

Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee

Meeting 12/2/2012

Attendees: Gideon Schreiber, Maria Saiz, Steve Engler, Janet Jameson, Sheila Fay, Natalie Truesdell

Guests: Heather Drake: Mass DOT- Safe Routes to School, Herb Nolan: Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Fund , Ethan Davis: community member

1. Acceptance of Minutes
2. Safe Routes to School- Heather Drake Safe Routes to School in Watertown: Safe Routes to School is a federal program to support walking/biking to school. Heather's territory is Greater Boston. Heather provided an update on the current activity level of the elementary and middle schools in Watertown. Jeannette Belcher-Schepis' had started the program in Watertown and is still involved. She initiated and wrote the Assessment grant for the Hosmer School last year.
3. The Hosmer school has remained active and has two flagship days in May and October (Assistant Principle has been leading the program). The Cunniff School has been involved with one of the days. Important to have community and parent stakeholders involved. Pedestrian safety education for 2nd graders has also been available at Hosmer. Heather met with Cunniff and would like to start walk to school days and the PE teacher (point of contact), is interested in bike safety workshops. Heather has also met with the middle school principle to see if they are interested. Heather brought some fact sheets and talking points. At this point Heather's role is facilitating the program, and identifying a school champion to administer the program. Walking Wednesdays is encouraged and the program promotes monthly or weekly walk to school days. A committee position from the School Board can help ensure sustainability. There are also summer programs that go through Walk Boston. Some follow-ups to continue the program is to contact the Town Recreation Director and the wellness committee. The most successful town is Newton. They have a Task force with DPW, DPH, pedestrian and bike committee members as well as parents. In addition, Parents actively recruit new parents to the program.
4. Greenough Blvd Project: Herb Nolan presented ideas for the Greenough Blvd project. Planning was funded by the Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation, which started about 7 years ago and is a small family foundation. They are an operating foundation that finds opportunities that have high value in the area of parks. They are interested in public/private partnership. They have funded a study and have been advocating for the Greenough Greenway as a connector to Watertown to Cambridge and Boston. The loop across the river is about 2.5 miles which is a nice scale for walking. Today the path is of very poor quality, but it is a beautiful stretch of river. Options have been incorporated into the connectivity study. Traffic counts support transitioning the road to two lanes. Herb provided a slide presentation showing various options to improve Greenough and at three different cost points ranging from under \$400k to more than \$1 million.

5. Watertown Greenway

- a. Phase 2 progress: No update
- b. Connection to Charles River: The Charles River Connectivity Study: Brief overview of the Charles River Connectivity Study which was done by DCR It looks at the whole river and connections to pedestrians and bicyclists. It starts in Watertown Square and goes to the Boston Port. Watertown will have to pay for the connectivity project in the Arsenal area. It was suggested that we should present the plans to the town Council in January to set aside funds in the capital funds of the project. Important to present it in January to begin the process in January. Some of the work has been done by the connectivity study. We could use funds for the design and part of the construction. The first step would be to define an RFP for the design phase.
- c. Mural Project Update: Additional funds have been raised and several artists have expressed interest in the project.

6. MAPC Wellness Grants: No update

7. MAPC Community Transportation Technical Assistance Program and Livable Community Workshops: No update

8. Committee Membership: No update

9. Website and Blog: No update

10. New Business: None