

Westborough Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee – Meeting Minutes, 10/30/2012
Submitted by Ellen Gugel

Committee Members Present: Don Burn, Tom Smith, Bruce Tretter, Chris Hughes, Donna Avery, Ellen Gugel, Ed Beachemin
Others Present: Janet Anderson, Howard Drake, Tim Dodd, Nancy Siegal

1. Minutes of September 18, 2012 were approved.

2. Action from last meeting

a. Storm drains – Bruce spoke with DPW John Walden and Town Planner Jim Robbins. Jim offers to be liaison on this committee's behalf to DPW. Storm drains are all cleaned once at year at the same time (annual cleaning) and the DPW will switch the wrong way grates at that time.

b. Traffic light sensors – Jim Robbins reports that traffic light sensors for bicycles are installed, though they are not marked. Don says the Mass DOT standard is to paint the markings on the pavement and install signs. No one present seems to have seen any. Bruce offered to speak to Jim and Mass DOT to see that they are properly marked.

c. Police Chief Al Gordon input – Bruce met with Al Gordon to discuss bicycle/pedestrian issues in town. They discussed education for “wrong way” cyclists, continued enforcement downtown of no sidewalk riding, safest for cyclists to “take the lane” downtown where parked cars back up or create a “door zone”.

3. Bike/pedestrian plan update

a. Don Burn's Sep. 2012 draft plan – Don briefed the committee on trail construction issues. A stone dust trail costs out @\$70K/mile. Don asked the committee to authorize him to approach Jim Robbins, Board of Selectmen, and Town Counsel Greg Franks to approach landowners in town along the proposed path to start to enter into negotiations for easements. In Westborough, there are eight easements needed between Route 495 and Park Street. The committee consensus is to start locally and demonstrate local momentum, a good use of resources rather than trying to get all towns along the proposed path on board before proceeding.

Motion: Ellen moved to empower Don Burn to approach Greg Franks, Jim Robbins, Board of Selectmen, and others in town as needed to start the process of discussion and negotiation with landowners along the proposed trail. Tom seconded. All voted in favor.

More discussion on the trolley line followed and led to discussion on road conditions and bikability of roads elsewhere in town, such as the narrowness of Ruggles Street and line of sight.

4. Bicycling education & PSA

Donna Avery spoke to Donna Kelley about a PSA on the local cable station. Donna (Kelley) was receptive. The committee brainstormed education ideas, including:

- Al Gordon appear in a PSA to give the information authority
- entertaining or interesting educational video (not “talking heads”)
- Powerpoint presentation – get into the schools (elementary schools) through police; make it available to scouting groups; cover safety and hand signals
- introduce a bike event into the town’s annual spring festival
- the Mass Brain Injury Foundation has some materials that could be used or adapted in a video or Powerpoint

Bruce will check with the schools, Donna will check in again with the cable station.

Ellen shared some educational brochures from the City of Boston, one for cyclists and the other for motorists. She will continue to search for other samples.

5. Web page – Chris spoke to Mark Stockman, the town’s webmaster. Mark said it would be easy to set up a new page on the town’s web site for the committee. We need to decide on content. Ellen offered to look at other towns’ web sites. Meanwhile, everyone is invited to send Chris their ideas. There will be one common email address for contacting the committee. It will list committee members. An interesting idea is to offer a way to report road conditions, hazards and potholes.

6. Other

a. Tim Dodd reminded the committee is to report biannually to the Board of Selectmen. This would be between December or February. Committee members were appointed in August and first met in September.

b. Janet Anderson voiced concern of those north of Route 9 and safe bicycle/pedestrian access to town center. Lyman St. & Route 9 demands a better pedestrian crossing. There was discussion about speaking to the Town Engineer, Carl Balduf. Don Burn remarked that improving the intersection is already in the plan [what plan?]

c. Next meeting 11/27/2012, 7 p.m.