

## WalkBike Springfield Meeting Notes December 9, 2021

Day of Remembrance Debrief & City response to Speeding. Over 30 attended and the event generated excellent press:

- <https://mass.streetsblog.org/2021/11/22/vigil-for-crash-victims-amplifies-need-for-safer-streets-in-springfield/>
- <https://www.wvlp.com/news/local-news/hampden-county/springfield-pays-tribute-to-world-day-of-remembrance/>
- [https://www.westernmassnews.com/news/springfield-participates-in-26th-world-day-of-remembrance/article\\_d771953a-4b30-11ec-a201-a3380e98b3f4.html](https://www.westernmassnews.com/news/springfield-participates-in-26th-world-day-of-remembrance/article_d771953a-4b30-11ec-a201-a3380e98b3f4.html)
- <https://www.newskudo.com/massachusetts/springfield/government/5671720-springfield-participates-in-26th-world-day-of-remembrance>

Meanwhile the Mayor and Police Commissioner had their own press event publicizing increased speed enforcement. We want to monitor that this is happening across multiple neighborhoods and not overly just stopping non-white drivers. WBS needs to still advocate for additional speed detection signs and the real solution – redesigning our streets. MassBike is supporting pending [legislation for automated speed enforcement](#).

State Street Update: The Mayor has announced a plan to reduce to one lane in each direction and installing a pedestrian refuge island and hawk beacons in the block by the library. The City Council is having a committee meeting about this at 1 PM on December 13. Meanwhile there has been an additional pedestrian death a block away. Even more change to State Street is needed.

MassBike Annual Meeting (Dec. 6) Debrief: Improvements in bicycle infrastructure in Pittsfield and Holyoke were featured. List of [MassBike 2021 accomplishments](#) presented. We learned that Pittsfield and Winchester have adopted a 10' default vehicle lane width (need to confirm).

Wheel Park Meeting with Pillar Design Studios - Dec. 14 @ 4 PM. (flyer attached) This is the first community presentation of preliminary design for the park. The plans will be shared online after the meeting and there will be additional community input meetings, including later in the day and virtual meetings.

Light Brigade Event(s): Thanks to Rob Thomas at RAD for leading a bike light distribution on November 22. There are additional lights from MassBike to distribute. Need folks to pick a date and place to hold additional events to give lights to passing cyclists. Lights can be picked up at RAD on Mondays from 2-6 PM.

Trails Update (UMass Design project): One of the presentations at the MassBike annual meeting was the UMass Design students' project about improving access to the Riverwalk – recommending at least better signage, with a goal of also getting installed a handicap accessible ramp along Riverside Drive. WBS will arrange for a full presentation of the report.

McKnight Trail: still working on getting a full construction cost to use for a possible additional MassTrails grant application in 2022.

Highland Trail (East Forest Park): DPW is working on getting it listed for construction funding on the PVPC/MassDOT Transportation Improvement Plan. A MassTrails grants for design has been awarded, but starts July 2022.

DPW Grant applications update:

A \$1.5 million **Safe Routes to School** application, focused on the Washington Elementary School, has recently been submitted. This funding could improve street crossings within a 2-mile radius of the school, which impacts 7 other schools.

A MassDOT **Bottleneck Reduction** application has been submitted for the Cooley/Allen St. intersection. Expect to hear in January.

The MassDOT **Shared Streets** grants will be reposted early in 2022. We discussed possible projects on Walnut St. – either by the GTC Farmstand and/or by the 3 restaurants opposite Barrow’s Park at Oak St./Pendleton Ave.

Community Advocates letter to Mayor & street lighting problem: Bea of Way Finders gave the history of the Healthy Hill Community Advocates multi-year efforts to get broken street lights fixed. Some success with Eversource in 2017, but then a return to no better than before. The City Council passed a resolution for an independent audit of the lights in 2018 and a meeting with the Mayor was about to be scheduled when the COVID shut-down happened. Based on a community survey, a new letter with three priorities, including the street light audit and increased funding for complete streets implementation is being sent to the Mayor. It also requests a meeting with the Mayor. The hope is that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds could address these requests. WBS is working with the Way Finder Advocates towards eventually getting the City to purchase the street lights and then undertaking a LED conversion and also using the poles to improve broadband.

Assisting Refugees: The Police Department reached out to WBS to help with getting translation of bicycling Rules of the Road for refugees who are using bicycles for transportation – particularly Afghani who need translation in Pashto and Dari. We are reaching out to [Ascentria](#) which is the primary western Mass resettlement organization,

Chestnut Street Bicycle Lane Issue: There was recent negative [publicity](#) about the new bicycle lane from Worthington to Carew Streets. WBS met with DPW engineering to discuss fixes. This situation illustrates the need for additional education of DPW staff about bicycle accommodation facilities.

**NEXT MEETING – Thursday, January 13 @ 6 PM.**

Granny’s Baking Table will be closed so we are seeking an alternative location for our in-person option, along with the continued virtual option.