

WALKBIKE SPRINGFIELD AUGUST 8, 2019 MEETING NOTES

I. Current Issues

A. Chicopee Bicycle Fatality: Two members described their participation in the Chicopee Police's crash reconstruction which the police are using to determine how fast the vehicle was traveling on Fuller St. when it hit the rear wheel of a 75-year old cyclist, who was killed. <https://www.masslive.com/news/2019/07/chicopee-bicyclist-dies-after-being-struck-by-car.html> (attached is an email and graphic about the reconstruction.)

We commend the Chicopee police for their follow-up to this fatality. Also noted is that plans are underway to improve Fuller St., including adding bicycle lanes.

B. Meeting with Timothy Sheehan: Betsy has arranged for representatives of WalkBike Springfield to meet with the City's new Chief Development Officer, Timothy Sheehan on Tuesday, August 27 at 4 PM. We hope to learn about his thoughts related to improving walking and bicycling, Complete Streets implementation, and how this can be part of his economic development agenda.

C. Central Library Crossing: In early August, the City Council's Maintenance and Development Subcommittee (Marcus Williams, Jesse Lederman, and Adam Gomez) requested a signalized crosswalk on State Street from the parking lot to the Central Library. DPW Director Cignoli responded with a 7 page memo detailing why this is not possible. The Councilors are having this response reviewed by engineer Chuck Marohn of Strong Towns (who was in Springfield when the child was killed nearly five years ago.) Jesse has also asked WalkBike Springfield, Way Finders, and Armoury Quadrangle Civic Association to advocate that something must be done to improve this dangerous situation. We will be drafting a letter that says that City needs to explore a variety of options (Sheila mentioned having library staff park in the Archdiocese's nearby under-utilized lots). The draft letter will be circulated for comment.

II. Mayoral & Council Questionnaire

Mayor Sarno submitted his responses today. Received responses from 3 Councilors: LaMar Cook and Jesse Lederman (at-large) and from Tim Ryan (Ward 6). Will send out press statement about the questionnaire and who responded. Encourage all to attend pre-election forums and ask some of the questions (attached). Aug. 20: Mason Sq. Library; Aug. 27: Rebecca Johnson School; Other???

III. Roadway Projects, Street Repavings & Complete Streets

The Mayor just received a letter dated Aug. 2 (attached) that Springfield will receive \$207,161 for 6 of the proposed projects. Betsy will determine what projects were not included and what are the other 6 remaining projects. Although Betsy thought the email from MassDOT Complete Streets director Eileen Gunn said that Springfield could apply again to update the Plan, upon more careful reading of her email, a community can only apply once for planning funds.

We discussed that Central Street reconstruction is starting, but now the City is claiming that there is only four feet for a shoulder and bicycle lanes will not be included. With Way Finders, we will schedule a meeting for the end of August with DPW to discuss how the City could ask for a "reasonable exception".

No further updates on other projects.

IV. Speeding Issues & Yard Signs

Lost six of the 30 signs, but they have now been relocated to East Springfield. In Todd's thank you to the Forest Park sign hosts he said: "Signs are printed in sheets of ten. Signs with stands cost about 10 dollars a piece. If you join up with 9 other neighbors you can order them from Sir Speedy downtown for approximately \$100. Ask Traci for a sheet of "Try 25 mph" signs."

The program was promoted at the July 25 meeting of neighborhood councils, where all the representatives indicated that speeding was a problem in their neighborhood. The East Springfield Neighborhood Council has had their own promotion about driving slower. We learned that their signs were a close-out discount from Lowe's.

It was confirmed that LiveWell Springfield is possibly interested in helping to move forward a Speed Management Plan.

No update on how to have some old posted 30 mph signs removed, as well as about getting better 25mph signs.

V. Ordinances n& Community Education

Still working on providing DPW with a model "downtown designation" sign and refining the material for the Good Neighbor Handbook. At the September meeting we will discuss outreach to the neighborhood councils and other avenues.

VI. Bicycling Education

No update. We are still reaching out to MassBike to learn the current status of the their curriculum.

VIII. WalkBike Springfield Structure/Outreach

Attendees felt that WalkBike Springfield was working fine without a more formal structure. It was agreed that a website would be good – We will set up a Weebly site. Also, a logo for use on business cards and a banner for use when tabling is needed. Don't want just the downtown skyline image to represent Springfield.

IX. Other

It was reported that Pat Sullivan asked for a nomination of someone to be the coordinator for the River Walk among all the entities involved (DPW, Parks, Water & Sewer, Army Corps, Capital Assets, Pioneer Valley Rowing Club, others?). She wants to nominate Peter Shumway and will draft a letter for WalkBike Springfield to send to the Mayor.

It was reported that she did correspond with Peter Shumway at DPW who is coordinating the McKnight Trail project and the contract has now been signed with Beta Engineering who has begun work.

NEXT Meeting: September 12 – place to be confirmed.