

WALKBIKE SPRINGFIELD OCTOBER 9, 2019 MEETING NOTES

Updates

“X” Project: Public hearing held on Sept. 17. Considerable concern about the mature tree removal and the round-about configuration. WalkBike Springfield participants reviewed the plans at the DPW and submitted concerns about the lack of safe pedestrian crossings and the need for consideration of alternatives for accommodating bicyclists. (Comment *letter attached* and see <https://www.springfield-ma.gov/dpw/index.php?id=192> for more information on the project.) It was reported that concern about the project was raised by Councilor Ryan at the most recent City Council meeting and the project will be taken up by the Council’s Maintenance & Development Committee.

Walkability Prioritization: We will reach out to the neighborhood councils for folks interested in determining priorities related to improving conditions for safe walking neighborhood by neighborhood. Hope to start meeting with Chief Economic Director Tim Sheehan in the next month.

Central Library State St. Crossing: No response to our letter to the Mayor about the need to explore a variety of solutions to the dangerous situation of pedestrians crossing State Street to the Central Library. (see <http://www.walkbikespringfieldma.org/action--resources.html>)

413 Wheel Park: Group hasn’t met, but Parks director, Pat Sullivan is seeking funds to move forward with developing a schematic design -- the first step in creating a new park.

Riverwalk Point Person: It was reported being at an unrelated meeting with the Mayor who acknowledged receiving the WalkBike Springfield letter and that this was a good idea.

Safe Routes to School: WalkBike Springfield and Way Finders participated on October 4 at an arrival and dismissal audit at the DeBerry School. We are encouraging the School Department to apply to a recently released small grant opportunity for improving crosswalks at a few schools. We are discussing trying to arrange a presentation to the School Committee about the Safe Routes to School program and doing more to improve overall the safety of coming and going at all 60 schools.

Roadway Projects, Street Repavings & Complete Streets

Prioritization Plan Update: Catherine Ratte mentioned that the City of Springfield should request technical assistance from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to help with this during 2020. She has encouraged Tim Sheehan and Scott Hanson to be sure to apply.

Central Street: Construction is underway. We will contact the new City Engineer, Andy Krar, to request that the four-foot shoulders on Central Street be marked and signed as a bicycle lane. Even better if the travel lanes might be reduced to 10.5 feet, enabling a five-foot bicycle lane.

Bicentennial Highway: Six-foot bicycle lane and two-foot buffer have been installed.

Six Corners Roundabout: Construction well underway. Will need signage to educate drivers as to when to yield.

St. James Boulevard: DPW has been contacted about the continuation of the bicycle lane from Page Boulevard by the CCRC plant onto St. James Boulevard.

2020 Paving Projects: Need to follow-up with DPW to get the list of the projected repaving projects as we did for 2019.

Other Activities

“Try to Drive 25” Campaign

Signs are currently out in the McKnight Neighborhood. MassBike PV is granting WalkBike Springfield \$100 for 10 additional signs. Deborah and Alex are working out how to better enable individuals to obtain signs.

Changing Speed Limit and Parking Signs: We discussed the need to document where there are 30 mph signs that should be reduced to 25 mph (such as on Eastern and Monroe); where there are contradictory signs (such as on Dickinson coming from Longmeadow.) Suggest using the “311 APP”.

Similarly, we need to report where parking is posted as allowed in bicycle lanes.

Good Neighbor Handbook: Attached is a *current draft* of language about safe bicycling for inclusion in the City’s [Good Neighbor Handbook](#). Send edits/additions, etc. to walkbikespringfield@gmail.com.

Bicycle Education: We have received a number of sample curricula from MassBike. Todd has make initial outreach to a physical education teacher, promoting that we start with four classroom sessions for all six graders. Later we could see about arranging for companion bicycle “rodeos”. To help with this project email walkbikespringfield@gmail.com.

Logo: We discussed ideas such a using bicycle and walking symbols for the letters of WalkBike Springfield; using an outline of Springfield around bicycle and walking symbols.

Riverwalk: New banners for the entrances are being funded through Community Preservation Act funds and should be installed in November. Interpretive signs about the bridges, historic events, thee levees, and more are also being designed.

We discussed that the use of the term multi-use path (MUP) is confusing and not widely understood — rather than bike/walking path. Also need Dave Bloniarz to explain the “Bird Trail” designation signs newly installed by West Street.

NEXT MEETINGS WILL BE WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13 & DECEMBER 11
We will poll the WalkBike Springfield list to determine 2020 meeting dates.

Other Upcoming Events/Meetings

MassDOT Moving Together Conference: October 24 in Boston

MassDOT & East Springfield Neighborhood meeting about Carew/St. James Ave./St. James Blvd. intersection: November 7, 6-8 pm at the East Springfield Neighborhood Council, [1437 Carew St., Springfield MA.](#)

Way Finder's Health Hill Meeting: November 7, 5:30 - 7 pm at the Brookings School, 433 Walnut Street.

MassDOT Safe Routes to School Workshop: November 20 in Maynard

Participants Being Sought for **PhotoVoice Project** of LiveWell Springfield's Complete Streets Study. Participants must live within 1/2 mile of the 6 Corners Round-About, of the "X" Intersection, or the Brightwood Railroad Underpass. Flyer attached.