

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

Meeting Minutes for November 7, 2011

Submitted by John Dempsey and Don McNamara

The meeting took place in the Devotion School Staff Lounge at 7:00 P.M.

Present: Cynthia Snow, John Dempsey, Chris Dippel, Mitch Heineman, Don McNamara, Tommy Vitolo, Bill Schwartz (Transportation Board Representative),
Absent: Officer Sullivan (Police liaison)

Public: Rebecca Albrecht, Neil Peterson, Neil Roberts, Lucy P de Martin, Elsie Jansen, Bernice Roberts, Christian Jupe, John Aslanian, Susan Roberts

BU Students: Steven Graff, Yuan Wang, Michael Ferragia, Melinda Hudson, Annie Ropeik,

Handouts: Agenda, Aerial views of three contraflow plans: Park Street, Green Street, and Dudley Street

Introductions

The minutes from the October 3, 2011, meeting were approved.

Public Meeting to discuss three contraflow proposals: Park Street, Green Street, and Dudley Street

1) Park Street discussion.

- No one from Park Street was present.

2) Green Street discussion.

- Mr. Roberts questioned where the contraflow lane would lead. He suggested Pleasant Street as an alternative.
- Ms. B. Roberts reported four near misses with bicyclists and she raised issues of speeding cars and bikes, endangering of children and temple goers, bicyclists not following rules, and drivers backing onto the street from driveways.
- Ms. S. Roberts raised issues of narrowness of Green Street, temple congestion and parking, and neighborhood density (in contrast with Netherlands Road).
- Mr. Dippel moved that, in the light of neighborhood concerns, the BAC should further study the Green Street contraflow.
- Mr. Dippel and Mr. Heineman will revisit the Green Street proposal and possibly revisit the issue at the December 5 meeting. They will inform Ms. S. Roberts about their conversation.
- Mr. Vitolo pointed out that there already might be two traffic studies of Green Street. Contact Mr. Kirrane.

Dudley Street discussion

- Ms. Snow read a letter from Ms. Comstock raising concerns that bicyclists on the contraflow lane would not be visible to drivers at the blind curve on Dudley Street.

Contraflow discussion

- Mr. Vitolo commented on three accommodations planners might take into consideration when designing contraflow lanes:
 - 1) Double yellow line when there is room makes the lane more obvious and more inviolate.
 - 2) Rectangular white sign with octagonal red inside to signify bicycle stop is less confusing for drivers approaching the intersection.

3) Sharrows on the travel lane make it obvious that, when traveling in the direction of the one-way street, bicycles should be in the travel lane, not in the contraflow lane.

Bike Parade - Dempsey

- Sunday, May 20, 2012 (5th annual)
- Police will support it. Parks Division is excited.
- BU Graduation/No Red Sox
- Mr. Dempsey will contact Brookline Bank and Chobee Hoy for financial support.
- BATV won second place in Northeast Region competition for their film about Bike Parade 2011.

Green Routes Plan - Snow

- Mr. Vitolo questioned how prescriptive we should be about specific solutions to routes.
- Mr. Dippel agreed that the Green Routes document be a “vision,” not necessarily a “plan.”
- Ms. Snow spoke about the problems of prioritizing route improvements.
- Ms. Snow reported that Mr. Safer seemed amenable to the revisions she suggested.

Green Day at Larz Anderson Park – Monday, October 10, 2011 - Dempsey

- BAC shared a table with SWAC.
- Ms. Snow, Mr. Dippel, Mr. Dempsey helped to staff the table.
- The event was under attended.
- Mr. Dempsey suggested that when we are asked to attend such events in the future we ask how the event will be publicized.

