

## WalkBike Springfield Meeting Notes- November 11, 2021

### 1. State Street Crossing Update – [An Additional Death on Nov. 10, a library employee](#)

2021 Crash data: 20 fatalities: 8 pedestrians

2020: 18 fatalities: 1 pedestrian; 1 bicycle

2019: 8 fatalities: 1 pedestrian; 1 bicycle

Check out: <https://apps.impact.dot.state.ma.us/cdp/dashboard-view/2>

At the Oct. 19 City Council Maintenance & Development Committee meeting, DPW Commissioner Chris Cignoli reported that a consultant is working on pedestrian crossing accommodations. It was suggested that WBS try to discuss ideas with the consultant before suggestions are formalized – we will reach out to Councilor Lederman to help us with this. The number of street lights out in the vicinity of the crash is a related concern.

### 2. World Day of Remembrance Event – **November 21** – Especially given the additional pedestrian death on Wednesday on State St. by the library, we agreed to join this international (26<sup>th</sup> year) tribute to roadway fatalities. Our event will be at **2 PM on the Central Library steps**. Since no event was held in 2020, we will recognize the 38 fatalities in 2020 and 2021. Hopefully we can get the names of the fatalities from the police reports. We will line the steps with 38 pairs of shoes (painted white?) and with lighting candles.

### 3. Review of McKnight Trail Forum on Nov. 10 – sponsored by the McKnight Neighborhood Council, the event was attended by nearly 60 people. We were pleased with Mr. Cignoli's support for the project. Initially expected to cost \$3.5 million, the construction cost is now estimated for the 1.5 mile path to be \$8.5 million. The cost increase is primarily due to needing to construct a 1900-foot long boardwalk through wetland and additional security elements for Buckeye Gas who pipeline is under and in the vicinity of the path. A "25 design" hearing is expected in January. We discussed the need to pay attention to resident concerns related to dirt bike usage, need for possible fencing, lighting, and access points.

Highland Railtrail – the East Forest Park to Springfield College section has received a MassTrails grants starting July 2022 for initial design. Meanwhile DPW is filing the paperwork with MassDOT to get the construction funds allocated in the "Transportation Improvement Plan." We discussed that the East Forest Park Neighborhood Association should also apply for Community Preservation Act funds in early 2022 – getting these funds was critical to moving the McKnight Trail along.

### 4. MassBike -- Kristen Sykes, Connecticut Valley Chapter Chair

Related to getting funds for trails, Kristen mentioned that Springfield should consider [the Land and Conservation Fund](#) (state side) and [Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership](#) . WBS will check with DPW and Parks as to whether they are pursuing these funds, and for what.

Kristen also encouraged WBS to participate with the [Light Brigade](#) – MassBike's program to distribute free lights to cyclists. Looking for volunteers to schedule a time/place, etc. in order to

distribute lights. Brendon offered to have a number of lights available to distribute as he does his daily riding.

The Connecticut Valley Chapter annual meeting will be held virtually on December 6, 2021 at 6 PM.

5. [Riverwalk northern end closure for Water & Sewer Construction](#) – We discussed the need to get a commitment for signage and alternative access accommodation for the current closure at Laurel St. and to get a standard policy among all the entities (DPW, Water & Sewer, Army Corps, Parks, etc.) involved with the Riverwalk for any future construction closures. Deb will meet with Peter Shumway of DPW about this.

Greg Poelker-McKee, a UMass student is working on a project evaluating Riverwalk access (or in fact inaccessibility.) Send him your comments about this to [gpoelkermcke@umass.edu](mailto:gpoelkermcke@umass.edu)

6. [MassDOT Local Bottleneck Reduction Program](#) – Andy Krar, DPW City Engineer will be applying for this new funding opportunity for improvements to the Allen/Cooley Streets intersection. WBS wants to generate a list for future consideration. Email [walkbikespringfield@gmail.com](mailto:walkbikespringfield@gmail.com) to add suggestions. Some compiled so far include:

- Pine St./Walnut St. & Pendleton Ave
- Page Blvd--St James Blvd.
- Page Blvd--St James Ave near 291 Exit 4
- Mill/Orange/Dickinson/Locust
- East St & Bowles Park

7. [MassDOT Shared Streets Program](#) (new applications January 2022) – Springfield has received these funds for the “bump-outs” on St. James & Wellesley, on Worthington St., and a project currently underway on Main St. in Indian Orchard. Some of the additional projects to be suggested by WBS to DPW could include:

- Frank B Murray St. across Dwight St. to Train Station
- State Street Library crossing
- 94 Chestnut – Museum’s proposed bakery/coffee shop

Are there restaurants which could benefit from more outdoor space while also helping to slow traffic by reducing the roadway width? Send suggestions to [walkbikespringfield@gmail.com](mailto:walkbikespringfield@gmail.com)

8. [MassDOT Road Safety Audit of Armory/Liberty “rotary”](#) – Because this area has one of the highest crash rates in the region, MassDot held a day-long audit of the area on October 28. Betsy Johnson represented WalkBike Springfield. Along with 8 MassDOT staff, Vlad from Springfield DPW, Springfield and State police officers the crash rates were first reviewed inside, followed by 2 hours of walking the area and noting vehicle movements and the significant number of bicyclists and pedestrians. The report will be used to hopefully lead to possible future improvements. It was identified that by just restriping the roadway and having the area

function more as a rotary with those in the rotary having the right-of-way should reduce crashes.

9. West Springfield Walk Audit – Nov. 15 @ 1:30 PM, meeting at the Boys & Girls Club at 615 Main St., West Springfield (flyer attached)
10. Project Update: the “X” -- a public hearing presented a revised “25% design” is expected early in 2022. Expect that too much of Sumner will be like State Street will long stretches between pedestrian crossing accommodations.
11. Other  
Streetlight outages – something needs to be done. Seem to get more results if report through calling the City’s 311 system (although now now on the App) rather to Eversource. WBS will continue to support the Way Finders’ Advocates in pushing for the City to undertake a comprehensive street light audit.

**NEXT MEETING: December 9, 2021**