Bicycling in Brookline
Where Are We?
Where Should We Go?

Welcome: John Dempsey
Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee

Tuesday, March 17, 2015
AGENDA

Scott Cassel, Moderator

Brief presentations:

Cynthia Snow, Chair
Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee

Todd Kirrane, Transportation Administrator
Brookline Transportation Department

Lt. Philip Harrington
Brookline Police Department

Joshua Safer, Chair
Brookline Transportation Board

Open Questions and Discussion
Overall Goals: Biking in Brookline

1. Make biking safer in Brookline
2. Increase the number of cyclists on the roads
3. Balance needs of all road users (bicyclists, pedestrians, cars)
Meeting Objectives

1. Greater understanding of roles and actions taken by Bicycle Committee, Transportation Department, and Police Department to improve bicycle safety
2. Greater understanding of laws pertaining to bicycling
3. Obtain public feedback on actions taken to improve bicycle safety
The Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee

... is appointed by and advises the Brookline Transportation Board on issues related to bicycling in Brookline.
Bicycle Committee Members

Cynthia Snow (chair)
Bryan Decker
John Dempsey
Chris Dippel
Don McNamara
Thomas Vitolo
One open position

Transportation Board Liaison: Josh Safer
Police Department Liaison: Sergeant Mark Trahon
The Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee

...Its mission is to encourage, plan for, advocate for, and advise about bicycling in the Town of Brookline for commuting, general mobility and pleasure, with an emphasis on safety, education of the public, and bicycle access. The Committee will assist Brookline to be a bike-friendly town, keeping in mind the balance among pedestrians, motor vehicles and bicycles.
Transportation Division
Department of Public Works
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR THE ENGINEERING & TRANSPORTATION DIVISION

DIRECTOR
Peter M. Otto

TRANSPORTATION BOARD
(Bicycle Advisory Committee, Public Transit Advisory Committee, other special committees appointed by the Selection and/or Transportation Board)

TRANSPORTATION ADMINISTRATOR

Administrative Assistant
Permits
C-6

Administrative Assistant
Licenses & Boards
C-6

ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEER
EN-05

PROJECT ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-05

CONTRACT/OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-05

PROJECT COORDINATOR
EN-05

UTILITY CONTRACT ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-04

TRANSPORTATION ENGINEER
EN-04

DESIGN ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-04

DESIGN ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-04

SURVEY CHIEF/DESIGN ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-03

DESIGN ENGINEER
CIVIL ENGINEER
EN-02

PERMIT INSPECTOR
EN-02
Transportation Division Duties and Responsibilities

**Traffic Safety & Operations**
- Manage traffic signal system (50 signals townwide)
  - maintain proper signal timing plans
- Maintain equipment and safe signal operations
- Investigate, research and analyze traffic safety problems and flow conditions using appropriate analytic methods
- Conduct traffic counts/speed counts
- Perform special studies (O-D, gap studies, etc.)
- Evaluate need for, design and develop plans for traffic control signs (regulatory/wareing/guide) and street pavement markings
- Implement Traffic Calming Measures on residential streets
  - Establish alternative strategies
  - Design and implement geometric and signage changes
- Implement Crosswalk Policy and Design Guidelines
- Manage traffic engineering-related capital improvement projects
- Plan and oversee traffic sign, parking sign, and pavement marking inventories, prepare and update Cartograph & GIS database

**Parking Management**
- Manage town off-street parking supply (meters/flots)
  - Set meter time limits and rates
  - Maintain meter equipment
  - Maintain parking meter GIS database
  - Establish parking time schedule
  - Monitor ParkCard usage and revenue
- Investigate and analyze all parking-related problems
  - Conduct occupancy counts, duration/movement studies
  - Utilize modeling tools
- Evaluate need for, design and develop installation plans for all parking signs (e.g., No parking, HP, permit, etc.)
- Administer residential permit parking program
  - Accept applications, issue permits & renewals
  - Investigate permit abuses
- Administer temporary permit parking program
  - Accept applications and issue permits
- Coordinate enforcement with police department
- Administer No Parking/F tow zone permit parking program for moving and construction activities
  - Investigate conditions and issue signs
- Administer commercial permit parking program
  - Accept applications, issue permits & renewals
  - Investigate permit abuses
- Administer overnight parking programs
  - Accept monthly overnight rental applications, issue permits & renewals
  - Maintain overnight guest permit programs
- Administer special event parking programs
  - Develop/school staff permit parking plans
  - Develop special event parking plans
- Issue valet parking licenses (annually)

**Taxi Regulation & Enforcement**
- Develop, periodically update and implement Town of Brookline taxi regulations including conversion to mediation based system
- Organize and evaluate results of semi-annual taxi inspections (w/DWP Highways)
- Monitor compliance of taxi companies and taxi fleet with taxi requirements; respond to public complaints (e.g., taxi office)
- Issue taxi business licenses and hackney certificates to all taxi companies and taxicabs (annually)
- Issue livery licenses (annually)
- Issue limousine licenses (annually)

