

PEARL STREET Roadway and Sidewalk Reconstruction Community Meeting Notes

Wednesday, February 26, 2014, 6:30 PM
Amigos School Cafeteria, 15 Upton Street, Cambridge, MA

** Indicates a comment was made multiple times; matching comments are sub-bullets*

Community Input - Project Related Issues:

- **Improve conditions for bikes:***
 - Bikes need to be considered/ better accommodated since a new Hubway station will be nearby
 - On the way to the Amigos School kids bike on the sidewalks while their parents bike on the street – the sidewalk seems safer for kids than the road. However, kids on bikes sometimes run into other kids waiting for the bus. Older kids bike on the street but this does not seem safe for younger kids
 - Sidewalks are bumpy for kids biking on them
- **Well-documented speed limits are needed, speeding is a problem***
 - 47 bus speeds on Brookline St.; slow down traffic. There is speeding by others between Mass. Ave. and the bridge, and speeding is a problem on Pearl St. too
 - Implement raised crosswalks to address speeding
- **Improve overhead utilities – drooping, trees, etc.***
 - Put utilities underground as part of the reconstruction?
- Parking on both sides of Pearl St. is a problem since the bus cannot get down the street
- Sidewalk with brick as part of the reconstruction?
- Replace the stop light at Pearl St. and Putnam St. with an all-way stop
- Make parking available at MIT lot during construction
- Will adding a bike lane cause parking to be removed?
- Interim roadway care of bad patches and potholes is needed before construction
- Separated sewers on Pearl St. yet?
- Re-level storm drain, curb cuts are all lower than the drains and blocked by snow. Stroller had to be lifted at multiple curb cuts along the street
- Kids who attend the Amigos School and their parents use neighboring streets, seek more input on the reconstruction from them

Comments on Map 1, Granite St. to Erie St.:

- **Wrong way turns are an issue:***
 - Bikes go the wrong way on Pearl St. to make right turns onto Granite St.
 - Drivers turn the wrong way on Pearl St. off of Putnam Ave, better one-way signage needed
 - Vehicles make wrong-way left turns onto Pearl St. from Putnam Ave.

- A traffic calming curb bump-out is needed on the corner of Pearl St. and Putnam Ave. in front of 262 Pearl St. in order to prevent people in cars from turning down Pearl the wrong way to make U-turns here
- **Speed! (general comment? written near Henry St)***
 - People speed to make the light at the intersection on Pearl St. and Allston St.
 - Speed between Hamilton St. and Erie St.
 - Traffic calming! At the intersection of Hamilton St. and Pearl St.
- **Water forms problematic puddles:***
 - A stormwater drain is needed across the street from 279 Pearl St.
 - Water forms a puddle at the bottom of the handicap ramp on the corner of Pearl St. and Putnam Ave. in front on 261 Pearl St.
 - Water forms puddles on Pearl St. in front of the driveway/parking lots between 230 and 224, and between 224 and 220.
- **The Pearl St./ Allston St. intersection needs to be improved:***
 - Intersection of Pearl St. and Allston St. is dangerous – sight distance
 - Why is there a signal at the Pearl St./ Allston St. intersection?
 - Can't see well at the intersection of Allston St. and Brookline St. when driving south on Allston St., vehicles are parked too close the intersection
- **Trees are requested:***
 - A tree is needed in front of 262 Pearl St.
 - Trees! Add four trees on Pearl St. between Putnam Ave. and Allston St. on odd-numbered side of street
- **Need improvements for bikes***
 - A bicyclist was hit in front of 221 Pearl St.
 - The street is too narrow for parking on both sides. I've seen a parked car sideswiped and a bicyclist sideswiped in front of 227 Pearl St.
- **Sight distance is an issue:***
 - Can't see well at the intersection of Allston St. and Brookline St. when driving south on Allston St., vehicles are parked too close the intersection
 - Sight distance at the intersection of Erie St. and Brookline St.
- I'd love to see the City show us examples of great streets. What inspiring things have other cities and towns done that we can learn from?
- Electric vehicle charging points!
- Traffic on Pearl St. backs up regularly at rush hour between Tufts St. and Granite St. The back-up begins on Granite St. past Rockingham St to the south and past 35 Granite St to the north (1/3 of the way between Pearl St. and Magazine St.)
- Too many signs!! (general comment? written near Henry St)
- Need fire hydrant on Pearl St. on the block between Chestnut St. and Putnam Ave.
- More signage for no trucks is needed on Pearl St.
- School bus stop in front of 261 Pearl St. (unclear if currently in place or requested for future)
- Overhead wires are too low when they cross on Pearl St. in front of 256 – they are regularly hit
- Brick sidewalk or strip (?)
- Noise on Pearl St (between Putnam Ave and Allston St.?) from buses and cars idling at the intersection of Allston St. and Putnam Ave. – radios [loud music] especially at night

- Tree roots break the sidewalk near Allston St.
- Utility lines droop in front of 215 Pearl St.
- Mailbox in front of 174 Pearl St. makes the sidewalk very tight
- Pedestrians everywhere! Between Hamilton St. and Erie St.

