

Massachusetts Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Notes
Wednesday, July 19, 2017, 1:00 – 3:00 PM
MassDOT District 2 HQ, Northampton

Welcome & Introductions: Pete Sutton, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM.

Members present: Tom DiPaolo, Richard Fries, Wendy Landman, Jeff McCollough, Joe Repole, Pete Sutton, **Members absent:** Rosalie Anders, Glen Berkowitz, Dan Driscoll, Kurt Gaertner, Philip Groth, Steve Heinrichs, Janie Katz-Christy, Rob Miceli, Steve Miller, Ben Wood **Guests present:** Daryl Amaral (MassDOT D2), Aleece D'Onofrio (Stantec), Wayne Feiden (City of Northampton), Beth Giannini (FRCOG), Josh Grzegorzewski (FHWA), Eileen Gunn (MassDOT), Laura Hanson (MassDOT D2), Nelson Hoffman (FHWA), Paul Jahnige (DCR), Angela Johnson (T4MA), Rich Masse (MassDOT D2), Kate Masztal (MassDOT D1), Rob Natario (MassDOT D2), Josh Ostroff (T4MA), Noah Parent (MassDOT D2), Rich Parr (MassINC), Nick Schmidt (Toole Design Group), **Guests participating by telephone:** Cameron Bain, Eammon Coughlin (Berkshire Regional Planning Council), Jackie DeWolfe, William Hanson (Framingham Bike/Ped), Tim Kochan (MassDOT D5), John McQueen, Halley Reeves (DPH), Jim Tozza (B2C)

Pedestrian Plan (Pete Sutton, MassDOT)

- In review now. Final rollout will occur during Moving Together
- Review final findings at September MABPAB meeting for final comments. One week before Moving Together.
- Wendy: Will we be able to review the plan sooner than one week before publishing?
 - Pete said yes. Modal plans will exist as online pages, not published documents. Can be updated more easily.
- Wendy: New MassDOT Snow Plan submitted to MEPA for review. Pedestrians and sidewalks aren't included. Need coordination with the Pedestrian Plan since snow is such a big portion.

Bicycle Plan (Pete Sutton, MassDOT; Nick Schmidt, Toole Design Group)

- Nearly 2,500 comments on the online map so far. Lots of great information. Pete summarized a few specific comments.
- Southampton update from Laura and Rich: No new information aside from a SRTS project.
- Nearly 1,500 completed online surveys.
- Most popular "I would bike there if..." statements related to maintenance and snow/ice.
- Completed half of the focus group interviews so far. Currently scheduling the remaining interviews. Residents with physical disabilities is the next interview, which is occurring in District 2 in Hadley.
 - Beth: noted that there are no interviews occurring in Franklin County region.
- Discussion of common and unique themes from interviews so far.
- Most people report enjoyment as why they ride, but when asked about the biggest reason why they do or do not ride, enjoyment almost always last.
- Modal gaps discussion:
 - Jeff: Amtrak Vermonter has added capacity to carry bikes, but it's limited. It's generally recreational but it's an interesting case study. There's need for this type of service.
 - Wendy: Important to include low-income communities when considering case studies. For example, there are typically bikes on the bus to Central Square from Watertown. Use this perspective to target investments.
 - Beth: Folks in Greenfield use bikes to get to bus stops, then they take the bus to the transit center, and then ride their bike to their destination. They often must park their bike at the bus stop because the bus racks are full. FRCOG did a study a few years ago to understand example commutes where the bike is an integral piece, typically with connections to transit. FRTA may track bikes on buses.
 - FHWA: This is great anecdotal information to illustrate that bikes and buses have a mutually beneficial relationship.
 - Wendy: in the Netherlands people often have bikes at both ends of the transit trip.
 - Suggestions: What about Bikeshare wayfinding at transit stations of all the docks nearby? Or how to know how to get around from transit stations? Some people don't know how to read maps.
 - FHWA: systems have maps that are apps

- Wendy: Her relative has given up on Hubway because none of the docks have bikes when she needs them. Bikeshare management needs to be acknowledged to address the lack of bikes.
- Richard: Does MassDOT have any say over bikeshare operations? No
- Wendy: Concerned about dockless bike share from pedestrian perspective. Blocking sidewalks. It's a big problem. There's no space.
- Beth: Bike parking is important even for rural/small town local buses.
- Wendy: Bike parking is important for local urban squares. Davis, Central, etc.
- Richard: If we're building all these paths we need to consider bike parking in tandem, for example Alewife.
- Case studies:
 - Suburban commuter rail
 - Two bus examples?
- Emerging trends:
 - Wendy: the decision making is context sensitive. Cited Longwood extremely limited parking. Need to make sure that the trends piece is presented in a way that has meaning. Meaning is different for different people, contexts (e.g., Longwood visitors, patients, staff, third shift staff, etc.). All decision-making framework is context sensitive.
- Paul:
 - Asked about clarification between paved shoulders and bike lanes. Mostly a rural/urban divide, though shoulders can be four feet minimum vs. bike lane five-foot minimum.