Committee to Make Recommendations about Improving Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossings of the Emerald Necklace – Vitolo

- Mr. Vitolo is the BAC representative on a large committee that is looking at five sections that could be better designed to connect various parts of the Emerald Necklace for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- The five crossings/intersections are 1) Route 9, 2) River Road, 3) Aspinwall Avenue, 4) Brookline Avenue, and 5) Netherlands Road.
- The wish is to move the project forward before allocated funds are cancelled.
- Mr. Vitolo reported that it was a positive and productive meeting.
- Committee members generally understand that there are different types of bicyclists.
- There are all sorts of jurisdictional issues: Town, DCR, Boston, and MassDOT.
- The public may submit comments in writing to the crossings committee.
- Ms. Snow will submit written comments to the Emerald Necklace committee based on the plans for the relevant intersections described in the Green Routes Plan.

Other Business

- Ms. Snow will invite Mr. Levine, Planning Director, to the January 9 meeting.
- Ms Snow asked the group to think of possible BAC projects for Climate Week – January 21-29, 2012.

Next Meeting

- We will meet next on Monday, December 5, 2011, at 7 P.M. at Devotion School.

Adjournment

- We adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Assignments

- Ms. Snow will invite Mr. Levine to the December 5 meeting.
- Mr. Dippel and Mr. Heineman will revisit the Green Street contraflow plan and report on December 5. They will inform Ms. S. Roberts about their conversation.
- Mr. Dempsey will contact Brookline Bank and Chobee Hoy for financial support.
- All will think of creative ideas for BAC participation in Climate Week 2012.
- Ms. Snow will submit written comments to the Emerald Necklace committee based on the plans for the relevant intersections described in the Green Routes Plan.

Open Meeting Law Guidelines for Members of Committees Created to Advise a Public Body (e.g. Bicycle Advisory Committee)

Prior to the meeting:

- A meeting must be posted to the Town Calendar at least one week before the meeting is to take place.
- Therefore, the committee chair should submit the information to the town employee appointed to assist the committee at least 1 ½ weeks before the meeting.
- The posting must include time, location, agenda in pdf format, contact person, and contact email address.
- An email will be sent to all TMM and other officials about the meeting.
- Notices of meetings must be made at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.
- Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays are excluded when counting the 48 hours. e.g. A Monday evening meeting must be “noticed/posted” before the previous Thursday evening.
- The posted agenda should list topics that “one can reasonably assume will be discussed.” What one can “reasonably anticipate will come up for discussion.”
- The posted agenda should include sections for “Old Business” and “New Business.”

Communication between committee members prior to meeting:

- There will be no deliberation.
- “Deliberation” can be construed as oral or written or electronic and is illegal outside of the official meeting.
- “Housekeeping” is acceptable (distribution of the agenda or reports, scheduling, or procedural matters). One-on-one discussions are acceptable.
- Onsite inspections are excluded from the Open Meeting Law strictures.

At the meeting:

- A “meeting” is defined as “deliberating public business.”
- A “Public Body” is any multiple member group that is convened to discuss public business.
- A majority of the committee members must be present for a quorum.
- An “electronic quorum” or “available to a quorum” is illegal.
- Any decision about public business needs to be voted on.
- No decision is valid without a quorum.
- “Remote participation” is allowed only if the Attorney General approves.
- One has to notify the chair if one wants to record a meeting, and the chair has to say “The meeting is being recorded.”

Minutes:

- The minutes must list members present and members absent.
- The minutes must include a summary of discussion of each topic.
- The minutes must include all votes taken,
- The minutes must include a list of any documents.
- All documents used in any presentation must be submitted with the written minutes.
- The first draft of the minutes – as are all drafts – is a public record.
- whether approved or not, minutes must be available to the public upon request within 10 days.

After the meeting:

- Within two subsequent meetings, the approved minutes (in pdf format) must be sent to the town employee assigned to assist the committee.
- Within two subsequent meetings, the town employee appointed to assist the committee must post those minutes to the website.

Certification and training:

- Within two weeks of being appointed to a committee, a member must certify his or her receipt of a copy of the Open Meeting Law.
- All committee members must participate in Open Meeting Law training within 120 days of their appointments.