Comments on Map 2, Granite St. to Erie St.:

- **There are drainage issues:***
 - Drain needed – very important – in the middle of the driveway between 286 and 280 Pearl St. and the driveway between 280 and 266-B Pearl St.
 - Issues with snow piles [blocking] access to drain
 - Level storm drains to eliminate ponding at [sidewalk] ramps
- **Add or maintain trees:***
 - Add street trees on the block between Pearl St. and Allston St.
 - Inspect ALL trees along Pearl St. – City Arborist
 - There is a pit with no tree in front of 231 – [tree] needed
- **All-Way stops have support:***
 - Keep the intersection on Granite St. and Pearl St. as an All-Way stop.
 - All-way stop at the intersection of Pearl St. and Putnam Ave. desired
- **Get rid of “No Turn On Red”:***
 - Get rid of No Turn On Red for vehicles on Putnam Ave. turning right on to Pearl St. near 263 Pearl St.
 - Get rid of No Turn On Red for vehicles on Pearl St. turning right on to Putnam St. at 261 Pearl St.
- **Add traffic calming:***
 - Traffic calming wanted along the length of Pearl St., between Putnam Ave. and Erie St.
 - Possible raised intersection at Allston St. and Pearl St.?
- **Truck traffic is a concern:***
 - Need a No Truck Traffic sign at Pearl St. and Mass. Ave.
 - Truck traffic on Putnam Ave.?
- Problems turning right from Glenwood St. onto Pearl St.
- Fire hydrant needed in the block between Chestnut St. and Putnam Ave. – on side of bike lane
- Contact MLK school
- Park between Putnam Ave. and Allston St.: lower fence ping pongs travel in the street (?)
- Opposed to traffic calming
- Can blinking light at the intersection of Allston St. and Pearl St. be removed?
- Possible previous pavers for sidewalks and streets/ roadway along Pearl St.
- [Add] bike lane with no parking on one side of the street – benefits in snow emergencies

Comments on Map 3, Erie St. to Mass. Ave.:

- **Bicycle improvements needed:***
 - Bikes travel on Pearl St.
 - Bikes going wrong way! (comment located near Speridakis Ter.)

- When biking I worry about cars coming up behind me on Pearl St., and on Magazine St. I worry about the [busier] two-way traffic
- Difficult for me to bike on Pearl St., cars cannot pass bikes easily – it is dangerous to pass but bikes are too slow for car speeds
- If a bike lane was created on Pearl St., wouldn't have a problem with blocking the street in snow emergencies. Cars manage to move in snow emergencies and for street sweeping, so they could accommodate a bike lane. The bike lane could alternate sides of the street with street sweeping so there could still be parking on one side
- Cars get irritated with bikes (general comment? located near William St.)
- [Add] sharrows? (general comment? located near William St.)
- **Fix uneven sidewalks:***
 - Very uneven brick sidewalks on Pearl St. between Lawrence St. and Cottage St.
 - Uneven sidewalks are a problem all along the street – evaluate
 - Brick or not? (meaning unclear, second half of comment unreadable)
 - Sidewalk slopes towards building in front of 40 Pearl St., creating ponding and freezing on the sidewalk
 - The section of brick on Pearl St. between Mass. Ave. and 34 Pearl St. (past Green St.) is badly heaved
- **Add or maintain trees:***
 - Trees everywhere on Pearl St.
 - More trees please, between Auburn St. and Mass. Ave. – uncomfortable in summer
 - Good landscaping, e.g. trees, everywhere (general comment? located near Lawrence St.)
 - [Add] tree[s] in front of library
- Would be nice if street design could help highlight the library – make this more of a community asset (library located at 45 Pearl St.)*
- Survey parking (comment located near Erie St.)
- Good lighting everywhere [desired] (general comment? located near Lawrence St.)
- More trash cans for public everywhere, especially on Lawrence St. near the park?
- Larger storm drain needed on the corner on William St. and Pearl St. near 85 Pearl St.
- Parking on one side of Pearl St. only for bus and bike lane
- Slow down traffic (general comment? located near William St.)
- Difficult turn right from Auburn St. onto Pearl St. near 71 Pearl St., cars have picked up speed, too many people looking for parking
- Include things to help reduce speeding (general comment? located near library)
- I don't see speeding, cars go too slow for me, they are looking for side streets
- Highlight library, do not impact with construction. Library has been closed for three out of the past six years due to construction
- Utility pole in front of 40 Pearl St. creates very tight pass through at work on (?) sidewalk (comment potentially located from Green St. to Franklin St.)
- Don't cut down on parking (general comment? located near Green St.)
- [Need] better signage at the intersection of Pearl St. and Mass. Ave. to prevent large trucks from ending up stuck at Putnam Ave. or Granite St.

