

July 16, 2009  
50 Carby St  
7:30pm

### Introductions and Updates

Welcomed new people and visitors:

- Molly Polansky - Deerfield parent, will represent Deerfield Elementary school
- Virginia Lester and husband George - their son Albert, an avid cyclist, was killed by a drunken teenage drunk driver in 1992 while competing in a bike race in New York State. Virginia has spoken to thousands of schools in communities across the country about drunk driving.

Virginia was interested in learning what efforts were underway to encourage and make bike riding safer...are their efforts underway to get new bike racks at schools? Her Daughter in law, Blanche bikes to the 128 train station from Medfield--down Hartford to Gay Street, then East to Canton, Blue Hill Drive and on to the train station at University Ave. If Westwood becomes known as a bike-friendly town...drivers will pay attention.

Paul Sicard: Hanlon school got a new bike rack last year. Needed to keep all 3 racks...because in the spring, all 3 are full.

Unsure if Martha Jones school has enough racks or not.

It appears middle school kids don't want to wear helmets..."cool factor" discourages, although in the safety classes, the police have shown them how to U-lock the helmets onto the bike racks--so they do not have to carry the helmets around or put in lockers, etc.

Dave: Safe Routes to Schools did a bike safety class at Hanlon last Fall; Rec Department just did "Safety Town," a summer program for kindergarteners including a day of pedestrian and bike safety.

Molly: nicest roads (e.g. scenic roads like Thatcher and Clapboardtree) are most dangerous, but plenty of room on some parts of 109.

John reported measuring about a mile of 109 between Burgess and Stanford area where more than enough room for a bike lane. But distance varies dramatically and choke points make a continuous bike lane unlikely.

Virginia described a recent traffic situation where a cyclist turned into her path--making a left turn from 109 to Summer Street--agreed cyclist was totally in the wrong--going wrong way, etc. Need better education in general.

question about little kids on sidewalks + bikes; at what age does it make a difference?

Paul Sicard: technically no bikes are supposed to be allowed on sidewalk in “business district,” but would not usually be enforced. Up to parents as to how safe they feel about kids riding in road. Dave: speed vs age - when bikes going faster than walkers probably not good on sidewalk.

VA commended Pan Mass Challenge

Bill: does police dept do training for bikes?

Paul: Safety Town

Bike Rodeo a few years ago

### **Goals**

Suzanne suggests: every school eligible to be a participant in SRTS

Molly: what does SRTS do?

- walking wednesdays
- walking school bus

Steve Olanoff: MAPC doing ped plan for region

- we should generate a list of priority sidewalks to be built

Paul: town used to have sidewalk committee to help with that...to recommend where to do things instead of having individual requests, etc.

- we should change bylaws to prevent parking on sidewalks

Suzanne: cars rarely stop for crosswalks...Needham has big green crossings.

Paul: DPW does not like them...claims risk of cars sliding on paint.

Note, according to state law, people have to be in the crosswalk for cars to yield, not stop. had to change wording on signs years ago b/c no requirement to stop. So, in other words, cars passing by as people stand on the curb = not technically wrong. Pedestrian has to “take the crosswalk.”

Here is a copy of the relevant provisions in state law:

## **CHAPTER 89. LAW OF THE ROAD**

Chapter 89: Section 11. Marked crosswalks; yielding right of way to pedestrians; penalty

Section 11. When traffic control signals are not in place or not in operation the driver of a vehicle shall yield the right of way, slowing down or stopping if need be so to yield, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a crosswalk marked in accordance with standards established by the department of highways if the pedestrian is on that half of the traveled part of the way on which the vehicle is traveling or if the pedestrian approaches

from the opposite half of the traveled part of the way to within 10 feet of that half of the traveled part of the way on which said vehicle is traveling. No driver of a vehicle shall pass any other vehicle which has stopped at a marked crosswalk to permit a pedestrian to cross, nor shall any such operator enter a marked crosswalk while a pedestrian is crossing or until there is a sufficient space beyond the crosswalk to accommodate the vehicle he is operating, notwithstanding that a traffic control signal may indicate that vehicles may proceed.

Whoever violates any provision of this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$200.

Whenever a pedestrian is injured by a motor vehicle in a marked crosswalk, the department of state police or the municipal police department with jurisdiction of the street, in consultation with department of state police if deemed appropriate, shall conduct an investigation into the cause of the injury and any violation of this section or other law or ordinance and shall issue the appropriate civil or criminal citation or file an application for the appropriate criminal complaint, if any. This section shall not limit the ability of a district attorney or the attorney general to seek an indictment in connection with the operation of a motor vehicle which causes injury or death and which violates this section.

Paul: Deerfield school - engineers don't want a crosswalk at the path; not safe without crossing guard. Too close to town hall light without a guard. Reason it is not painted more is to discourage crossing.

lights on 109 are coordinated to get traffic through the center; gay st and town hall, summer

Paul: Emotionally Intelligent signage; will be piloted at Hanlon area. want signs to be readable; involve graphic arts kids. Groups at Forbes and Downey put out family neighborhood slow signs.

Steve Harte brought materials on crosswalks and group discussed some of the various treatments described, agreed we should make a list of priority locations to recommend action on.

Maintaining sidewalks? Piecemeal...make a list.

Poison Ivy? Who's responsibility is it to cut back the poison ivy from the road?

Goals, consensus:

SRTS for every school

make lists

sidewalks - new and repair

crosswalks - locations to be improved  
bikes - paint lines based on width of lane constant; width of shoulder should vary  
consider sharrow or something on Gay St

John reported that he had emailed the City of Cambridge asking about rules for how much space required for a bike lane. Answers: 4' if no parking; 5-6' if car parking present.

see the following article for detailed discussion of bike lanes and a critique of the Cambridge study that considered this:

<http://www.truewheelers.org/comments/cambstudy/index.htm>

and

[http://www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/et/bike/bike\\_safety.html](http://www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/et/bike/bike_safety.html)

Steve: see MassHighway design standards

see [http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/common/downloads/bikeplan/Final\\_Bike\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.mhd.state.ma.us/common/downloads/bikeplan/Final_Bike_Plan.pdf)

John noted that a 1 3/4 mile section of route 109, from around the Dunkin Donuts to Pheasant Hill has a wide shoulder that could probably support a bike lane.

traffic calming...traffic circles...Harrow Rd from Oak St Norwood sandbag traffic circle

George Lester suggested doing something to promote bike safety for middle and high school students...an event to promote...intergenerational...