

WalkBike Springfield April 8, 2021 Meeting Notes

Highland Rail Trail – We discussed what WBS should include in comments to BSC Group, the consultant for this conceptual design for the eastern section of the old Highland Rail. The presentation can be viewed at: <https://www.facebook.com/Springfielddpw/> . We are pleased that the scope is to go from Hickory St. to the MLK Charter School near the East Longmeadow boundary. Our major concern is the attempt to have bicyclists dismount and walk on the sidewalks and cross Sumner Ave. and again at Allen St./Island Pond, Cyclists just won't do this, so there needs to be an alternative that give cyclists and pedestrians a signal-controlled way to just cross the intersection directly. We discussed sponsoring a walk of the right-of-way, but we were concerned that it would be too over-grown. Instead, it was offered to create a drone video of the trail, which we could use to promote the trail.

St. James Ave./St. James Blvd/Carew Comments – WBS submitted comments of the proposed improvements to this intersection. The WBS letter is *attached*. The main concerns were that (1) the hearing was not interactive, (2) there has not been consolidation of driveways into the commercial establishments on the north side of St. James Ave. as there has been on the south side, (3) the project scope should not stop mid-block towards Ames St. on St. James Ave. Also, it should extend down Carew St. to opposite the fire station.

DPW Projects Update & Striping Policy– No update obtained by meeting time. Hearing about the “X” is rumored to be happening in the spring. Recent correspondence regarding the repaving of Lehigh St. has raised concern that the City has a blanket policy of not including a center lane on residential streets. However, a residential street such as Leigh is a major “cut through” would benefit from such striping. Also raised, was the concern that shoulder striping should indicate where parking is allowed, and not be painted such that allowable parking happens over the lines.

Connecticut River Connections – It was reported that the construction of the Connecticut River Walk is underway in Chicopee. There will be a walking path atop the levee and the paved bicycle path below the levee. <https://www.masslive.com/news/2020/12/construction-begins-on-2nd-chicopee-bike-path.html> The 2.5 mile trail will go from the Medina St. boat ramp to Nash Park.

Wheel Park – The Parks Department received three consultant bids. The consultants will be interviewed in the next couple of weeks. We all need to be suggesting additional possible locations other than Carew St. and Greenleaf Park (the later will be unacceptable.)

Safe Routes to School – A message from Patrick Higgins invited others to join a walk audit for the DeBerry School on Tuesday, April 19 at 9:30 am. (POSTPONED)

McKnight Neighborhood Crosswalk – The Council's current attention is on a marijuana store on Albany St. We will follow-up with the Council chair about the effort to get more crosswalks in the McKnight area. We discussed the need to involve SR2S with how students walk to the Van Sickle Middle School.

April 15, 5:30 PM: Panel about ADA: Zoom Meeting:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88464787050> Phone: 646-876-9923 Meeting ID: 884 6478 7050

NEXT MEETING (VIRTUAL): Thursday, May 13, 2021 @ 6 PM – MassBike Connecticut River Chair Kristen Sykes will be attending