



## SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE JUNE 2023 MEETING MINUTES

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

### Community Representatives

**Tom Lamar**, Chair  
**Lena Webb**, Vice Chair  
**Ted Feldman**, Secretary  
**Gregory Ely**

**Alex Frieden**  
**Mark Vollinger**  
**Ian Woloschin**

### Ex Officio

**Willie Burnley, Jr.**, City Council  
**Viola Augustin**, OSPCD Mobility  
**Adam Polinski**, OSPCD Mobility  
**Eric Weisman**, DPW

### Guests:

- Stephen Mackey
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Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, 6:30-8:00PM

### ***Note: Meeting will be hybrid***

In-person meeting location: City Hall 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 93 Highland Ave

Zoom link for computers, tablets, and smartphones:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83506187706?pwd=SWd4NmE2MHYxY0k0NXpKWg5aUtGZz09>

Dial-in number: +1 (305) 224-1968, or find your local number: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83506187706?pwd=SWd4NmE2MHYxY0k0NXpKWg5aUtGZz09>

Meeting ID: 835 0618 7706

Passcode: 468727

### ***Order reversed to give more time for attendees to join.***

#### **Focus 1: Left Turn treatment at Medford at South St (25 minutes)**

- Discussion and potential vote on recommendations for improvements to Medford St at South St– Ted F
- Discussion of left turns out of protected bike lanes in general.

#### **Focus 2: Left Turn treatment at Medford at South St (25 minutes)**

- Discussion and potential vote on recommendations for improvements to Medford St at South St– Ted F
  - Two options for intersection are being considered as part of a partnership between the city & a developer of a local project.
  - South St is currently a two-way street, will become one way (to Medford St) as part of the project with bidirectional bike lanes.
  - Option 1 has a Protected Bike Lane on Medford St with a “quickcurb” median.
  - Option 2 has a Protected Bike Lane on Medford St but replaces the median with a left turn lane for cyclists heading towards South St
  - Traffic volume on Medford St is roughly 10k cars per day (Similar to Somerville Ave or other City arterials!)
  - Appreciate the raised crossing for pedestrians & cyclists.
  - Unsignalized left turn lane may not add much value.
  - Raised median may help reduce car speeds.
  - **SBAC prefers Option 1**
  - It appears reasonable to signalize based on car count, but may not be feasible to time with other area intersections?
  - Could the design include a bidirectional cycletrack on South St?
  - Questions
    - Is South St unprotected past the intersection?

- Is there a sizeable offset on Ward at Medford between raised table and crosswalk?
- Ian – Do we know the ratio of left turning cyclists at South St?
  - Adam – No, and they might change drastically.
  - Tom – From bike counts mostly going straight but will change drastically.
- Greg – Is there a reason the left turn is on the right side of the straight lane (Option 2)?
  - Adam – There was a previous iteration that had them flipped, the reasoning was that motorists might not be able to discern that a cyclist turning left was about to cross the travel lane.
  - Viola – Since this is a raised crossing cyclists can use part of the sidewalk to help turn.
  - Greg – Concern about cyclist conflict attempting to turn left or go straight.
- Greg – Having a physical median helps prevent cars from parking in the intersection.
  - Ted – The most often blocked area will have flexposts to help keep bike lanes clear.
- Tom – Unsignalized intersection preference is for left turn lane to be on the left to reduce confusion.
- Ian – Option 2 isn't great here, but having the left turn lane on the right side allows cargo cyclists (and kids!) a bit more space to make tight turns, this doesn't make sense here (Option 1 preferred!) but this is an interesting design choice that should be considered for future projects in the City
- Adam – We're going to take feedback and bundle it up and provide it to the developer as soon as possible.
- **Tom MOTIONS** - <Tom to enter motion here>: summary: Motion to adopt recommendations with addition of consideration of turns for cargo and larger bikes, Tom, seconded by Ian, passed unanimously.
  - **Ian Seconds**
  - **Motion unanimously approved.**
- Bow St @ Somerville Ave
  - Facilitate a safe left turn by the same principles as safe pedestrian crossing.
    - Speed hump or raised crossing.
    - Crossbike
    - Signage/Beacons
    - Narrow the slip lane portion of the street.
- Discussion of left turns out of protected bike lanes in general.

