

WALKBIKE SPRINGFIELD
February 7, 2019 MEETING NOTES
Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, 60 Congress St.

I. 2019 GOALS

A. Mayoral Election Platform

We discussed the pros and cons of having a platform, wanting to educate, but not alienate candidates. We agreed that carefully worded questions which we would ask each candidate to answer and then could publicize, as well as ask at forums, could be an effective way of getting candidates to know about our issues. We would not plan to endorse any candidate. [Attached are questions given to mayoral candidates in Boston, and similar ones were used in Somerville – although we want to avoid the ones that come across as shamming, and have fewer questions.] All are encouraged to develop your five top questions for discussion at the March meeting. Alex suggested three areas of focus: safety, education, and infrastructure.

Election timeline: May 28: nomination papers submission deadline; June 11: candidate certification deadline; Sept 10: preliminary election.

Letter to Mayor Sarno regarding increasing funding for striping

Thanks to Todd for writing an initial draft. It was mentioned that there were 2.5 miles of bicycle lanes in 2013, and today there are 20.9. The letter was approved by those present. [Attached.]

B. Education

1. We discussed the need to engage the police. MassBike will be doing three “Advocacy Bootcamp” workshops, including one in Springfield in late May/June. They are looking to have a panel including the police. Discussed doing outreach to the C3 units, Way Finders, New North Citizen Council, school resource officers, PE teachers, and School Wellness coordinators. The Bootcamp will include how to communicate among diverse constituencies.

The education both needs to explain the rules regarding safe walking and bicycling, as well as lead to an overall change of the pedestrian and bicycling culture in Springfield “Walk facing traffic, Ride with traffic!”

2. PeterKuusisto mentioned that the **Mass Rides program is ending at end of June.**

3, **Safe Routes to School:** The School Committee is poised to pass a requirement that all second graders be given the Safe Routes to School pedestrian safety class – meeting on February 14. The PE instructors will be trained to do this.

<https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/07/28/Students%20Walking%202nd%20grade%20Curriculum.pdf>

Bicycle safety sessions – a 35 minute program can also provided in conjunction with MassBike. Goal: get the School Committee to approve providing the bicycle safety instruction for 2nd, 4th, 8th grades.

Peter mentioned reviewing the Arrival/Dismal Reports that Safe Routes Schools prepare to determine additional action items and infrastructure needs. Also the individual school handbooks are place to include walking/bicycling safety education messages. The Gerena Community Elementary School is an example.

Mass Safe Routes to School Walk & Bike to School day is May 5

4. **Presentation at Neighborhood Councils** – we agreed that after the additional draft bicycle related ordinance passes, we should put together a packet to take to Neighborhood Councils and ask for their help in spreading the “Ride with Traffic; Walk Against Traffic” message, along with what is in the newly updated Rules of the Road and the bicycle ordinance.

C. Ride Routes & Maps (need a separate meeting to accomplish)

D. Safety [“Vision Zero”] Campaign

Police department just received a grant to help with reducing fatalities – need to learn how the funds will be used. We discussed the need for a meeting with the police, DPW, and more? to get more information about the increasing levels of crashes (9 in 2016, 11 in 2017, and 13 in 2018.) Tim Allen will arrange for such a meeting.

It was discussed investigating about Springfield becoming a “Vision Zero” community or having a “Vision” of “Zero” crashes by some date. From a discussion with a representative of the Mass Vision Zero Network, she learned that this involves establishing a Task Force (such as Tim’s meeting), developing an Action Plan, and having the Mayor adopt Vision Zero as a goal.

<https://visionzeronetWORK.org/>

<https://www.slideshare.net/visionzeronetWORK/vision-strategies-action-guidelines-for-an-effective-vision-zero-action-plan-84104719>

II. UPDATES

A. Roadway projects, Street repavings & Complete Streets

-- 2019 paving list is expected to be ready soon for our input on how to expand Complete Streets application.

-- the next MassDOT Complete Streets implementation funding application deadline in May first.

-- the second annual Complete Streets Demo Day is scheduled for May 11 (raindate May 18). The proposed location is Walnut St. between Pine and Union.

B. Rules of the Road & City Laws regarding bicycles, skateboards, and

scooters: Updated Rules of the Road (with considerable input from Todd Crosset) passed the City Council on February 4. The bicycle ordinance is expected to be on the City Council agenda on March 4.

C. Safe Routes to School – March 5 webinar, 10 am

D. Connecting Lower Valley Bicycle/Walking Trails - North End Bridge: Sheila has been actively working to schedule a walk with Senators Welch and Lesser and Rep. Gonzalez. Suggested to also try to include Rep. Finn from West Springfield.

E. Highland Railtrail: McKnight Trail & East Forest Park

McKnight Neighborhood Council: Feb. 12 – 6 PM at the Rebecca Johnson Elementary School on Catherine St.: UMass design students’ presentations. Springfield just submitted a proposal for additional design funding to the MassTrails Program.

F. Railroad crossings update – funding for Phase 3 of Riverfront Park is being pursued by Senator Lesser so that there can be more ready access to the Park via the underpass. It is not expected that Amtrak will improve the rail crossing anytime soon.

G. Non-motorized wheel Park

Mike Tully who is the point person in the Parks Department is leaving. Need to get a recommitment for a facility (including on City property). Google Pump Track to see a variety of design options for this kind of park.

III. OTHER

A. State Legislation Priorities

The statewide pedestrian and bicycle organization are focusing on three legislative priorities

<https://www.massbike.org/legislation>

- An Act requiring the hands-free use of mobile telephones while driving
- An Act Relative to automated enforcement
- An Act to reduce traffic fatalities

It is never too late to contact ones State Rep and State Senator and encourage them to support these bills.

Alex Weck of MassBike PV attended the Advocacy Day at the State House on January 23 and met with met many western MA legislators.

B. MassBike Events - Bike Week is May 11-19, 2019. A planning meeting for Bike Week, which will include the Complete Streets Demo is February 13 at 6 PM at Makerspace, 168 Worthington St. In late May/early June there will be a weekday, daytime Advocacy Bootcamp for government officials and community.

C. WalkBoston Events – On March 18 – Springfield community, government, and organization representatives will be receiving WlakBoston’s Golden Shoe Award. Betsy is offering a ride to those who want to attend the event in downtown Boston, 5-8 PM.

<https://walkboston.org/golden-shoe-awards/>

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/walkbostons-annual-celebration-2019-tickets-54376194662>

NEXT MEETINGS (second Thursdays) @ PVPC, 60 Congress St.

March 14, 2019

April 11, 2019