

Bicycle Advisory Committee (BAC)

Meeting Minutes for April 5, 2010

Submitted by John Dempsey

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

Present: Cynthia Snow, Tommy Vitolo, Chris Dippel, Mitch Heineman, Don McNamara, John Dempsey

Transportation Board Representative: Bill Schwartz

Police Department Representative: Kevin Sullivan

Town of Brookline Engineering Department: Bill Smith

Public: Rebecca Albrecht, Peter Furth, Hugh Mattison

Handouts: Agenda, Minutes from 3/1/10, Spreadsheet of 2009 Bicycle Accidents in Brookline Resulting in Police Reports, Carlton Street Footbridge initial drawings,

The minutes from the March 1, 2010, meeting were approved.

Bicycle Accidents – Sullivan

- Officer Sullivan presented his spreadsheet: 2009 Bicycle Accidents in Brookline Resulting in Police Reports.
- The sheet contained the following categories: date, time, weather, address, bicycle street, bicycle direction, bicycle turn, bicycle on street, crosswalk, or sidewalk, other party street, other party direction, other party turn or parked, other party type, helmet, light, fatality, transport cyclist to hospital, transport other injured party, bicycle damage > \$100, other party damage > \$100, citation, narrative, citation narrative.
- Summary: There were sixteen bicycle/motor vehicle accidents that resulted in police reports being filed in calendar year 2009. The accidents occurred between March 18 and September 23. They occurred between 6:38 a.m. and 7:20 p.m. One bicyclist died. Nine bicyclists were transported to a hospital. Eight drivers were cited. Two accidents seemed to be the fault of the cyclist. There was one case of a cyclist hitting a manhole cover and falling against a car. Four accidents were caused by dooring. At least nine cyclists were wearing helmets. At least nine cyclists had lights.
- Officer Sullivan will do a similar report about bicycle accidents in 2008.

Bike Ramp for Carlton Street Footbridge to the Muddy River – Smith and Mattison

- Town of Brookline Engineer Bill Smith introduced the Bicycle Advisory Committee to the preliminary plans for the Carlton Street Footbridge. He asked the Committee to work with the Town and other interested parties (e.g. disability, preservation, and park advocates) to refine the design of the ramps that will provide access to the historic structure for those with disabilities, bicyclists, and other wheeled conveyances such as baby strollers. The Bicycle Advisory Committee said that the reconstruction of the footbridge will provide an important link between the Muddy River Path and key cycling routes for both recreation and commuting.
- Ms. Snow will draft a response to the Engineering Department that states the following sentiments: The BAC appreciates Engineering reaching out to the bicycling community. The BAC would like to move ahead in the planning process. The BAC looks forward to working out the details with other groups and the Engineering Department.
- It was noted that the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee had advised widening the access ramps to 8 feet to accommodate travel in both directions and safe turns. Discussion ensued.
- It was noted that any discussions of the ramps should also take into account the historical nature of landscape as well as issues for the disabled and others who need wheeled access to and from the bridge.

Bike Parade – Dempsey – Sunday, May 23, 2010

- Brookline Bank and Chobee Hoy Real Estate have agreed to sponsor the event again.
- Mr. Dempsey met with the police and the transportation coordinator. The agreement was to have two parades again this year: the 5-mile parade for 10 and older and the 1.5-mile parade for novices.
- Mr. Dempsey emphasized the importance of getting the message out.
- Mr. Dempsey has been meeting with Ms. Gallentine to coordinate with the Parks Division.
- Town departments donating services and overtime: Police, DPW, Parks, Recreation.

- This event is “The Biggest Bike Parade in New England.”
- A photograph from the 2009 parade will probably be on the cover of the Brookline Annual Report.

Proposed fine for blocking bike lanes – Snow and Schwartz

- The Transportation Board sought BAC advice about a proposed law that calls for \$50 fines for drivers who block bike lanes.
- Some members of the BAC advised having a separate box for “blocking bike lane” printed on the citations - as opposed to just including it as a double-parking violation. The Committee felt that blocking a bike lane was a safety concern because it forced a cyclist into traffic and created a dangerous situation particularly for less experienced riders. Double parking was usually looked on as less of a safety hazard and more often as a disruption to traffic flow and an annoyance.
- Some members felt that a \$50 fine was appropriate under the following conditions: 1) the police were willing to enforce it 2) there was a public education campaign to inform drivers. The BAC felt that stopping or parking in bike lanes had to be seen in the same light as blocking fire hydrants and handicap ramps.
- Some members felt that the current citation for double parking was adequate and enforceable.

Bike Sharing Article for Town Meeting Warrant - Vitolo

- There is an article in the warrant to create a committee to advise whether Brookline should join a bike-sharing network that is being encouraged by the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee.

Open Space Planning - Dippel

- The three public meetings were held in March: North Brookline, South Brookline, Town Hall.
- Plan will be submitted to Board of Selectmen in September 2010.
- Plan will be submitted to Commonwealth in March 2011.
- Mr. Dippel suggested the BAC submit the Bicycle Greenways Plan and the top ten priorities from the 2005 plan.
- There was discussion about how to make the Bicycle Greenways Plan more public.
- Mr. Heineman will send the most recent Brookline Bicycle Master Plan to Mr. McNamara.
- Mr. Dippel and Mr. Furth will present the plan to the Open Space Plan committee.

Follow-up

Other business

- MoveMass meeting on April 16 at 8 a.m. at Brown and Rudnick, One Financial Center, Boston
- Gateway East meeting, April 28 at 3 p.m. at Town Hall
- Bike Newton Rally, May 16 at 12 noon at Newton City Hall
- Brookline Bike Beacon Bike Parade, May 23 at 12:30 p.m. at Amory Park

Next Meeting

- We will meet on Monday, May 3, 2010, at 7 P.M. at Devotion School.

Adjournment:

- We adjourned at 8:45 P.M.

Assignments:

- Officer Sullivan will do a similar report about bicycle accidents in 2008.
- Ms. Snow will draft a response to the Engineering Department that states the following sentiments: The BAC appreciates Engineering reaching out to the bicycling community. The BAC would like to move forward in the planning process. The BAC looks forward to working out the details with other groups and the Engineering Department.
- Mr. Heineman will send the most recent Brookline Bicycle Master Plan to Mr. McNamara.
- Mr. McNamara will put the Plan on the website.
- Mr. Dippel and Mr. Furth will present the plan to the Open Space Plan committee.
- Mr. Dempsey will attend the Newton Bike Rally on Sunday, May 16, 2010.