**Planning & Development**
- Provide review and technical support to other departments involved in comprehensive planning process (e.g., Coolidge Corner IOPC, Gateway East Planning Project, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans, Zoning proposals; Urban Ring and other transportation proposals)
- Perform development impact reviews and prepare reports; assist in development of mitigation plans (e.g., Chestnut Hill Square Development) in conjunction with consultant
- Facilitate alternate forms of transportation (e.g., Car Sharing like Zip Car; Bicycle Accommodations, Bike Sharing like HubWay; MBTA coordination)
- Plan and conduct neighborhood meetings
- Draft and issue RFQs and RFPs in support of other divisions and departments (e.g., LED Street Lighting, Parking Meter Technology, Parking Citation Technology)

**Administrative and Management Services**
- Respond to all public inquiries received by phone, email, and in-person
- Maintain internet website
- Maintain Brookline Traffic Rules and Regulations
- Develop and maintain reporting and accounting systems for all programs (invoices, accounts receivable, deposits, etc.)
- Assist in preparation of capital and operating budgets
- Provide technical and administrative staff support to Transportation Board
- Provide advisory support to Board of Selectmen, Town Meeting, Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeal, and other Boards and Commissions
What Guides Us?
1. Vision for a Bikable Community

Bicycling is a sustainable, economical, and convenient mode of transportation for short and medium distance trips and is a popular form of recreation for young and old. Bicycling is good for the environment, for public health, and for reducing traffic congestion and parking demand. It offers older children a measure of independence and is a practical mode of travel to Brookline High School, sports fields, and other local destinations.

Brookline already has many conditions conducive to bicycling – compact development, proximity to major employment centers, relatively flat topography, and a temperate climate. With 4% of commuter trips made by bicycle (US Census, 2010), Brookline’s percentage has increased from 1.5% since 2000. Bicycle counts conducted during rush hour on one weekday each September since 2008 show more than 1,000 bicyclists per hour passing major checkpoints, including more than 100 people riding daily to Brookline High School. A survey indicated 78 bicycles parked around Coolidge Corner at mid-day on one September Saturday.

Beacon, Harvard, Washington, and Chestnut Streets are major connectors for cyclists traveling from Brookline and Newton to Kenmore Square and downtown Boston, across Brookline, and between Jamaica Plain and Brighton. Boston has made a strong commitment to improving conditions for cyclists and has made major strides in recent years toward this goal.

Brookline’s notable improvements in bicycle facilities and accommodations in recent years include more bike racks in commercial areas, additional bike lanes and shared lane markings on Longwood Avenue, Washington Street and elsewhere, contra-flow lanes and cycle tracks on Netherlands and Parkway Roads, and installation of a $50 fine for vehicles blocking bike lanes.

Brookline installed three bike-sharing stations in 2012 following the successful 2011 launch of the Hubway Bike Sharing Program in Boston. A fourth station was installed in 2013.

However, bicycle use in Brookline remains well below its potential. For most residents, getting outside one’s immediate neighborhood requires negotiating heavily trafficked streets, resulting in a level of stress and danger that many people – especially less experienced cyclists – prefer to avoid. Every community with high bicycle use, whether in the Netherlands, Denmark, Davis (CA), Portland (OR) or Boulder (CO), offers an extensive network of bike routes with low traffic stress.

Brookline’s quiet local streets are ideal for bicycling, but they are not connected in a network that facilitates cross-town travel. Even the town’s few dedicated bicycle facilities subject cyclists to high traffic stress. The bicycle lanes on Husson Street disappear at intervals, leaving cyclists in busy traffic, particularly at intersections. Bike lanes often occupy the “door zone” of high turnover parking lanes.
An Ideal World…..

In all roadway designs would allow for the maximum possible space to meet the goals of the various roadway users

- Wide 10-12’ sidewalks
- Benches
- Street Trees
- Minimal interaction

- Separated facilities
- 7’ to 10’ width based on separation
- Minimal interaction

- 12 foot wide travel lanes
- 8 foot wide parking lanes
- Minimal interaction with pedestrians and cyclists
In all roadway designs we must strike a balance between the many users including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, trucks, buses, etc.

- Reducing the number of and width of travel lane widths to allowable minimums under state and federal guidelines
- Reducing parking lanes to 7’ minimums allowable under state and federal guidelines
- Use of at grade bicycle lanes or sharrows
- Narrower sidewalks
Techniques Brookline is Embracing

- Contra Flow Lanes
- Left Turn Queue Boxes
- Separated Bicycle Facilities
- Bike Boxes
How Do We Choose?

