

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

Meeting Minutes for October 5, 2015, Town Hall Room 408 at 7:00 PM.

Submitted by Kristin Schreiber

Present: Cynthia Snow, Kristin Schreiber, Nathaniel Fink, Don McNamara, and Sgt Brian Sutherland

Absent: John Dempsey, Bryan Decker, Thomas Vitolo

MIT Researchers: Amy Plovnick, Devon Neary

Public: Rebecca Albrecht, John Bowman, Anne Lusk, Nick Schmidt,

Minutes: September meeting minutes were approved as circulated

Secretary: Kristin Schreiber volunteered

MIT Researchers

An MIT class on Land Use has been engaged by the Brookline Planning and Community Development Department to conduct an assessment of Route 9 East for economic development and including bicyclist and pedestrian safety. After briefly describing the project, Ms. Plovnick and Ms. Neary asked for input from the committee, which elicited the following suggestions:

- make area more of a “village scape” by plantings, infrastructure, lighting to resemble Brookline Village
- consider eliminating Route 9 median to make more room for bicycle lanes
- look at challenge of fitting in desirable cycle tracks, especially at intersections
- think about logical pedestrian crossings, aligned with historic walking paths
- consider problems with parallel parking

Outcome: The class will present and seek input at a public meeting on October 28th (time and place to be determined) and in November before preparing a final report. The BAC offered to provide feedback on their presentation and to serve as a resource.

Bicycle Friendly Community Application

We have been working for a couple of years on an application for bicycle friendly community status from the League of American Bicyclists. Ms. Snow and others have done as much as they can on the application and need input from the Transportation Department staff on other parts of the application in order to complete it, submit it for Transportation Department and other necessary reviews before the next submission deadline of February 2016.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator

The difficulty of getting staff help on the BFC application and other projects because of their very heavy workload, led to a discussion of the possibility of seeking funding to hire a bike or bike/pedestrian/complete streets coordinator for Brookline.

Outcome: Ms. Snow will discuss this possibility and the best way to pursue it with Dr. Safer and others.

Bicycle Comfort Scale

Dr. Schreiber, Mr. Fink and Ms. Snow developed a draft A-B-C bicycling comfort scale in response to a request from Kara Brewton, the Town's Economic Development Director. Several questions/suggestions:

- The practicality of using this scale, and how to address how it will be used
- We need to prepare a map with the ratings
- Should we reverse the order of presentation, from worst (C) to best (A), specifying that A requires meeting criteria specified in B and C?
- Need to address intersections, many of which are C

Other resources to integrate/reference:

- Dutch Crow book (potential to borrow a copy)
- NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide
- Mineta Transportation Institute Report: LOW-STRESS BICYCLING AND NETWORK CONNECTIVITY by M. Mekuria, P. Furth and H. Nixon.
- Mass DOT is coming out (Nov. 5th) *Separated Bike Lane Planning and Design Guide*

Outcome: Plan to revise, to address above issues, using comparisons to other previously published work, and submit draft to Ms. Brewton for feedback

Brookline Climate Week

Will be in the spring rather than winter this year. Possible ideas for BAC participation:

- public forum, in conjunction with the complete streets policy committee
- bike maintenance (Landry's or other shop helping get ready for spring)
- include food
- possibly Saturday event at town hall
- last year BAC forum in March with open comment session was helpful and well received

Outcome: something to think about in coming months, what we can do for this

Bicycle Counts

Still ongoing because of bad weather; results should be available before next meeting.

Plan for Beacon Street Outbound Marion to Washington Square

Feedback on the plan

- travel lane too wide (14')
- minimum for bike lane 5' (not 3 ft'6")
- buffer between parking lane and bike lane very narrow as is
- getting rid of some parking on Beacon between Marion intersection and Short St would considerably improve safety for cyclists as motorist merge from two lanes to one
- An ideal alternative cross section where the street width is 30 feet: 1 foot shy space to L, 11 ft motor travel lane, 3 ft buffer, 5 ft bike lane, 3 ft buffer, 7 ft parking; where street is not 30 ft wide, buffer between bikes and travel should be narrowed since most frequent accidents are from "dooring"
- flex post at beginning of lane
- tighten up corners at Short Street

Outcome: Suggestions will be sent to Transportation Department for review again next month

Other items:

- BAC had tables at two events in October: Community Aging Network meeting at Senior Center and Brookline Day at Larz Anderson
- Bike Training Area for Children at Robinson Park: Dr. Lusk reported that despite spending considerable time seeking help with the project from the Boston Architectural Center and from Brookline High School CAD class, she has had no luck so far and may have to give up on the project for the time being.
- Left turn bike box at Beacon and Webster appears to have no detection loops to trigger traffic light for bikes
- Beacon at St Mary's (outbound)- an entire lane blocked off for construction is dangerous for cyclists
- Ms. Albrecht asked for and received advice on seeking better bicycle racks in housing where she is helping an elderly man get a better bike. Good bike storage in apartment buildings is a problem throughout Brookline and is an impediment to cycling for many people.