

Pedestrian Committee
October 28, 2021 6-8 pm
Held via Zoom webinar
DRAFT Notes

Attendees:

- City staff: Cara Seiderman (CDD), Evan Killion (CDD), Brian McLane (DPW), Dana Benjamin (TPT)
- Committee members: Debby Galef, Sandy Goldberg, Robin Bonner, Jeannine Powers (Harvard), Jenny Turner-Trauring, Sean Peirce (note-taker)
- Public: Arnav Murulidhar, Emily Gruber, Naomi Bolotin

Notes:

- Introductions and review of meeting protocols
- Minutes from September meeting were approved
- Brian McLane (DPW) presented information on snow clearance operations. See attached slides. Other notes:
 - Rule of thumb for clearing your sidewalk: use 1 cup of salt per 4 sidewalk panels. Pre-treating before snow falls and removing the first layer of snow will usually make subsequent shoveling easier.
 - Sand is not recommended as it clogs drains and sometimes makes traction worse. City does not use it.
- Discussion / Q and A with Brian:
 - SeeClickFix can be used to report unshoveled sidewalks. Many neighborhoods have repeat offenders.
 - Q: Has DPW reached out to citizens to educate them about best practices for shoveling and snow removal? Public salt barrels could be a location to post information, or QR code that links to info. A: Yes, as part of projects with new sidewalks -- have flyers for residents about better and worse de-icing chemicals to use on different sidewalk materials. More could be done, and the salt barrel idea is a good one.
 - Can make own brine: 2.28 pounds of salt per gallon of warm water.
 - Q: What are the pros and cons of the different smaller vehicles for sidewalk and bike lane snow removal? A: They vary in torque / pushing power and the types of attachments (e.g. plow vs. brush vs. snowblower) and ability to spread salt. Bobcats are good for clearing down to bare pavement. Some imported vehicles have issues with repairs and spare part availability.
 - Q: Any ability to improve enforcement of payment of fines for unshoveled sidewalks, e.g. not renewing any relevant licenses or permits? A: City looking into options.

- Other DPW Updates
 - Street construction season ending soon. Depends on weather but most projects will be wrapping up within next 1-2 weeks.
 - Many new parks have been opened. November 13 is opening date for universal playground on Field St.
 - Galileo Galilei Way near Fulkerson Street -- remainder of project will be opening soon. Street has been calmed, with wider sidewalks and landscaping. Nearby park will go into construction next year.

- TP&T update from Dana Benjamin
 - Safety Improvement Project on Mass. Ave. from Dudley Street to Alewife Brook Parkway.
 - Quick-build project that is all within existing ROW, mostly using paint and posts. Adds separated bike lanes and dedicated bus lanes.
 - Faster, more reliable bus trips on Mass. Ave. and safer bike trips. Similar to the existing bus-only lane in Arlington.
 - New traffic pattern and signal timing at Mass/Harvey/Cedar.
 - *Committee voted (by virtual show of hands) to support this project. Sean will write a short email to the project manager, expressing our support.*
 - South Mass Ave from Douglas St. to Memorial Drive:
 - Would better connect existing bus-only lanes
 - Project details are available online
 - Q: Is project being delayed due to technical issue with paving? A: Can check on this.

- Public comment -- none received

- Other updates
 - Smaller construction projects moving ahead -- details online
 - Public meetings in November for bike/ped safety improvements on Mass. Ave.
 - Also meetings in November for urban design concepts for Cambridge Street; may invite project team to present to committee

- Committee Updates
 - Next meeting November 18 (note this is the third Thursday, not the fourth)
 - Planning on an orientation event for new and existing members
 - Past tradition has been to have the December meeting be a more casual potluck multi-committee meeting (with Bicycle and Transit). This would be difficult to do via webinar and weather is likely too cold for outdoors. Committee recommended waiting until spring.