

WalkBike Springfield
January 13, 2022 Meeting Notes

I. Friends of Highland Trails

Liz Stevens said that Craig Della Pena recommended that a “Friends of Highland Rail Trail” begin to be created. ***An invite to join the effort is attached.*** We discussed that a decision about whether the group needs a federal non-profit designation (503(c)3) should wait until after the McKnight and East Forest Park sections are actually constructed.

We will also be investigating why the wetlands requirements and Buckeye Gas security issues may be overly raising the construction cost for the McKnight Trail.

II. Armory Street bridge replacement hearing – February 1 @ 6 PM

Pre-register at: <https://www.mass.gov/event/springfield-armory-street-bridges-over-csx-replacement-2022-02-01t180000-0500-2022-02-01t193000-0500>

This project has great potential to resolve a currently very difficult and dangerous area for pedestrians and cyclists. Check out <https://www.bikeleague.org/content/biking-and-walking-access-now-required-bridges>

This project may also encourage additional bike/ped improvement actions as suggested in the recent MassDOT roadway safety audit of the Liberty/Armory circular intersection. ***Draft report attached.***

III. MassBike/AMC Update

Appalachian Mountain Club staffperson and Connecticut River Valley MassBike chapter president, Kristen Sykes reported that the UMass design student project about improving access to the Riverwalk is now available – a short presentation was made at the recent MassBike annual meeting. ***The report is attached.***

We discussed WBS pursuing an access ramp on Riverside Road (DPW had included this in a post-tornado relief grant application; this project was not funded.) Betsy will try to get this proposal.

Sheila raised the need for improved signage at all the entrances to the Riverwalk. She will pursue getting an estimate for such signs from Design WorkShop for submitting a 2022 Community Preservation Act proposal.

Kristen also mentioned that the **League of American Bicyclists** [annual summit](#) will be a hybrid event – March 27-30, 2022. Early registration ends January 31.

MassBike is hosting a “meet up” about the bicycle friendly bills currently being considered by the Massachusetts legislature on January 24 at noon. Register at https://www.massbike.org/jan22_mbmeetup

IV. Safe Routes to School

DPW submitted for a major SR2S Infrastructure grant for intersection improvements related to the Washington Street school. WBS provided a support letter. Hope to hear before summer.

Lucy reported that she has been touch with schools in the Forest Park C3 area, including the Alice Beal, Sumner Ave., Kensington, and Washington St. School and with the C3 unit about doing joint programming.

V. Wheel Park

[Pillar Design Studios](#) is the consultant. To review the design concepts to date go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/899393380242493>

Suggestions related to desired features can be sent to:

bikeandskatepark@springfieldcityhall.com

WBS is working a an additional design discussion meeting that is convenient for the youth who advocated for the wheel park.

Post meeting update: Parks has an agreement with the Boys & Girls Club, so the location on Carew Street is where the design is going forward. Parks is submitting for a major Massachusetts Land and Water Conservation grant to fund construction. WBS provided a support letter.

VI. The “X” and other projects

- Hearing about the revised “25% design” for “X” is still not scheduled. Expected before spring.
- DPW will be submitting the MassDOT Shared Streets grant for improvements at the Allen Park/Allen Street bus stop, for 3 additional bike share stations, and for improvements to Dickinson/Olmstead/Appleton.

NEXT MEETING – Thursday, February 10, 2022 @ 6 PM