

## **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee minutes**

Date:	11/19/09		
Meeting start:	7:40 p.m.		
<b>In attendance:</b>			
David Belcher	Michael Kraft	Dave Atkins	Steve Harte
Wendy Muellers	Mary Beth Persons	Virginia Lester	George Lester
Steve Olanoff	Sergeant Paul Sicard		

### **1. Sheehan LEGO project update**

The fifth graders from Sheehan School updated the work on their project since the last meeting, including a tour of the Arlington/Cambridge section of the Minuteman Bikeway, a visit to the Smart Cities lab at MIT, and a tour of bike lanes in Cambridge. Interesting findings included enclosed bicycle parking, bike lanes on the road and bike lanes on sidewalks.

Their proposed ideas:

1. High Street-Washington Street link by starting behind Starbucks and utilizing existing paths. They encountered some private land and had to stop close to Thatcher Street. However, this idea seemed to hold promise and much talk centered around the possibility of a path behind the stone walls along Thatcher Street as a link to Sandy Valley Road and Lowell Woods. This would allow users to safely get to the area of Laura Lane.

2. A bike lane on Gay Street which would require road widening.

3. Make Gay Street and Clapboardtree Street one way.

### **2. Crosswalk at Washington Street and Croft Regis Road.**

A resident, Dawn Khoury, expressed her frustration with the crosswalk and the safety of the children who walk from the area of Loring Road, across Washington Street and up Croft Regis Road to the Hanlon School. Apparently some drivers do not stop for the crossing guard, even when she is in the road with her arms raised. Some drivers also utilize the breakdown lane to go around cars that have stopped for the crossing guard.

Proposals from Sgt. Paul Sicard and others in attendance:

1. Move the crosswalk to Washington Street and Gay Street. That idea met with opposition.

2. Use cones to block the breakdown lane. The crossing guard may or may not want to do that. She's not required to do it. Sgt. Sicard did supply her with a sign to place in the breakdown lane. It's unclear if she is using the sign.

3. Park a car in the breakdown lane. It's unclear if the crossing guard would do that. For liability reasons, Sgt. Sicard can't tell her to do that.

4. Install a pedestrian-activated flashing light on both sides of the street. There are options for this solution, including solar-powered lights. Natick and Wellesley make extensive use of these. Perhaps a committee member would like to take charge of investigating their effect.

5. Install a choker, or neck-down. This would serve the purpose of eliminating the breakdown lane in that area and would also shorten the pavement that students need to cross.

6. Increased police presence. The police have been in the area in the morning and it seems to have some effect. Because of the shift change at 3:00, it's difficult to have police presence there in the afternoon.

In response to a question, Sgt. Sicard shared things citizens can do to "police" the community, including: take the plate number of a car that passes a school bus and give it to the bus driver, take down the plate number of a car that passes a school bus and give it to Sgt. Sicard. The RMV can get involved in these cases. Westwood has a by-law that enables the police to issue a citation for failure to stop for a crossing guard.

### **3. Bike Racks Update**

Bike racks have been ordered and should arrive by the end of November. They are funded by a grant- the town is only responsible for \$200 for shipping and the cost of installation. It's ideal if they are installed on a hard surface. The DPW will install the racks. Steve Olanoff and Dave Atkins toured the proposed installation sites. The school department will need to approve the installation locations at the schools.

### **4. Cross-town Bike Trail update**

Jeremy and Ben Pinkus shared their update on the Cross-town Bike Trail update. Most of the trail comes within 100 feet of wetlands and would

need Conservation Commission approval. They would like to map the proposed trail utilizing volunteers- they will utilize photos of trail junctures and GPS. Some committee members signed up to be part of a Trails Subcommittee. Jeremy will investigate possible Westwood Land Trust resources.

## **5. Discussion about use of time at meetings**

It was decided that we will devote a large chunk of time to discussing the Idea Scale proposals at our next meeting. Two options were discussed: no outside visitors for the December meeting or outside visitors will be limited to appearing after a 7:30-8:30 work time.

## **6. Intersection-monitoring cameras**

A question was brought up about the use of these in Westwood. Sgt. Sicard shared that they cannot be used for law enforcement in Massachusetts. Further, it has been documented that intersections with the cameras sometimes see increased accidents because of cars slamming on their brakes at a yellow light.

## **7. Emotionally intelligent signs**

Sgt. Sicard is meeting with a representative from the Hanlon PTA on November 20 to look at ideas for these signs at the Hanlon. Middle School students have finished their designs for the signs.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Harte