



February 2025 Meeting Minutes

Somerville Pedestrian & Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC)

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

Meeting Information

Thursday, February 20, 2025, 6:30-8:00 PM

This meeting will be hybrid:

- **In-person meeting location:** Somerville Public Library, Central Library, 79 Highland Ave.

- **Zoom info to join remotely via computers, tablets, and smartphones:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89181225932?pwd=aWpoL2FtaUh3aGdVbHNRWUJmeDRNQQT09>

Passcode: 152274

Or join by phone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 891 8122 5932

Passcode: 152274

International numbers available: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kcVy69ROJG>

Members

* = present

1. Ted Alexander
2. Ginny Alverson
3. Caroline Bodager
4. * Meredith Brown
5. * Laura Evans
6. * Christopher Ferry
7. Preston Gutelius
8. * Satoko Hirai (Digital Communications Office)
9. * Brenda Marvin (Secretary)
10. * Steven Mulder
11. * Barbara Myers

12. * Bianca Norkunas
13. * Vitor Pamplona (Vice Chair)
14. * Zach Rosenberg
15. * Alessandra Seiter (Chair)
16. * Robert Stanzel
17. Carole Voulgaris
18. Will Mbah (Ex Officio, City Council - At Large)
19. * Katherine White (Ex Officio, OSPCD Mobility)
20. Justin Schreiber (Ex Officio, OSPCD Mobility)

Guests

2 residents in person; 3 online

Acting Secretary

Rob Stanzel

Call to Order

6:32

Agenda

Procedural Business (10 Minutes)

- Roll call and guest introductions
- Vote on January draft minutes – **approved** by unanimous vote
- Upcoming meeting logistics:
 - March:** Virtual-only (most likely)
 - April and onward:** 101 South St, Boynton Yards
 - June:** Moving to 6/12

Subcommittee Updates (5 Minutes)

- Community Events
 - Reviewing ongoing project areas - planning regarding 3 organizations
 - AARP has a robust library of worksheets with questions about assessing the area they're walking through
 - Could repurpose one of them for our walkthrough audit, then put together letter for Union Square improvements
- Design Review
 - Snow clearing: maybe organize topics and questions in next meeting – talk to local candidates
 - Letter - add to March agenda for vote

City Update: Mobility 2024 Key Performance Indicators & Maffa/Mystic Bridge Replacement Project (40 Minutes)

- Mobility staff will present their [2024 Key Performance Indicators \(KPI\) report](#) on mobility and safety in Somerville over the past year. Katherine White presented.
 - Key Performance Indicators every winter – see <https://somervillema.gov/VisionZero>
 - Highlights – Pedestrians, Maffa Way, Elm/Beacon Open House March 10
 - Bus ridership significantly decreased from pre-pandemic levels. Evening pedestrian trips up; morning trips are down.
 - Crash data is sourced from MA state portal.
 - Pedestrian crashes up slightly but trending downward; no deaths last year, again.
 - 2 miles of sidewalk rebuilt every year - how many total?
 - Alessandra Q: Are we expecting bus ridership increase with redesign? Any strategies to increase ridership?
 - Kate: There is reduced delay being seen at one line which makes it seem more reliable (Union->Harvard)
 - Julian (Guest) Q: How have traffic signals changed?
 - Kate: Most pedestrian signals are default (non-request) but these need audible signals, e.g. Bow & Summer there are countdown timers rather than walk/don't-walk.
 - Joel (Guest) Q: How much of the dropoff is due the GLX or electric BlueBikes?
 - Kate: Anecdotally, the 109 to Orange Line is faster than Green Line.
 - Julian Q: Cars going faster than 25mph - do we have stats on the vehicular throughput as well?
 - Kate: yes - ATR automatic traffic recorders have both sets of data.
 - Vitor Q: Can we start collecting pedestrian fall data? Boston Globe article mentions 3X higher falls this year (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/02/19/metro/ice-related-injuries-boston-streets>)
 - Kate: Somerville-specific fall data would be interesting but Somerville has no hospitals - KW will inquire.
- Mobility staff will also give a brief overview of MassDOT's ongoing [Maffa Way/Mystic Ave bridge replacement project](#).
 - All are encouraged to attend the next Somerville-focused public meeting on February 26, 6:00PM, at the Somerville Central Library (79 Highland Ave).
 - Corresponding safety improvements are wanted.
 - Two public meetings on 2/24 & 2/26
 - Alessandra Q: What final separation will there be between traffic and the bike lane?
 - Kate: There will be a raised median between them.
 - Brenda Q: Mystic Ave bridge shoulder is enormous - can that space be allocated differently?
 - Kate: We asked but it is difficult to get MassDOT to move away from long-standing large shoulders designs - we hope the final design uses the space better.

Review PTAC 2024 Annual Report (10 Minutes)

- Julian Q: What is meant by the North South Somerville Connector?
- Alessandra: We don't have good transit connections North-South, they are mostly East-West; could we have smaller transit vehicles for the North-South hills?

- Report approved for publication without objection, pending final tweaks

PTAC Enforcement Survey Results (20 Minutes)

- Alessandra: At our January meeting, we voted to administer a survey to gauge PTAC members' views on street safety enforcement and guide our future advocacy. At this meeting, we will present the survey results and discuss next steps. See slides - responses; deciding on next steps.
 - Vitor: We could collect unanimous responses and move forward with those.
 - Alessandra Q: Could state representatives come to a meeting to talk about the process of getting bus lane legislation?
 - Kate: We have advocated for automated vehicle enforcement but those bills are still stuck in legislature
 - Brenda: I'm surprised at the even spread of the responses about enforcement.
 - Alessandra: Is anyone opposed to moving forward with the unanimous results? I see support for that and no opposition - is it worth discussing the non-unanimous ones such as increased SPD involvement?
 - Perhaps discuss in the smaller groups to avoid the intimidation of entire (large) group?
 - Summary - preliminary strategy: more advocacy and guests regarding automated enforcement.
 - Strategizing interrogating differences of opinions regarding enforcement.

Other Business (5 Minutes)

- Public comment (n/a)

Meeting Ended

7:46pm