

Pedestrian Committee Draft Notes

3-26-15

Present: Rose Billeci, Victoria Farr, Debby Galef, Magda McCormick, Carrie Jung, Sam Stern, Andrea Yoder, Elizabeth Bierer, Helen Rose, Cara Seiderman (CDD), Matt Nelson (CPD).
Guest: Lt. Rick Riley (CPD).

I Introductions

- Started with intros – 2 out of 4 new members in attendance (Sam Stern & Carrienne Jung)
- New 2 year terms – April 1, 2015 – 2017
 - A few people had left either moved out of town, or gotten new jobs and were no longer available...

II Discussion With Police (6:18 start)

- Office Riley – Runs traffic unit, works closely with Cara – share common goals
 - Traffic dept: 14 officers, accident investigators as well
 - 5 days a week schedule (work long day shifts Monday-Friday), corresponds to busiest times in the city on the streets...
 - Does dignitary work as well – mentioned pres in town on Monday, for example
 - The 14 traffic officers write 50% of traffic citations (against 283 total police force)
 - Increasingly, their activity is guided by public feedback – looking for hotspots. He feels good about the fact that they're more aligned to where people are complaining, or where data pushes them to go, rather than just driving around randomly...
- Data! Presentation! PPT #1 – Accident data
 - Accidents in city 2009-2014
 - Accidents peaked in 2011, then declined through 2014
 - 5 fatal accidents altogether since 2009, 1 so far in 2015, a cyclist (it's been in the news), but he declined to talk about it b/c it's an ongoing investigation
 - Pedestrian-specific accidents show a shallower downward trend than the overall accident trendline.
 - Assumption that many pedestrian accidents go unreported, but lack of data meant he was unwilling to give an estimate
 - Challenge w/r/t ascertaining pedestrian accident crash *rates* is they don't have pedestrian counts like they do for bikes and cars (seems like a great task for the pedestrian committee to figure out at some point)
 - 5 accident hotspots – Porter, Harvard, Central, Inman & Lechmere...Where cars, peds & cyclists come into conflict
 - [Asked about ped vs. cyclists crash data to try to understand if some areas are worse for different types of users → Believe they said jeff could break it out for us?]
- Data! Presentation! PPT #2 – Ticketing data

- Failure to yield to pedestrians citations spiked from 2013 – 204 to enforcement increase (they got funding to do more of this work)
 - Doesn't include bike citations – the reason? They don't separate out bike citations, so all cyclists get the same citation, no matter if they ran a red, failed to yield to a pedestrian, went wrong way on a one way, etc.
- Improper turns and failure to yield (to other cars) also increased
- Stop light / stop sign violations is biggest citation category by far (~7k last year)
- Marked lane violations (includes bike lanes) also increased
- Ped/Bike Safety Grant Discussion
 - Allows us to devote more time on traffic safety – grant for Peds
 - MAPC grant for bike safety
 - Inman square study was first use of grant \$\$\$ last year
 - Challenge in Cambridge around transient population – which are actually 2 populations, college students as short-term residents, and then daily through commuters to jobs into Boston...
 - Concern that neither population as knowledgeable or sensitive to rules of road in the city
 - Debby: “Could we publish any of that MAPC data? Love to see the responses from the interviews with scofflaw peds”
 - Riley: “not sure, need to check with MAPC”
 - Cara: “Nudging them to share something”
 - Traffic study of 4 dangerous intersections
 - 1) Inman
 - 2) Mass & Upland
 - 3) Cardinal Medeiros & Cambridge
 - 4) Cardinal Medeiros & “Little” Binney
 - Elizabeth Bierer (feedback to Riley): “The more tickets the better” – running of redlights, example of Mass Ave. near law school given...
 - Cars swinging around left turn car, illegally in bike lane or parking lane (some of us didn't know this was illegal, which speaks to the education/knowledge issue)
 - Riley: “Officers struggle with safe spots to pull people over” – implying that shifting of street right of way from cars to bikes/peds was an issue in this case
 - Sam: “any info sharing from police to feed traffic/ticket hotspots back to other departments who could change signal timing or redesign streets/intersections to make them safer?”
 - Cara: “Yes, there's a joint meeting where we share this data”
 - (missed who asked): “What about traffic issues on weekends?”
 - Riley: “Regular police will respond when traffic unit is off. And our department is highly responsive to these types of calls.”
 - Balance of their work has shifted, much more proactive, preventative (cited work w/ homeless, etc.)
 - Jeff Parenti (TP&T) analyzes much of the traffic data.
 - Discussed dangers of texting – or any phone activity – while driving at the end
 - Good news is texting is eligible as primary offense to pull someone over for...

IV Committee Activities (7:25)

- Victoria: Leadership for the June walk
- Reviewed last year's June walk – Tatte on Third Street, then through Kendall – local businesses like Clover and Catalyst took great care of the walkers...Jennifer Lawrence does a lot of the outreach activities for sustainability
- This year's walk: weekend of June 20-21 – Victoria to send out an email making the announcement. She had proposed Inman square, and discussed next steps to make that happen...
- BUT: Proposal to switch it to Northpoint instead to introduce people to a new, undiscovered part of the city.
 - EF Education may be able to host something (Cara will check)
- Group decided: **Northpoint it is**
- Suggested that we get Renata von Tscherner from Charles River Conservancy to talk about the skate park
 - Action item: Magda to contact Renata
 - Action item: Cara to contact EF Edu
 - Action item: Debby offered to do the history of the site
- Could we get one of the developers over there to host something?

III Updates (7:48)

- DPW – cranking construction projects back up in April
- Pearl Street reconstruction moves forward without a decision on the design of the street (parking preservation vs. better cycling/pedestrian facilities). Supposedly, neighborhood is divided, though more letters/input was received altogether supporting the “complete streets” option.
- Victoria: ECKOS – East Cambridge And Kendall Open Space Committee – she's on that committee too
 - Formed as a recommendation from the K2C2 planning study to look at getting more, and better green space in and around Kendall square
 - Did an open space competition – solicited proposals from private firms for 4 parcels:
 - 1) Rogers Street park
 - 2) “Porkchop” (Binney/Galileo)
 - 3) Point Park (Broadway/Main/Third)
 - 4) Land Blvd/Binney
 - Committee made a decision, not yet announced
- Reminder to vote on how to spend the \$500k – Participatory Budgeting Process

V Next Meeting – April 23

- Cara can't be there – a few others likely to miss as it's school vacay week
- DPW coming to present five year plan