

WalkBike Springfield July 11, 2024 Meeting Notes

I. After a tour of [Nordica St. Community Farm](#) by our host Todd Crosset, we celebrated that WalkBike Springfield had started meeting NINE YEARS ago. During 2014 Pioneer Valley Planning Commission convened community representatives to develop a Complete Streets policy and plan. A year later the City had failed to adopt the Policy. The new WalkBike Springfield got passage of the policy.

II. Event Debrief & Future Planning

Bike Month – May 2025 – Todd recently did a 25-mile all-Springfield neighborhood bike ride. A version of this with various join/end points for different length rides should be offered. WBS hopes to again offer Bike Valet for the Pancake Breakfast and a Mural Ride in the greater Mason Square area. Other ideas?

Ironman – June 8, 2025 – Thanks to our 10+ member team who helped with the early morning swim support. Jim will submit the initial sign-up to volunteer in 2025

World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims – Sunday, November 17, 2024 – We discussed making blow-ups of some of the individuals who were killed. The construction of the State St. crossing should finally be underway at that time. *(To date in 2024, there have been 8 fatalities in Springfield, including 2 pedestrians (one on State St.) and 1 on “person on a personal conveyance.”)*

III. Roadway Project Updates

- Springfield Street Repaving – need to check out if any Complete St. treatment on Breckwood; City engineer does not learn of the repaving schedule much ahead because the contractor gets to control the schedule (cost savings).
- New mid-block crossing with pedestrian refuge islands and flex posts have been installed at Wilbraham Rd. & Norfolk St (to Adams Park) and Wilbraham Rd. & Waltham Ave (by AIC)
- Dwight St., including crossing to Train Station to start fall 2024
- “X” – request for construction bid must be out by Oct. 1, 2024, with construction in 2025-26.
- WBS asked City Engineer to determine how to stripe a single narrower vehicle lane along St. James Blvd. between the two St. James intersection projects that are underway. He is receptive to this.
- West Street – planned with applications for construction funding submitted.
- Highland Railtrail – issues with the design contractor and MassDOT. Discussions underway. Hope to apply for additional MassTrails funding in 2025.
- Safe Streets for All – awarded funding is WAY, WAY too little for the proposed 14 intersections and 9 roadway corridors. Still awaiting the schedule to the corridor projects. Need to consider advocacy to Rep. Neal and Sec. Transportation Buttigieg.

IV. Speed Limit Changes

WBS is trying to get clarification from the Traffic Commission and City Council as to the process for requesting and then getting approval of reducing posted speed limits related to the new State legislation which gives communities more flexibility.

Meanwhile, the Traffic Commission is being more receptive to requests for additional stop signs, especially creating 4-way stop intersections rather than agreeing to 25mph speed limits (which is the default limit!)

V. OTHER ITEMS

4' Passing Signs – still none seem to be installed in Springfield nor additional signs requested from MassDOT. Hector Velez is the point person.

Crosswalks. City Engineer is receptive to adding crosswalks, especially across the 2-lane arterials, which currently have next to NO painted crosswalks across these streets throughout the City: Worthington, St. James Blvd., Bay St. Wilbraham Rd., White St., Walnut St., Newbury St. Armory St. Bradley Rd. Plumtree, etc. etc. *WBS needs to come up with a list of priority crossings.*

A 2021 walk audit in the Old Hill neighborhood identified that there was no safe pedestrian crossing to Adams Park on Wilbraham Rd. This has led to a new protected crossing being constructed. *WBS needs to identify the other City parks that need such projects.*

Also, MassDOT has an initiative to improve crossings to bus stops -- [youtube](#) of a presentation about the program.

Sidewalk evaluation. DPW has a summer intern doing an assessment of all sidewalks in Springfield in order to more systematically prioritize repairs. Boston did such an assessment and then prioritized the repairs by overlaying with an “environmental justice” classification.

DPW Engineering Advisory Committee. Because efforts to get the City Council-passed Complete Streets Council formed is going nowhere, a request was made to City Engineer, Andrew Krar as to whether he would entertain having an advisory committee to meet regularly for information sharing regarding projects and safety initiatives. He is receptive to this. *Who? When? Now needs to be determined.*

More To Do:

- Meet with the new Police Superintendent Akers to discuss the department’s tendency for pedestrian victim blaming and possibility of a Vision Zero initiative.
- Follow-up with School Dept. (new Superintendent?) regarding the implementation of the 2nd grade Pedestrian Education Policy passed before COVID
- Follow-up with City Council members receptive to our issues: Mike Fenton? Jose Delgado? Zaida Govan?

VI. [Seeds of a Father](#)

Kevin Green described initiatives being undertaken by the Seeds of a Father. We discussed joint bicycle rides and walk audit possibilities. The youth could definitely help with identifying needed crosswalks.

Next WalkBike Springfield Meeting – August 9, 2024