

## July 2025 Meeting Minutes

### Somerville Pedestrian & Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC)

Mayor Katjana Ballantyne

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### Meeting Information

Thursday, July 17, 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

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 Officer)\*
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 Councilor At Large)
19. Justin Schreiber (Ex Officio, OSPCD Mobility)\*
20. Katherine White (Ex Officio, OSPCD Mobility)\*

## Guests

1. Viola Augustine, *Senior Planner, Mobility*
2. Mackenzie Webb, *Somerville resident*
3. Karen Molloy, *Somerville Alliance for Safe Streets (SASS)*
4. Liam, *Somerville resident*
5. Mark, *Somerville resident*
6. Zack, *Somerville resident*

## Acting Secretary

Preston Gutelius

## Agenda

### Announcements

- Alessandra motioned to accept May and June minutes, seconded by Brenda
- Brenda gives an overview of changes for planning secretary responsibilities
- New member addition, Mackenzie, is proposed by Alessandra, Preston seconded, group approves

### Subcommittee Updates (10 Minutes)

- Community Events
  - Ted, we planned and coordinated on the Somerville Ave walk last monday, reviewing unions square walk audit results which is circulating to participants before being finalized, Planning farmers market (Ted)
    - Kate added that that scaffolding is taking some of the parking lot, so we may not have a community table until August, most likely on the 9th
  - Alessandra, enforcement conversation (generally probe automated enforcement, discussed concerns and trade offs, Will Mbah was present)
- Design Review did not meet
- Special Projects did not meet

### Discussion on Somerville Avenue Quick-Build Project (25 Minutes)

- Project overview
  - Viola gives a quick introduction to the project, highlighting the pro and cons of the quick build(changeable/temporary, but does not allow for bigger changes or repaving)

- Some parking will be removed, protected bike lanes will be added and improved sightlines for pedestrians. Potentially traffic signal timing changes and bus stop changes,
- No new paving, sidewalk, or raised crosswalks.
- Timeline, initial community outreach is closing
  - Design over winter
  - Outreach for design feedback in the spring
- Reviewing slides and highlighting the existing intersection and crosswalks
- Highlighting that maintenance issues would need to go through DPW
- Potential for signal changes and bus stop changes, seeking feedback
- Discussion
  - Ted- on possibility for adding equipment, what would this be
    - Viola- Not whole new lights, more potential for removal, or adding in an additional phase/signal for bikes at part st
  - Ted- anything that we need to address before they are locked in
    - Viola, no, mobility is generally open to anything at this time, cannot think of anything right now, but please reach out if anything comes up.
  - Vitor, on questions for center and somerville
    - Kate, construction slated for this year
    - Viola, the construction and changes may affect plans
  - Karen, wilson sq stub/slip lane plans?
    - Viola, this may be in the scope of the elm/beacon plan, currently being used in that plan as a right turn lane and essential.
    - Kate, the plans will be tackled in the Elm Beacon project and more will be available when the next plans are made available.
  - Brenda, new office sidewalk, how/why was it funded, what would allow for this with other project
    - Justin, part of the design approval and impact mitigation required renewal of the streetscape
  - Alessandra, discussing some notes from the community walk:
    - Lowell st
      - Dangerous car turning left off os somerville ave, timing overall was good, cyclists prefer the area, Mackenzie suggested better wayfinding, Preston highlighted the long cycling timing for the small road
    - Spring St
      - New development at spring street, comparing to the forge lot on the other side it is much better to have parking behind or below a building for better sense of place and visibility,
      - Cars confused about one way nature of spring street
      - Alessandra, the dark material of building itself radiates a lot of heat next the sidewalk, the city may want to consider rules on material at grade level
    - Beech street, discussions on whether the signals are fully needed,
      - Suggestions included RFB, signal cycle that triggers for cars leaving ice ring lot where they end up blocking the sidewalk and bike lane trying to leave
      - Ted seconded the need for something to manage the sudden rush of people leaving, it probably should be looked at more specifically during one of those times
    - Central street

- The construction project will improve the intersection, Cambria hotel drop off/pick up messes
- Recommendations, Holly raised concerns about tactile markings for limits of raised crosswalks.
- Concerns about what could be done about lefts off of park
- Laura, worried about the right hook on to central,
- Properzi way
  - Generally positive feedback
  - However Laurel st has some poor visibility for peds going west
- Near Market Basket
  - Many concerns here due to the large number of driveways and curb cuts,
  - Limited pedestrian ways from Somerville ave into the parking lot to get to market basket, adding a ped section to the entrances?
  - Need for more bike parking,
  - Narrow entrance on church street
  - Bus stops generally good,
  - The area at church street is chaotic, could turns be restricted to going right, a major area of concern

## City Update: Bus Route 90 and Other Transit/Construction Updates (20 Minutes)

- Justin: Some construction updates
  - 90 coming back to it's pre GLX routing on cross street in August
  - City is making some changes to make it easier for the MBTA to operate
    - More flex posts in no parking to make travel lanes wider
    - Reviewing broadway turn to make sure it is made workable
      - A few parking spots may be removed,
      - Added enforcement
  - Long term plans for the 90, and 88, need to be review
  - Alessandra, we are planning on having discussions this fall in PTAC on the 90 long term planning
  - Karen, in the last budget cycle there were funds for a new shelter/stop at assembly in anticipation of the 85 going to assembly
    - Justin related, there is a new quick build to make the space usable for the bus
      - Currently testing some zicla products in the area
- Justin, participatory budget funded shelters are in progress with one at washington/webster now installed, new shelters include lighting(solar powered), benches, and shade
  - Ted, question on whether old shelters are movable,
    - Justin, unfortunately not feasible, contractors advise they will fall apart if attempted to move
  - Vitor, confirming what the power is used for
    - Justin, just the lighting
  - Justin, MBTA is going through a few shelters they funded, a mix of new and replacements
  - Ted, was the one at Somerville new tech building funded by the developer,
    - Justin, yes the MBTA works with others for this type of upgrade
  - Once installed the shelters move to MBTA for maintenance
- Kate on reconstructed sidewalks, in areas such as holland st and college ave to wrap up the projects

- Highlighting new bump out for tree on walnut st making it passable and saving the tree
- Reading out a list of recently installed/upgraded curb ramps as well as two new raised intersections.
- Vitor thoughts on raised intersections with asphalt vs bricks
  - Asking for feedback on if it sufficiently conveys the use
  - Kate talking about the ease or maintenance/cost vs tactile effectiveness
    - Excited to try the new textured pavement markings
    - Eversource loves to come in and build trenches, and this will help us to better address
- New plans published for middlesex ave behind trader joes area, planned for fall construction, welcoming feedback
  - Full design available online
  - Some signal changes planned for Middlesex ave at Foley, which includes the removal of the ped exclusive phase,
    - Justin added that it is moving to protected concurrence which also provides better protection for bikes
  - Adds bike lanes and better marking for the area
- On participatory budget Alessandra asks how that planning and process impacts the mobility team
  - Viola and Justin talk about how it was a learning process with new timeline and scheduling concerns that are not typical, in a better place for the second version.

## Meeting Ended

- 8:00PM
- Note: Alex Hollowell from the MBTA was not able to join to give the planned presentation/update on automated bus enforcement.