Comments on Map 4, Erie St. to Mass. Ave.:

- **Bicycle improvements needed:***
 - Bicycles cannot safely bike on Pearl St., dangerous for me and others to bike because it serves as a thoroughfare to the BU bridge.
 - A bicyclist was hit by a drunk driver on Pearl St.
 - Pearl St is marked as a bicycle route with green signs leading from Inman Square, but is dangerous to bike on.
 - Make Pearl St safer for bikes or move the bicycle route to another street such as Magazine St.
 - Concerned that a bike lane would remove parking, even though I want better bicycle accommodations
 - There are a lot of bikes, people with strollers, elderly – all need a safer street
 - A bike lane or safer route for bicycles is needed somewhere on or near Pearl St.
 - Keep buses on Pearl St. and put bikes on Magazine St.?
 - Route the bus on Pearl St. and bicycles on Magazine St.
- **Bus improvements needed:***
 - Buses need better accommodation, wider lanes
 - When the 47 bus on Magazine St. was rerouted to Pearl St. for an event in Central Square, cars had to repark and were able to find other parking
 - Buses cannot turn right off of Erie St. onto Brookline St. due to the snow
 - EZ Ride shuttle parks on Erie St. south of Brookline St. and on Brookline St. near 188 after turning off of Erie St.
 - Add bike lane on Magazine St, it is nearby a (planned?) Hubway station
 - Route the bus on Pearl St. and bicycles on Magazine St.
 - Keep buses on Pearl St. and put bikes on Magazine St.?
 - Magazine St. has better road accommodations for buses
 - There is a bottleneck of buses on Pearl St. from Cottage St. to Mass. Ave. due to insufficient room to get through parking cars. Buses sit and honk their horns in a standoff with parked cars until someone comes out to move their vehicle
- **Pedestrian improvements/ traffic calming desired:***
 - Raised intersection at Erie St. and Brookline St. (unclear if existing or desired)
 - Is there a crosswalk on Pearl St. at Erie St.?
 - Want crosswalk with hump across Pearl St. in front of 169 Pearl St.
 - Crosswalk in front of 153 Pearl St (unknown if desired or existing)
 - The crosswalk across Magazine St. near Upton St. is very faint – used by kids and parents going to the Amigos School
 - At the crosswalk across to 87 Pearl St. where the market is, people don't slow down for pedestrians – [problem]
 - Traffic calming needed on Pearl St. between Decatur St. and Watson St.
 - Concern that construction on Pearl St will increase traffic on Magazine St., Pleasant St., and Western St., which are already unsafe for young and old alike, especially for kids crossing the street to get to school
 - The corner of Franklin St. and Pearl St. nearest the library has a brand new sidewalk curb that has a three inch gap with cones around it

- Challenging/ dangerous to cross Pearl St. near Mass. Ave. due to left turns from Mass. Ave. – make safer for pedestrians, elderly, the disabled, etc.
- **Fix drainage issues:***
 - There might be ponding on Pearl St. at the intersection with Corporal McTernan St.
 - Consistent and severe ponding at William St. and Pearl St on both corners
 - The drain size at William St. and Pearl St. was reduced in the last construction – does not make sense to me
 - There is a terrible drain near the intersection of Pearl St. and Mass. Ave. in front of 580 Mass. Ave, bricks around the drain are breaking
 - There might be ponding on Pearl St. at the intersection with Lawrence St.
 - Construction on William St. regraded the street and causes ponding at the intersection with Pearl St.
- **Street lights need repair:***
 - Street lights on Magazine Street go out and take a long time to replace
 - It is very dark near William St. and Magazine St., hard to see bikes and cars – the light is out
- **Improve or maintain landscaping:***
 - Keep trees on Pearl St., better than smaller trees on Brookline St.
 - Japanese scholar tree in sidewalk in front of 180 Pearl St presents problems for parked cars/ neighbors – starlings, sticky flowers, slippery/ sticky pods
 - The block between Franklin St. and Green St. is ugly
- **Parking is a concern:***
 - Parked cars are pushed away from the curb by snow piles, park on top of snow. Consider seasonal parking
 - Many people do not have off-street parking
 - Do not want parking eliminated
 - Put construction on hold in winter so that snow emergencies do not cause even greater loss of parking
- **Consider children in design:***
 - Dana Park is used by a lot of families [with children], consider its users in street design
 - Amigos School children and parents are key users of the streets near Pearl St.
 - During Pearl St. reconstruction, detour traffic from Mass. Ave. on to Brookline St. and Sidney St., not Magazine St. These streets have less kids and are in better shape than Magazine St. Magazine St. will already be likely to have increased traffic since it is the one two-way street
- Library (45 Pearl St.) has undergone many constructions recently – do not block usage AGAIN*
- Narrow the sidewalks to make more room for other road facilities
- We get a lot of truck traffic on Pearl St. and Putnam St. even though no trucks are allowed
- I don't see a lot of trucks
- Trucks get stuck on the corner of Granite St.
- Blind spot at the intersection of Hamilton St. and Magazine St., cars come to screeching halts – bushes, hill, speed [are factors]
- Parking is currently sufficient to meet resident's needs
- Recent construction on Decatur St. caused a back up on Pearl St.
- 71 Pearl St. is under renovation with big trucks
- Brookline St. would receive more traffic if Pearl St. were under construction