**TRACK 1**

The Bicycle Advisory Committee selects a project from their priority list

**FY2015:**
- Cypress/School Street (north of Boylston)
- Beacon Street Connections

**TRACK 2**

Staff red flags any planned roadway reconstruction project being planned by the Engineering Division

**FY2015:**
- St. Paul/Aspinwall Ave (south of Beacon)
- Sumner Road (Clark to Boylston)
Completed Projects

Brookline Green Routes Bicycle Network

Prepared by Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee, 2015
Upcoming Projects
Upcoming Projects
Upcoming Projects

GATEWAY EAST
BICYCLE FACILITIES

The Gateway East Project will build continuous designated bicycle facilities along both sides of the East-West Washington Street corridor, linking Brookline Village to the Emerald Necklace Parks Bicycle Path System.

EMERALD NECKLACE
BICYCLE FACILITIES

The Emerald Necklace Project will build a shared use bike path connecting the existing Riverway Park path systems in both Brookline and Boston at the north, to those of Omssted Park at the south, and provide a fully signalized crossing at Washington St.

BICYCLE CONNECTION

Connectivity for bicyclists at the interface of the (north-south) signalized crossing with the (east-west) Washington St bicycle facilities is critical to safely link the Emerald Necklace Parks’ regional bicycle paths to the adjacent medical, educational and residential comminities as well as the nearby Longwood Medical Area and retail/transit Center of Brookline Village.
Other Areas of Note

- Bike Share
- Bike Corrals
- Bike Racks
Feedback Wanted!

Feedback from the public is appreciated! Possible topics include:

• As we evolve, are we on the right track?

• Are we missing areas with our Green Routes Network Plan?

• Hubway? More stations? Where?

• Bike Racks? More locations? Where?
Find BPD on Social Media

- Visit our website at Brooklinepolice.com
- Find us on Facebook at facebook.com/brooklinemapd
- Follow us on Twitter @BrooklineMAPD
Open Discussion

We would like to get feedback on the following...

Routes:
Do you agree with the identified safe routes?

Racks:
What type of racks do you prefer, and where are these racks most needed?

Data:
Were the data presented useful; what additional data would you like to see?
Bike Parking

- Turn public parking lots into parking “parks” with trees, bike parking, businesses open to the back onto the lots, so that both vehicle and bike parking off street will be more welcoming and convenient
- Publicize bike parking in public lots (like that behind the Coolidge Corner Theater); cyclists might use such locations if they knew about them
- Bike parking behind buildings and in parking lots needs to be visible and well-lighted
- Best bike racks/corrals are those that have multiple points of contact for supporting locked bikes and adequate distance between verticals to allow easy access and parking of wide bikes and those with baskets and panniers
- Bad bike racks are those that only secure front wheels, provide no support for bike frames, the “wave” racks, and racks that require lifting bikes into the rack
- More bike racks are needed in Coolidge Corner
- Provide information to Chamber of Commerce/businesses on value of customers arriving by bike; some might be willing to contribute to the cost of racks/corrals
- Bike racks should be dug out of the snow after storms
- Possible locations for bike racks/corrals:
  - Green Street near Peet’s
  - Next to Coolidge Corner Theater

Bike Routes

- More protected bike lanes (separated from motor traffic) are needed, especially for children to be able to bike safely
- Some vehicle parking should be given up/better managed/re-priced to reflect its value/relocated to provide room on the streets for protected bike lanes
- Use parked vehicles as a buffer for bike lanes, so that a street configuration would have bike lanes next to curbs, with a buffer, then parked cars, then moving traffic
- Specific route suggestions:
  - Safe route from Brookline to “Avenue of the Arts” in Boston—MFA, Symphony, other attractive destinations
  - Babcock Street would be a good bike route if the surface could be made safe for cyclists
  - Provide good connections for bikes (and pedestrians) to Boston bike routes (e.g., at Paul Pender Circle and Cleveland Circle)
  - Safe way to ride outbound on Beacon Street between Summit Avenue and Washington Square is needed
Hubway
- The locations of the stations in Brookline Village and Coolidge Corner are not optimal since they are not highly visible or very convenient
- Consider additional stations close to the Boston borders to extend the utility of the program (e.g., St. Mary’s and Cleveland Circle)
- More stations are needed in Brookline for the system to work well
- The Washington Square station often fills up during the evening rush hour

Data and Enforcement
- More information on enforcement for both bikes and motorists who endanger cyclists would be useful (e.g., for blocking bike lanes) in terms of numbers and locations
- Bicyclists should be able to start across intersections on walk lights (in advance of motorists) as long as they do not endanger pedestrians in order to be safely visible to motorists as they cross intersections and take a safe position on the road, especially in relation to the door zone of parked cars.
- Enforcement of the no-parking area on Harvard Street between Beacon and Green Streets is important for cyclists’ safety
- Enforcement against double parking (blocking bike lane) in the St. Mary’s area on Beacon Street is very important
- Publicize the voluntary bike registration program to help with recovery of stolen bikes

Other Suggestions
- The promised signs prohibiting bicycling on sidewalks in commercial areas should be installed ASAP
- Traffic signals for bikes only
- On-line forum for people with ideas about bicycling in Brookline
Thank You!