Northampton Complete Streets Initiatives (Wayne Feiden, Northampton)

- Summarized the history of traffic calming, pedestrian and bicycle facilities in Northampton.
 - Sidewalks built as part of development projects. Originally orphaned and not connected to anything, are now being connected in many examples.
 - 70% of the population within walking distance to shared use path. Reaching for 80%.
 - Still grappling with a comprehensive approach for speed humps. Everyone wants them. Hard to refocus the conversation on what's best instead of current citizen thinking that speed humps solve all problems. Also grappling with how to reclaim right of way to narrow the street. Making changes physically but hard to change citizens' minds.
 - Passed Complete Streets policy in 2005 and revised in 2008 as part of Comprehensive Plan. In 2015 made it an ordinance, which required them to water the policy down.
- Bike/ped plan completed in January 2017, will be incorporated into updated Comprehensive Plan soon.
 - Bike/ped plan came up with a list of specific projects first then drafted policies in response. This is backward from typical process.
 - Plan approved by Planning Board but is also undergoing approval by City Council.
- Pleasant Street project discussed.
 - Northampton took over elements of Pleasant Street from MassDOT to make it a city street.
 - Wanted to slow down travel speeds and make it safer to cross as a pedestrian and bicyclist. Used curb extensions and raised elements to send message to drivers to slow down.
 - A MassDOT roundabout helped establish a gateway to downtown.
 - Seeing a lot of private investment in the corridor. The project helped build momentum, and people like to invest with momentum.
 - Tested a 400' separated bike lane as part of the project.
- Main Street project:
 - Pedestrian counts highest on Main Street west of Route 128.
 - 6th highest crash cluster in the state.
 - Goal is to do road diet.
 - Did a full-day demonstration project that narrowed the street and added a buffered bike lane.
 - Have a temporary parklet that they move around throughout the year. Do before-and-after pedestrian counts to assess impact. Parks help encourage people to walk further for trips.
 - Going to bid later this summer for Main Street for engineering design.

- Created an urban, rural, and suburban Complete Streets Design Manual.

District 2 Bike/Pedestrian Projects (Laura Hanson, MassDOT)

- Four RPAs and 56 towns in District 2
- Northern Region (Montague, Greenfield):
 - Completed Montague City Road project which includes bike lanes, sidewalks, bus shelters, and crosswalks with rectangular rapid flashing beacons, median crossing islands
 - Completed rehabilitation of Hatcher Road and Greenfield Road Pedestrian Bridge. Has live railroad tracks below the bridge. Original bridge structurally unsound because of water table conditions. Used polystyrene blocks to solve the issue with the new bridge. Example of a previous vehicle road now 100% bike-ped access only.
 - Schell Bridge over the CT River. Project on TIP Year 2021 for \$18 million. Eight concepts developed. DCR will be owner of bridge.
 - Wisdom Way project will feature a 10' shared use path. Not on the TIP yet.
- Southern Region:
 - Barre Town Common Improvements includes new bike lanes, sidewalks, and curb extensions. New green space resulting from pavement reduction.
 - Northampton Mass Central Railroad underpass under construction now. Connects two regional shared use paths. Due to be completed in October 2017. Tunnel had to be built in two phases so that track could be open at all times. Secretary Pollack visited in June.
 - Springfield North End Pedestrian Path listed on the 2018 TIP. Will be 12' shared use path. Will close the track for 5 days to save project time and costs.
 - Agawam/West Springfield Route 147 over Westfield River will include a separated bike path. Will include new crosswalks and sidewalks
 - Southampton Safe Routes to School project on Pomeroy Meadows Road is under construction now. Will include 10' shared use path for 0.5 miles. Includes rectangular rapid flashing beacons at 2 crossings.
 - Westfield Route 20 Access Improvements will add 10' shared use path on the north side and sidewalk on the south side.
- Events:
 - River Roll & Stroll shut down the Route 116 bridge for four hours for bike and pedestrian access.
 - Lots of sponsors and attendance. Successful event!
 - Demonstration separated bike lane provided through the MA Bike Plan outreach. Included two activity boards for the public.

Open Discussion

- Jeff: Did Northampton DPW have any struggles to coordinate with MassDOT for Complete Streets funding?
 - Wayne: Nope, very easy
- Richard: Any plans to go south and connect into CT trails?
 - Jeff: There are projects underway for towns in south of District 2.
 - Pete: Section of Columbia Greenway already open and does connect with CT system.
- Josh: Any rail with trail projects in the region?
 - Pete: there is one example already in Northampton.
 - Wayne: MassDOT is extending a path now and Northampton is in discussion with how close can path be to the railroads.
- Wendy: WalkBoston is doing a lot of walking workshops in hill towns. There is a lot of action in District 2 small town centers. Mass Department of Public Health is very successful at getting word out about benefits, and offering technical assistance funds.

Adjournment: Pete Sutton adjourned the meeting at 3:00 PM.