#### **Procedural, General Business & Updates (20 minutes)**

- Roll call and meeting logistics.
- Acting Secretary: Ted Feldman
- Approval of May meeting minutes – motion by Ian, seconded Tom, passed unanimously.
- Upcoming outreach events
  - Carnivale – moved to 11<sup>th</sup> due to rain, Perry Park June 7<sup>th</sup> (talk to Cate), Art Beat

#### **Focus 1: Final Bike Network Plan (20 minutes)**

- Discussion and potential vote to endorse Bike Network Plan – Tom
  - Tom presented slides covering previous review and concerns, including use of neighborways.
  - Greg asked about choice of wording in “speed limit” vs. “design speed,” given that some streets are currently higher speed/volume – should be “design speed” to indicate future intention.
  - SBAC raised issue of one-way directionality, addressed through addition of Appendix B
  - Question of timing, original plan was 30 years, plan now include priority network to be implemented by 2030.
  - Prioritization now includes methodology.
  - Specific sections:
    - West Somerville conditions addressed by comments including Appendix B, including the notable comment that bus/bike lanes are not comfortable for all ages and abilities.

- Davis Sq – proposed connect, Ian worries that we may need to consider potential pedal/bike conflicts.
- Bow Street: illustrative path includes notion that Bow will be pedestrianized.
- Concern of access to East Somerville School sufficiently addressed in Appendix B
- Also considered Beacon and Dane/Park detour, Ian raises concern that alternate route introduces a number of left turns that may be uncomfortable without additional protection for turns.
- Tom mentions that there should be design guidance around protecting left turns.
- Gaps in Priority Network:
  - Greg mentions Boston and Medford St
  - Nate mentions Mossland.
  - Ian mentions Park St,
  - Viola mentions that there may be an opportunity to reconsider small gaps created by implementation of priority network.
- Exclusion of Beacon St
  - Gap where there in segments approaching Cambridge.
  - Alex F mentions that he could not endorse a plan that does not include all of Beacon St given that it is “bicycle highway of New England” with 600 bikes/hour.
  - Tom mentions that final comments will include strong language that Beacon must be included in priority network even if another street must be removed.
- Discussion of support of plan
  - Tom proposed language around endorsement of plan with the understanding of Beacon Street
  - Viola mentions Mobility needs to clarify process for revisions, could postpone vote.
  - Motion proposed by Tom, seconded by Ted, passed unanimously.
  - Final resolution:
    - Neighborways definition: we appreciate referencing NACTO standards. The plan should replace "speed limit" with "design speed" The plan relies on bicycles making left turns at several busy intersections. We ask that the implementation guide plan how to make left turns safer for biking, at both signalized and unsignalized intersections, and that it considers the implications of left turns for bikes.
    - Priority Map
    - Gaps

The proposed Priority Map has several short gaps, likely due to the prioritization mechanism. We suggest that the Priority Map be amended to include these gaps:

Medford S

Boston Avenue

Mossland

Our most significant concern is that finishing Beacon St is omitted. We feel strongly that Beacon St should be included. We move to endorse the Bike Network Plan, conditional on the above concerns being substantially met.

### **City Updates (25 minutes)**

- Construction updates
  - Bow St
    - Green MMA and flex posts expected in July.
    - Delay in part because contractor ran out of green.
  - Powder House
    - Phase 1 striping completed last night.
    - Waiting on commitment from contractor for speed humps and then implementation of PBL
  - East Broadway

- - Holland/College
    - Construction – majority striping completed.
    - City staff continuing to work on logistics and with outdoor dining businesses.
    - Curb Use and Parking
      - New loading zones, meters and ADA spaces are operational.
      - New live-time occupancy data sign at City-owned Buena vista
      - Continued discussions with TAB
      - Ongoing data collection
- Community Path
  - No major updates
- Medford St detour
  - High School section of path will not be open until Fall 2023
  - Detour just opened.
  - Continue to assess and may adjust.
- SBAC-requested updates on:
  - Can the city evaluate removing the turn lane at Webster/Prospect?
    - Redesign of intersection at concept stage, will progress next 12 months.
    - Lane drops will be addressed in the longer term.
    - Will re-review in a year?
  - With pre-cast concrete curbs going in on western Washington St bike lane, can pre-cast concrete curbs also be used in other projects?
    - First pilot will be Western Washington
    - Evaluation will include the impact on street maintenance, and issues with movement of curbs.
    - Will re-review in a year?
  - What is the city's current procedure for replacing flex-posts as they are damaged?
    - 250+ flex posts + base combos + 150 posts, additional 600 flex posts to deploy at various new locations.
    - Log 311 requests
    - Can also contact mobility to alert sections.