

Joint Bike/Ped/Transit Committee meeting
6/9/21
Notes

Attendance

Bicycle Committee: Ruthann Rudel, Randy Stern, Mark Boswell, Alison Harris, Gloria Huangpu, Amy Flax

Pedestrian Committee: Jenny Turner-Trauring, Magda McCormick, Debby Galef, Wade Smith, Elka Kuhlman, Sandy Goldberg, Robin Bonner

Transit Advisory Committee: Saul Tannenbaum, Arthur Strang, Matthew Coogan, Bill McAvinney, Jackie Jones

Staff: Greg Hanafin (CDD), Andy Reker (CDD), Cara Seiderman (CDD)

Alewife Park Project Team: Chris Haynes (Gensler), Anthony Galluccio (Galluccio and Watson), Chrissy Gabriel (IQHQ), Howard Moshier (VHB), Sean Manning (VHB)

Walden Square II Project Team: Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies), Jocelyn Gambone (VHB), Erik Bednarek (VHB), Jim Rafferty (Adams & Rafferty)

Public: George Schneeloch, Shana Wickett, McNamara Buck, Joel Nogic, James Williamson, Justin Weintraub, Sayeda Nakiba Minihan, Ashley Martin, Stephanie Hsu, Mohamed Abdullahi, Mohamed, John Trever, Mahamed Mohamud, Suzanna Schell, Christine Schueller, Michael Brandon, Eric Grunebaum, Eitan Normand, Karen Cushing, Kristen Cahill, Larry Parnell, Katherine Beaty

Agenda Review, Zoom Protocol, Minutes

- May Bicycle Committee minutes approved

Alewife Park

- Presentation
 - Chris Haynes (Gensler)
 - Described existing site and collection of existing buildings/road/lots
 - Building currently acts as barrier to the neighborhood on Whittemore Ave and Harvey St
 - Proposed site plan opens access to Whittemore at 3 points, plus Harvey St (bike and ped only) and Linear Path to Whittemore Ave.
 - New proposed bike path from Minuteman to Linear Path, makes left at MBTA head house, avoids Russell Field, goes in front of new parking garage
 - Pedestrian path along east side of Jerry's Pond on boardwalks. Hoped to relocate some ped traffic to this path, so Linear bike path is less congested
 - Widen path along Alewife Pkwy to make a multi modal path from 6' to 12'
 - Sean Manning (VHB)
 - Vehicle Access from Alewife Station underpass or Whittemore
 - Bike/Ped through path will be shared with maintenance and emergency vehicles
 - Want to encourage bike access
 - Not adding new parking. Will have existing number of spaces, moved from surface lot to a garage
 - Chris Haynes
 - Natural areas

- Also will add a community garden at the corner near Russell Field, opens visibility for the turn towards Alewife Station in the multi-use path.
 - Seating areas and overlooks along pedestrian boardwalk on the East of the pond
 - Eco center at south west of the pond for the community. Also, preserves existing large oak trees
 - Anthony Galluccio (Galluccio and Watson)
 - Rindge Ave. Friends of Jerry's Pond had many ideas for this area that were incorporated. Will add a boardwalk in the area near the water. Also info placards with historic information.
- Committee Discussion
 - Headhouse improvements (doors, paving, mural, plantings, lighting). Who determined those? users/ MBTA? Glad to see historical markers.
 - A - Not decided on head house yet. Will get input from MBTA and users. But want to make it much nicer. Maybe separate bikes and peds more in front of head house.
 - Parking garage. How to mitigate conflict with bikes?
 - A - Parking entry on south of garage, Will move entry as far east as possible so cars don't block the path going in/out
 - How will this be managed?
 - A - May have to have time limits for access to Jerry's Pond for safety, and maintained by IQHQ.
 - Boardwalk around pond - accessible in winter? Snow removal.
 - A - Will be maintained just like the plaza, open all season. There could be exceptions in very bad weather.
 - Can you separate bikes from peds on Rindge Ave? A - Curb to curb 27 ft. Need to work with city on that. [*there is not room*]
- Public Comment
 - Timeline for project.
 - A - Improvements will be articulated in a special permit. Need DCR, City, Conservation Commission permits. Full build out of buildings campus, Q1 2024. But pond improvements, plaza could be done sooner. Needs many approvals.
 - I love what you are doing. Along Alewife Brook Pkwy, maybe better to put bike path near road and weave ped path through trees.
 - A - Thanks you, more to come
 - Alewife Working Group appreciates that IQHQ has been listening so far. Still think a west bound bike lane could be built on Rindge Ave. Cambridge Bicycle Safety would also like to see this. Would also like a raised ped crosswalk.
 - Intersection of Rindge and Alewife dangerous to cross, needs some work. Rindge Ave and entrance to parking lot needs bus entrance/ exit shelter moved to make entrance to Jerry's Pond. Desire to separate bikes and peds more on East-West section of path.
 - A - Will adjust curb line near parking lot on Rindge Ave.
 - Friends of Jerry's Pond appreciates committees looking into this. Also would like boards walk for peds near Alewife, bike closer to parkway. Cambridge Bicycle Safety recommendations are good.
- Q&A
 - McNamara Buck: I wonder if the historic placards will mention the historic native american use of the land also.
 - Anthony Galluccio: absolutely!

