Pedestrian Committee Meeting
September 29, 2016
minutes

Present: Helen Rose, Debby Galef, Sean Peirce, Magda McCormick, Joseph Rose, Jodie Cohen Tanugi, Sam Stern, Liza Cohen, Brian McLane (DPW), Matt Nelson (CPD), Cara Seiderman (CDD); Bicycle Committee: Mike Proscia, Amy Flax, Ingrid Schorr, Jon Adams

Guests: Dan Driscoll (DCR), Tracie Lenhardt (VHB), Doug Brown (Friends of the Greenway), Bill Deignan (CDD)

Agenda review, minutes

Watertown – Cambridge Greenway (60 minutes) – Dan Driscoll (DCR), Tracie Lenhardt (VHB, consultant)

- Phase 2 of the project is the one we’re discussing (since some of it is already constructed in Watertown…)
- Connectivity from Charles River path system to Minuteman path system* (caveat that the pinch point near Alewife over the bridge crossing train tracks)
- DCR got easement from Cambridge so that they can fund it out of state funding…
- Funding from a lot of sources…Athena health, and some other foundations and interested parties kicked in…
- Path is 12 ft paved, 2 ft shoulders on each side…DCR says this is wider than most paths they do…
  - Greenough is 10 ft w/ 2 ft shoulders, so this one is 2 ft wider…
  - ADA compliant – plowable too…
- $2.3 million construction budget – not secured. Tufts Health Plan expected to fund a crossing by their building, which they want…
  - DOT as possible funding source - $60 million to spend on ped/bike projects to spend in next 5 years, $15 million to be spent in fiscal ’18, which starts half-way through ’17, I think
  - 12 months of construction, starting in spring or summer of next year…And people will start using it as soon as the path is open…
- Lighting?
  - Open to it, but worried about the height of it, and if it’s solar, then people can vandalize???
    - Lighting in other sections….DCR is worried about precedent-setting of lighting paths that would mean they have to light longer, more remote paths…
    - Lots of unsubstantiated claims coming up in this Q&A: Cape Cod, bright enough to not need lights…concern from abutters, and from fresh pond advisory committee…However, the records show that there is overwhelmingly more support than opposition – mostly opposition is from a couple vociferous people.
    - It is absolutely possible to have path-appropriate lighting (not highway lighting), which can be operated remotely and dimmed or turned-off at certain times, particularly the overnight hours
    - Committee members cited safety for kids traveling to/from school; women’s concerns; the low-levels of lighting during early morning and late afternoon hours for much of the year
    - For those with environmental concerns, they should be doing everything possible to support sustainable transportation
    - People are legally allowed to travel along the path 24/7 so it is safer for lighting to be there
- Safety?
  - Liza asks about lighting as safety, and other safety features like call boxes…
DCR says Connected paths are better patrolled by local police (asserted, not sure there’s data for this – police support lighting in any case)
Doug Brown notes that the lack of lighting is a safety issue for the abutters too, since they don’t know what’s happening if they can’t see...
Lighting from Cambridge is the key...
Lighting for tunnel under bridge Mt. Auburn is happening...Not Huron Ave. bridge in current proposal

Other stuff?
- Abandoned RR from Concord Ave. to Danehy Park (behind shopping center) has been purchased by the City
- Challenge of all the connectivity in and around the shopping plazas and Alewife, and Fresh Pond too...

Ped-Bike Committee Statement
- We support the project. We advocate for a wider path, 14’, with 2’ shoulders on each side...
- Lighting is essential.

Pedestrian Committee Work

- PARKing Day – ped committee folks supported city spots and bike committee separated bike lanes in two different spots. Discussed the relative success of pop-up bike lanes that were perhaps a bit confusing for cyclists.
- Ideas for Ped interventions next year
  - Do a temporary bulb out at a cross-walk that needs one...
  - Do a temporary mid-block crossing with yield to pedestrian signs at long blocks
    - Several people recommended a pop-up crossing at Huron Ave...Fresh Pond market...
  - Look for other problem intersections, or hot spots, and then cross them with where people are doing other PARKing day installations...
  - For next year, provide better description of what PARKing day is for passers-by ...
- Joint committee meetings – Transit, Bike & Ped
  - Joint meetings once in a while, as needed for projects, or Sean mentioned having Liaisons to the respective committees...
  - Some conflict w/in committees... need to have meetings where people feel comfortable talking, concern about being overshadowed
  - Can we find ways to work together to advance our parallel/shared goals...
- Big future shared projects to discuss: Mass Ave redesign...
- Future meetings – October 27, November 17,
- Proposing Wednesday, Dec. 14 – joint meeting