

Pedestrian Committee Meeting Minutes, September 23 2010

Agenda:

Introduction, review of minutes

DPW five year plan

Longfellow Bridge update

Fresh Pond process

Project updates

Other business (permit leasing, disabilities commission)

Members in Attendance:

Thayer Donham (MIT), Robin Finnegan, Debby Galef, Alan Greene, Rona Gregory, Pete Kane, Helen Rose, Joe Rose, Eran Segev, Amanda Trombley

City Staff in Attendance:

Rosalie Anders, Bill Dwyer (DPW), Owen O'Riordan (DPW), Cara Seiderman, Kathy Watkins (DPW)

Kathy Watkins (DPW) gave presentation on five year plan.

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks//departments/engnr/fiveyearplan.aspx>

Segev asked about bike routes saying if roads are in poor condition then he might bike on an empty sidewalk

Gregory and Greene brought up the issue of above ground utility wires and possible tree damage. DPW staff members said digging those would cost \$1000 per foot

Break

Seiderman is making an effort to send condensed version of announcements of upcoming public meetings. Notices would come out every couple of weeks.

Rt. 28 (McGrath/O'Brien) will be reduced to two lanes from Boston to Cambridge and NO lanes from Cambridge to Boston due to Craigie bridge deck reconstruction.

Longfellow Bridge: community groups are pushing for something much more pedestrian friendly. Stated goals: not to make traffic worse. Boston businesses are very pro car.

Boston to Cambridge: one travel lane may be possible. Still need to maintain certain width for emergency vehicle accessibility. Opportunity for widened sidewalks and enhanced bike facilities.

Cambridge to Boston: more likely to remain two lanes. Perhaps one lane in places. Cambridge wants to see full traffic analysis.

Improved connections for pedestrians and cyclists at both ends. Connections aren't

controversial but MassDOT reluctant to include them in the project scope because don't want it to delay project (NB: still in discussion).

City wants excellent pedestrian and bicycle connections to the bridge. Some cyclists use sidewalks now because cycle lanes are narrow and it is uncomfortable in general to ride next to high volumes of fast traffic.

Where to put barrier: between cars and bikes/peds or cars/bikes and peds.

Concern about snow clearance for road level variation of cycle path.

Seiderman will schedule a separate meeting on an imminent Monday night and send out details. She also will send a web link for more diagrams.

Fresh Pond: water department hired a consultant to talk about uses in the park. Meeting had many many dog owners. (consultant: consensus building institute) Brian Culver attended. Seiderman will get further details. Seiderman would like input on what makes the area pedestrian friendly, keeping in mind that it is not the intention that any specific group will get banned (e.g. dogs, cyclists). Seiderman thinks it would be helpful for there to be a formal role for a pedestrian committee member.

Project updates: parking permit for \$8. City manager wants to raise the fee to \$20. Right now the money has to be used for ped and bike programs. Went to city council who tabled the meeting. Additional fees could be used for climate improvement projects. Pedestrian committee members can contact their city councillors if they would like to express support for the higher fee. [*update: change passed, will be implemented with 2011 parking permits*]

Elevator at 51 Inman street under construction. Our meeting might conflict with disabilities commission. November meeting. Perhaps a joint meeting. Or part joint.

Next meeting: October 28, 2010