

Pedestrian Committee Meeting March 4, 2010 (rescheduled from February 25, 2010).

Members in attendance: Amanda Trombley, Debby Galef, Alex Linthicum, Stephen Keen, Eran Segev, Rona Gregory, Megan Weintraub, Robin Finnegan, Thayer Donham, Alan Greene, Kobena Bonney, Brian Culver, David Loutzenheiser,

City staff in attendance: Stephanie Anderberg, Cara Seiderman, Jeff Rosenblum

Agenda:

Minutes & Agenda Review

Projects & Events

Western Ave (Jeff Rosenblum)

GoGreen Month, Golden Shoes, City Smart (Stephanie Anderberg)

Development Projects (22 Water St, Alexandria)

Updates & Announcements

Accelerated Bridge Program

Police Report

DPW Report

Reports from the 'hood

Other

Subcommittees & Report Back

Golden Shoes: Larry Parnell stepped down from committee. He was key in obtaining donations for Golden Shoes in previous years.

Stephanie said she had about 50 shoes (but 100 prizes) and then she had to rehide them up to twice in one month, and now has just 30-35 shoes. Discussion about whether we want to do something different other than give out a bag with goodies. Just the bag?

What about hiding fewer shoes? Just one shoe? A scavenger hunt? Pre-planned clues posted to Facebook? Most steps walked, measured by pedometer?

Amanda will contact the Brattle Theater to get movie tickets (they have been good with giving in the past).

We decided to wait for March's meeting (March 25) to make any final decisions on what to do for Golden Shoes this year.

The idea of having a pedometer challenge during CitySmart was brought up; perhaps leading a walk during North Cambridge Open Studios. Unfortunately NCOS is too early, also there was a pedometer challenge last year for CitySmart but it received very little interest or participation.

Western Ave: Jeff Rosenblum from CDD. Reconstruction project through DPW &

redoing surface design of Western Ave. Coordinated subcommittee/extra session for bike comm & ped comm members who are interested. Eran is on the advisory committee and will be a liaison to the committee as a whole.

Most people tend to think of Western Ave as a "means to an end", or a way to get out of Cambridge. Residents of Cambridgeport/Riverside think of Western Ave as a real neighborhood. How to redesign a street that has been redesigned so much already and keep everyone happy?

Street has a great deal of history. Residents feel that history, but there are newer residents who may not be aware of it all.

How can we look at & integrate in the pedestrian issues with a design that will work for & balance as many of the needs as possible.

Community process begins in 2010, construction to begin in 2011.

Project runs from Franklin St to the river. Roadway, sidewalks, street furniture, trees, perhaps lighting. City will dig sewer, water system, electrical, gas, electric, telephone, cable.

Sewer is from 1870(!). Handmade brick sewers.

Consider: traffic volumes, parking, bike accommodation, parking, surfaces, plantings, trees, sidewalk cafes, intersections, green design elements, open space

Two ways to reduce water: reduce the amount of pavement that collects the water, increasing green space; capture water & store it temporarily. Pilot program on Brookline Street with rain garden (plantings that deal with some of the runoff).

Western Ave Committee has 20 members, Eran said the first meeting had a good range of attendees. He was surprised how many businesses were on the street, several sent representatives. Issue came up: overall funding, there is some amount of uncertainty. Underground work will influence the amount of money left for other work (streetscapes, bike accommodation, etc).

City staff plan to meet with neighborhood associations. Workshop at Cambridge Community Center planned. Shift venues around to induce other types of neighbors than the usual meeting attendees. Informal walk series.

Website: <http://www.westernavenue.info>

Accelerated Bridge Program: "Charles River Bridge Reconstruction Program" being done by MassDOT.

Full details at: <http://www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/et/infra/abp/index.html>

Two bridges under construction: BU Bridge, Craigie Bridge (Museum of Science). BU Bridge is supposed to be 3 lanes of travel with bike lane in both directions, but there have been no designs on the Cambridge-side rotary. Craigie still waiting final design.

Construction about to start on Magazine Street Footbridge. Street level crossing will be in place during construction.

River St & Western Ave bridges under design. Upcoming meeting at Morse School on March 8. Anderson Memorial bridge (JFK St/Harvard Square) under conceptual design. Cara pleads for people to attend & speak up.

Brian said the pedestrian crossings of Memorial Drive at River and Western were not addressed at all.

Reports from the 'Hood: Amanda described a North Cambridge improvement study meeting going on (with David, Rona, Robin in attendance). Project Manager would like to talk to PedComm at March's meeting.

Arlington's side of Mass Ave seems to be thriving, but North Cambridge does not seem to be doing as well.

Development Projects: 22 Water St reviewed a few years back. Not large North Point projects, but closer to Somerville. Cara has plans, wants subcommittee to look at it. Planning board March 16. They have asked for a smaller car parking space ratio than usual (0.8 rather than 1.0). Some discussion about the possible cause (distance to Lechmere, fewer cars used in existing garages nearby).

Alexandria Project: Planning Board April 6. Next round of more specifics, Cara will set up a special meeting, probably towards the end of March.

Cara hasn't heard back from the Police Department about the tips they promised us from last month's meeting.

Stephen wanted to bring up city plans for middle schools. If middle school is put in and students currently walk to school, they may be bused to the middle school. There would have to be statistics done to determine where students come from and where they go. Middle school students have to live further away to qualify for a bus. Walk to school is a key issue and the committee could look at it further.

We should cover this at a future meeting, but as "walking to school".

Subcommittees:

PVIS: sent some intersections to Jeff Parenti, in the future we want to look at signage clarity, clutter, and consistency in the city.

Streetscape: Talked about 22 Water St project.

Community Outreach: Talked about billboards & getting back to that. Eagerly awaiting tips from Police Department. How to do education around tips that we discussed last time. Brainstorm other ideas aside from doing a brochure or billboard. What other avenues? National night out, Cambridge Housing Authority.

Next meeting: March 25

To think about: summer walks