- McNamara Buck: Have all the recommendations of the Bicycle Safety group been incorporated?
 - Anthony Galluccio: will confirm that!
- Eitan Normand: have you considered some kind of development around the MBTA headhouse? restaurants? cafes? light commercial development. something that will create activities and circulation of people naturally.
 - Anthony Galluccio: limited space and not sure what survives there. We do have retail onsite which we can make sure serves the community. Will raise with MBTA
- Suzanna Schell: I know that Rindge is narrow and that is a challenge. I hope IQHQ and the City can work together to make a wider bike and ped access along Rindge. I also hope that the Cambridge Bicycle Safety recommendations around the site can be implemented.
 - Anthony Galluccio: noted. love to. Need some creative thinking and DPW support. May not be the "perfect " lay out but want to

Walden Square II

- Presentation
 - Matt Robayna, Winn Development
 - Project - Have owned affordable housing property for 20 years, plan to make improvements, improve bike and ped circulation, greenspace, construct 103 new units of affordable housing, 7 stories, under AHO, on existing parking lot.
 - Underpass will connect to a new portal into Walden Sq
 - Underpass connection to Raymond St will be expanded from 5 ft to 14 ft to make it easier to get to Raymond
 - Extend 10 ft wide path to the west to Sherman St.
 - Bike parking as required by zoning [*NB: AHO requirements less than regular zoning*]. Short term near Raymond St, long term within campus
 - Proposed 19-dock Bluebike station near Raymond St
- Committee Discussion
 - As a heavy bicycle user of Raymond to Yerkes underpass and to Sherman, intersection of Raymond and Richdale is hard to turn on. Happy to see a Bluebikes station added. Speed bumps on interior route are good, please keep them! How many trees are being removed?
 - A - Working on entranceway from Raymond to make it a nice entrance for peds and cyclists. Concentrates cyclist access to Raymond St. Expect that most cyclists will not cut through the campus and use the building underpass. 21 new parking spaces, not a lot of more vehicle traffic expected. [*No numerical response to tree question*]
 - Quality of living improvements to housing units?
 - A - Ongoing improvements every year.
 - Enhancing the flow?
 - A - relocated playground and enhanced plaza area
 - Glad that flow is being improved. Will underpass be out of commission during construction? Lighting for underpass will be important.
 - A - will not be closed during construction. Path will be maintained in some way. Pedestrian flow under the building clearly needs safety features which we will plan to install.
 - 10ft path to west of underpass. Does that go all the way to Sherman St?

- A - no, its 10 ft for about ½ the length then narrows to 7 ft. It's expected that cyclists would take a left and merge with parking lots and cars to get to Sherman St.
 - Needs more thought to improve flow for cyclists in this area. 7ft path inadequate for 2-way cycling.
 - Safety at night is important.
 - A - Will be putting in more lighting, and have some openings for visibility from parking to path.
- Public Comment
 - Gateway from Yerkes has city property. Propose to put part of the 14 ft path on city land, with smoother arc from underpass to Raymond St
 - Don't like the current Walden 1. Here, what will be done to mitigate air quality and noise in units above an underbuilding vehicle lane?
 - A - area is sufficiently open to not require special ventilation in the space. Will have insulation and concrete that should limit sound transmission to units
- Q&A
 - James Williamson: Campus??
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): Yes, there are multiple building currently on the land
 - James Williamson: Military?
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): WinnCompanies manages over 100,000 units of housing, including affordable, mixed income, market rate, and privatized military housing
 - Eric Grunebaum: Will you continue allowing people to drive through the site from Raymond St. to Sherman St. as we can today?
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): Yes, we currently plan to continue to allow pass through traffic through Walden Square as currently exists today.
 - Karen Cushing: Walden Square currently provides 0.78 parking spaces per unit, which is fully utilized. The proposed expansion provides 0.2 spaces per unit, which is 60 fewer spaces than needed. Can you guarantee that the new residents will not have to use Raymond Street and Richdale Ave. for the parking that should have been provided on site?
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): We cannot guarantee that.
 - Eric Grunebaum: There's enough space for cars and bikes! I use both and also live in the neighborhood. There's no need to discourage cars from passing through the site.
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): Thanks for your thoughts!
 - Stephanie Hsu: I think Matt just said 21 additional parking spots for the 100+ units. Doesn't seem reasonable, most likely there will be many more than just 21 additional cars. Will there be lighted signs (i.e. flashing yellow lights) that pedestrians can activate when they need to cross under the building? Also, I currently use the sidewalk to the south side of the new proposed building which is nice because it's pedestrian only. For the proposed bike and pedestrian path, will there be anything that delineates between bike paths and pedestrian paths?
 - Matthew Robayna (WinnCompanies): Yes, 21 new spaces. We will look into your comments regarding lighted signs and markings on the sidewalks.

Announcements

- MBTA restored ferry services
- MBTA restored Fitchburg line weekend service
- Bus route 68 is restored, route 72 will NOT be restored
- MBTA public meeting tomorrow to review restorations

Upcoming meetings

- MXD substation proposed bike valet
- Ped committee walk of Alewife Park area Thursday 6/24 at 6:00
- Bike committee meeting July 14 - maybe a ride?