

Draft Minutes of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee Meeting February 2012

Present: Cara Seiderman, John Goodman, Adam Serafin, Randy Stern, Andrea Williams, Catherine Hornby, Sam Lipson, Taylor Walker, Carole Sousa, Bill Connolly, Madeleine deBlois, Matt Schrupf, Amy Linne, Tegin Teich, Daniel Baronofsky, Jim Wilcox (DPW), Owen O’Riordan (DPW)

Arts Council - Review of Bike Racks for Kendall Square

The committee spent some time reviewing the proposed artist designs for the bike racks in Kendall Square. There was a brief discussion of things the individuals on the committee liked and disliked:

- Fat & square posts can be hard to fit locks around
- The Planter proposal has less flexibility and might require more maintenance
- Do the planters fit in the aesthetic of Kendall Square?
- Obvious closed systems (those that provide a closed loop to lock to) are preferred to racks that have an open end one could accidentally lock to.
- Horizontal bars are not as good as vertical as not all bikes can easily lock to a horizontal bar.
- On the green spot rack, bikes will lock towards outside and might take up more space. Not all bikes will fit; what about baskets (front and back), etc.
- On the wave racks, concern about how people will use it – they could easily preclude full capacity use
- The question was asked of the Art Council Staff if the locations and number of racks have been decided. They have not, this will depend on which racks are selected and amount will depend on the cost of the rack (which varies considerably).
- The planter design has the appeal of a green component
- Obstacles like baskets and trailers make some racks difficult to lock to. Think about which ones will work for bikes that have those.
- Designs that are too elegant or artistic (like the Puzzle) might confuse people. Ask, “does this look like a bike rack?”
- More attachment points provide more flexibility in giving people choices about how to lock bikes
- Some fit into Kendall Sq theme (molecule and sine curve)

January Minutes were approved

New members were introduced

DPW update

Owen O’Riordan, city engineer, gave a presentation of the public works 5 year plan. The presentation is available online here:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/ourservices/engineering.aspx>

High priorities of the current 5 year plan have been public parks and squares, bus routes, major thoroughfares and handicap accessibility. The budget for these improvements has been \$3M.

Sidewalk accessibility, width and cross slope has been an important issue for the department.

One program they have implemented is offering to plant trees on private property that abuts public sidewalks in order to increase sidewalk widths. Other key issues are maintaining pedestrian access during construction, pedestrian ramps and crossings at intersections, and traffic signals that alert visually impaired people when it is safe to cross. Feedback is welcome and wanted, please bring bicycle committee concerns to the attention of the department.

Bicycle committee members commented that they would like to see the gaps in the city’s bicycle infrastructure addressed and the question was raised as to what is the DPW’s plan in

terms of improving bicycle facilities. The response was at this point the improvements are made on a project by project basis, in other words; bicycle facilities can be added to an existing project; depending on the scope of the project, a larger design study may need to be done and budget also considered. The question was raised if it is possible to use the bicycle committee's previous report to identify future bicycle improvement projects. That idea was amenable and this is a topic that will have ongoing conversation. Other miscellaneous items were: construction plates that cover the roadway during a project, especially in the winter can be slippery and dangerous is there a solution to this problem? Also utility covers and gas cap placement in the bike lane can be a concern. The response to this issue was that the utility covers have to occur over the line running parallel to the street so there is not much flexibility in their placement. The gas lines typically run perpendicular so there is some flexibility with their placement.

Council on Aging Outreach

Carole wrote a survey for the COA and sent it out to the committee for review. The survey is tentatively scheduled to appear in the April edition of the COA newsletter. Pending the results of the survey small meetings will be planned to follow up.

Central Square Study

A student from Northeastern did a study on the use-ability of the bike lanes and found that the lanes on Mass Ave in and out of Central Square were blocked fifty percent of the time.

Police Report

There have been 15 incidents this year involving bicycles in the city: 4 doorings, 4 left turns, 2 right turns and 5 miscellaneous. Most occurred during commuting hours.

Mass DOT

There will be a separate meeting with the Pedestrian committee to discuss MassDOT bridges, specifically the Longfellow and Prospect to Portland. This meeting will be Monday February 27th at 5:30pm location TBD.

Spring Ride

The initial planning for the spring ride has begun. The theme for this year is Science. The committee is looking to collaborate with the MIT museum and possibly other groups / institutions. Informal ride planning meetings take place on the Wednesday 2 weeks following the regular committee meeting at the Plough and Stars. The ride is scheduled for May 19th.

The question was asked if it is important that the ride stop and start in the same place [not necessarily]. We need to come up with a name for the ride that is science related but appeals to a crowd.

Kendall Square

Bike/Ped joint meeting will review plans on Feb 27.

The design the committee was most in favor of regarding Point Park is not the current direction.

Next Committee Meeting Wednesday March 14th