

**Cambridge Pedestrian Committee**  
**November 19, 2020**  
**Minutes**

**Attendance**

Committee Members: Sean Peirce, Robin Bonner, Helen Rose, Jenny Turner-Trauring, Olivia Turner, Erik Tillman, Erica Seidel, Elka Kuhlman, Sandy Goldberg, Angie Meltsner, Wade Smith, Debby Galef, Pam McLemore, Theresa Tobin, Magda McCormick

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

Public: Michael Kennedy, Michael Brandon, Phyllis Pownall

October's minutes were approved.

It was decided that the December meeting will be held on the third Thursday, the 17th. This will not be our traditional December potluck with the two other committees. Maybe we can do that once things return to normal.

There are a few upcoming projects for review:

Cambridgeside

New MIT dorm on Lower Vassar

New MIT building on Upper Vassar St.

New Tobin/Vassal Lane Upper School project

Construction updates:

Cambridge/Watertown Greenway multiuse path will be paved soon and finished in the spring.

**Volpe discussion (follow up from presentation on 11/18 at TriCommittee meeting)**

- Reconstruction of Binney St. in progress, already designed
- Concern that development site won't connect well to surroundings, leading to dead area after dark - not beneficial for an arts venue
- Concern that shared streets will still have too many cars - should be solely for peds and bikes – or perhaps one-way would reduce vehicle traffic if necessary - or could be timed or seasonal differences
- long time frame is concerning - what can come soon? - maybe Planning Board can help with this
- Part of the deal with the federal government was to guarantee Volpe's current number of parking spots in the new development, leading to lots of parking spaces - large vehicles with large pieces of equipment will need to have access to the new Volpe building, so at least one wide street is necessary
- Ride Hail (Uber and Lyft) provide useful services so we need to make sure they have a location for pick up and drop off
- Planning Board will make final decision regarding private streets and City public ones
- There will be a zoning discussion sometime over the winter
- People who live in this area are often not those who work there - equity issue as to which businesses should be encouraged to open - if we have suggestions we should share them
- Drug store would be very useful, especially if it contained an urgent care clinic

- There's a new, small upscale grocery store on Main St. (Brothers) - maybe a full-fledged supermarket?
- More residential units are coming to area - Boston Properties will have new building to west of Volpe

Review of guidance list of questions for developments from standpoint of peds and cyclists - maybe transit needs to be added for future reviews

### **2072 Mass. Ave. discussion**

- Committee reviewed at the request of a neighborhood resident
- Plans call for 8-story 49 unit 100% affordable housing structure on lot that currently contains small one story building and parking
- Project is funded by grants and city affordable housing funds
- Needs BZA Comprehensive permit, Dec. 10 hearing - Planning Board to review on Dec. 1
- Lot is adjacent to the North Cambridge Senior Center
- No car parking provided other than 3 handicapped spaces and temporary spots but there will be bicycle parking - estimated that approximately half of residents will own cars
- Walden St. will be reconstructed and widened slightly in this area, as will the sidewalk
- Design of Mass/Walden corner where building is pulled back and there is glass is good, as sight lines can be problematic there.
- Note that there are few crosswalks across Walden heading away from Mass. Ave. (issue with sight lines due to bridge over RR tracks creating a rise in the roadway)
- There's no crosswalk across Mass. Ave. from that side of Walden - adding one would require major changes and will have to await north Mass. Ave. reconstruction
- Opportunity for pickup/drop off should be on Mass. Ave. - if not, concern there will be parking in nearby bus stop

Michael Brandon, North Cambridge resident and member of the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee gave his views

- We need to look at safety issues at this intersection
- Feels there has been inadequate outreach to community and hopes the project will be delayed

Committee did not choose to make official comments. Noted was that this was a City supported affordable housing project and there is a deadline to ensure the grant funding.

### **Subcommittees**

- Bike committee has an outreach subcommittee which could be joint with the Ped. Comm. - they've been discussing equity and inclusion
- Could also be joint data collection subcommittee

Intersections subcommittee: Erica reported on observations along north Mass. Ave. at Dover and Hollis - signals need to be changed - Sean talked to Dana some time ago about this location

if we have a list of problem intersections this can be put on a future agenda

Elka - Raymond/Walden intersection feels dangerous; concern because of all the kids crossing to the park