



## **SOMERVILLE BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **April 3, 2025 MEETING MINUTES**

### **DRAFT**

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

Meeting begun approximately 6:34PM

#### **Attendees**

##### Community Representatives

Tom Lamar, Chair  
Lena Webb, Vice Chair  
Ted Feldman, Secretary  
Kathryne Benesh  
Alex Frieden  
Katharine Lange  
Paul Morgan  
Ian Woloschin

##### Not in attendance

Adrienne Agarwal  
Gregory Ely  
Amanda Rychel  
Maria Salim

##### Ex Officio

Greg Hanafin, OSPCD Mobility  
Rashika Dhawan, OSPCD Mobility

##### Not in attendance

Willie Burnley, Jr., City Council  
Eric Weisman, DPW

##### Guests

Adam Polinski, OSPCD Mobility  
Christopher Bach

#### **Procedural, General Business & Updates (40 minutes)**

- Motion by Lena Webb to approve minutes, seconded by Paul Morgan, approved unanimously.
- Motion by Kathryne Benesh to endorse to Boston Cyclist Union's recent statement on the reinstatement of bike lane safety infrastructure. Discussion on why relevant for Somerville residents/commuters.
  - Modified that we are signing on behalf representing all the Somerville residents who bike into Boston as a desired motion. Seconded by Ian Woloschin. Motion passed unanimously.
- Committee Elections (all unopposed): Statements of candidates of interest in the roles. Brief discussion by the committee. Motion by Tom for approval of entire slate, seconded by Ian. Slate passed unanimously.

- Chair: Lena Webb
- Vice Chair: Ted Feldman
- Secretary: Paul Morgan

**Focus: Engineering review (30 minutes)**

- Elm/Beacon Connector:
  - Subcommittee: Beech/Willow, supportive of lane narrowing. Main comments, thinking about how to prioritize access to Willow Ave. Would suggest bollardization of the new pedestrian space to prevent encroaching by cars. Suggest further traffic calming, including raised crosswalks and/or rapid flash beacons. We'd also be supportive of bike slip lane through the new pedestrian space to enable turns into Willow.
    - Committee feedback:
      - Request for city to reconsider turning lane (does the volume of cars actually warrant that).
      - Concern about conflict zone of cars turning right onto Beech, bicyclists continuing through, and cars turning left onto Beech. Either daylight more or harden the intersection more. City: thinking about more green conflict zone striping, also considering where/when cars vs. Bikes have right of way. Committee response: Just want to make sure it's very clear where bikes are supposed to be, so it's obvious.
      - Appreciation for crosswalks and protected bike lanes!
      - Desire to learn more about how bikes use the pedestrian space (e.g. slip lane) - committee has mixed views on using a slip lane. City: Considered that, but get the most space back in this current configuration. It's also potentially City of Cambridge's space (city line) - working closely together.
      - Just generally want to make tighter, more difficult turns to make it safer for everyone (go slower).
    - Elm Street / Hancock:
      - Subcommittee: Contraflow on white street and also discussion about how to better connect with Hancock Street with crossbikes. City: Would Mossland make a better contraflow than White Street?
        - Committee: Discussion on value on white street contraflow to avoid going through the parking lot. Many of us use it
      - Subcommittee: Elm at Mossland. Supportive, maybe put in murals or something of fish!
        - Committee: Clarification about the black platform (zicla platform), to prevent cars but allow fire trucks. Make it clear that bikes are allowed to pass through. Make it clear to cyclists how to go north (if not Cedar contraflow). Discussion on signal system – and expectations that bikes will go on pedestrian signal if northbound.
      - Subcommittee: Elm at Somerville. City: Whenever there is a vehicle moving, bike/pedestrians will be allowed to move as much as possible. Looked at slip lane, but decided we need to fully reconstruct intersection to make it safer.
        - Committee: Discussion on how new lanes/signal system makes it safer for bikes headed to Union Square from Beacon. Concern about driver education required to implement right on red prohibition (from Beacon to Somerville ave). Discussion on slip lane, looking at hardening options.
        - Public question: For bikes making the two stage left from Somerville Ave Southbound onto Elm Street, it doesn't look like there's a place to wait for the left turn while other cyclists on Somerville Ave proceed

Southbound. Answer: they wait on the curb, it's not a great solution, but there is limited space. Only quickbuild, so can't do jug handle (like Porter) on the sidewalk.

- Subcommittee: Somerville Avenue / Beacon. Committee: Discussion on signal plans and bike queueing. Discussion on new parking spaces on Somerville Ave.
- Motion to endorse statement on committee's feedback on the Elm/Beacon connector by Kathryn Benesh. Seconded Ian. Voted unanimously.

City updates:

- City does have budget for swag/giveaways.

Chair adjourned meeting at 8:15PM