction path - Design ongoing, Working Group meeting 8/6

Belmont St. - From Mt Auburn to Belmont line - design ongoing, no date set for public meeting

Concord Ave - grant for deploying transit signal priority, funding expected 10/2020

#### **Development Projects –**

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/specialpermits>

- 101 Rogers St, Foundry project - at planning board, docs on planning bd web site
- 402 Rindge Ave affordable housing project - at planning board, potential multi use path along RR right-of-way. At least won't block the possibility. New Bluebikes station on site.
- Cambridgeside Galleria - just preliminary info, MEPA certification received.
- 325 Binney St at Fulkerson - potential connections to Grand Junction and Binney Street bike lanes, pre-application process.
- Tobin Montessori & Vassal Lane Upper School – Presentation on line:
  - Conflicting meeting tonight

- Trying to separate car access from bus drop off zones (150 parking spots under the building). 3 car access options, all with pros and cons
- Bicycle and pedestrian access mentioned but still conceptual. Not showing separated bicycle and pedestrian access
- The committees felt that cars and buses CANNOT share the road, too problematic.
- Comments, questions and ideas about these different options should be sent to kriley@cambridgema.gov by August 14.
- Transit Committee will look at bus schedules.

Committee comments on Tobin School proposal:

- Connections from Danehy/Fern Street to and through the site are very important.
- Where are students arriving by bicycle TO the school supposed to go? Where is the bike parking?
- SO many bicycles parked at the school (from those who live nearby and see it). Where is the bike parking? (comment repeated by several people). Where is the Bluebikes station? (there is one now)
- What about the path from Concord to Vassal Lane on the east side? That should be maintained
- What is being done to dissuade people from driving altogether?
- There is no clarity about where people are supposed to bicycle and where they are supposed to walk. \*Need separate dedicated paths that are wide enough for each use\* (comment supported by several members of each committee)
- Not feasible or advisable to mix buses and private cars (from a teacher with experience)
- Concern about major pathway crossing with larger vehicles
- The connection from Fresh Pond is also important – make sure that works well
- Support for Option #2 for motor vehicle access (that lines up with Standish St)

Public Comment

1. Floating bus stops in Kendall are narrow, and crossing the bike lane is not easy.
2. Frequency of service on Concord Ave should be improved, not just signal priority.
3. Joe Barr presented today on Putnam to City Hall section - several options, separated bike lane is required by bike plan. Will be a public meeting to discuss.
4. Shared bus/bike lane in Belmont Street plan. Should they be considered elsewhere in the city?
5. 402 Rindge Ave project - parking reduction planned, does that make sense? Pedestrian crossing across Alewife Parkway is still dangerous.

**Shared Streets and other COVID-19 changes**

- Additional signage added to shared streets
- Curbside expansion for restaurants in Inman Sq and Central Sq
- Additional curbside pickup zones created

- Next steps - Explore more shared streets, more expanded sidewalks, bus frequency improvements - Next webinar on the shared streets project is 8/4/2020, 6:00 p.m
- Committee comments –
  - illumination of streets still a major concern for nighttime use – how can we increase lighting – safety concern;
    - especially on Harvard St
  - new positioning of speed signs is better than before, more rugged orange barrels better than A frames; need people/neighbors to help keep signs in place
  - maybe no yellow center line would be better to make streets look shared,
  - Garden street signs have been vandalized, cars driving much faster than 10mph on Garden St, can we have signs recommending good parallel routes for cars, cars are not doing that now?
  - Magazine St, does not feel safe to walk on, especially with baby carriage,
  - 4 people specifically mentioned Oxford St. added as shared street (nice connection to a lot of places);
  - support for more outdoor dining;
  - Norfolk Street was suggested to connect to Central Square;
  - motorists sometimes get confused about how to get where they want to go with shared street or Inman Sq single lane on Cambridge St.,
  - East Cambridge has no shared street yet - would be good to add something there,
  - add sign - “shared street, seek alternate routes”,
  - add speed display signs to shared streets so cars know they are going 25, not 10 mph...
  - The committees agreed that Oxford Street should be considered for a shared street.

#### Public comment

- Garden Street does not have very many pedestrians, don't need a shared street there.
- Person lives on Walden - people go way too fast on Garden Street, people are angry about having to slow down for a shared street, vandalizing street signs, it's dangerous now
- Speed limit is legally 20mph, 10mph is suggested only. Street is still open for all previous uses. People have differing expectations, need better communication so pedestrians to do not assume people will go 10mph. Even city staff have misstated that speed limit is 10mph.
- (Dien Ho) People need to be courteous - just because legal speed limit is 20mph doesn't mean people SHOULD drive that fast on a shared street. How do we ask the community to support this?
- Comment from one person who bikes on Garden Street and is threatened and harassed; how can signs be stronger, more permanent?
- Should try to preserve shared streets after pandemic ends to reduce single occupancy vehicle traffic

## Other

- Participatory budgeting is paying for repaving bike lanes on Cambridge Street right now; more streets to be done (a lot of paving projects underway, trying to catch up)
- E-bike legislation - opportunity to send another letter, amendment and definitions that ebike is different from a moped and can use it in a bike lane.
  - It should be consistent with regional and national laws
  - Dien will send a letter.
- Possible bike committee ride for committee members, test out 19th Amendment ride. City wide ride unlikely any time soon. The ride will be put on the website for the public to ride on their own.
- Idea of bike/ped/transit committee walk on Watertown-Cambridge Greenway path (still under construction)
- City support for lane reduction and shared path expansion on Mem Drive during pandemic? - City Manager is not blocking this, ball is in DCR court - Joe Barr says they have not responded to inquiries.