

Pedestrian Committee Meeting
February 25, 2021
Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members: Robin Bonner, Debby Galef, Sandy Goldberg, Elka Kuhlman, Magda McCormick, Pam McLemore, Angie Meltsner, Sean Peirce, Helen Rose, Wade Smith, Erica Seidel, Erik Tillman, Jenny Turner-Trauring
Staff: Greg Hanafin (CDD), Cara Seiderman (CDD), Dana Benjamin (TP&T), Brian McLane (DPW), Daniel Wolf (CDD)

Minutes of January 2021 Pedestrian Committee meeting approved

Palmer Street

Daniel Wolf presented a project to enhance Palmer Street, a shared street in Harvard Square. The budget for improvements is \$70,000 from the Harvard Square Improvement Fund. Currently staff is gathering feedback to inform the design process. Current positives/amenities: it is a flexible space (can host movie nights, festivals, street vending) and has seating blocks, light sculptures, and an interactive photo-op mural. Current downsides/challenges include a dull color pallet, few active facades, limited sunlight, and dual use as a delivery zone. Some options for enhancements are tables & chairs, programming, aesthetic enhancements, interactive opportunities. Constraints include delivery vehicle hours, the need to coordinate programs, abutter approvals, upcoming building construction. Committee members were generally in favor of adding color and lights; interactive light displays; possibly plants; tables & chairs; programming such as a farmers market, fix-it clinics, public piano; stationary bicycle-generated light display; a trompe l'oeil. Updates to the project will be posted at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Parks/palmerstreetactivation>.

Department Updates

TP&T: As part of the Cycling Safety Ordinance, planning for the installation of a quick-build separated bike lane along mid-Mass Avenue from Trowbridge Street to Inman Street is underway. Project will involve removing some parking and possibly relocating a bus stop that is currently in front of City Hall. Project details and a provision to provide feedback are at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/trafficparkingandtransportation/midmassavesafetyimprovementproject>.

DPW: With winter ending, construction season is beginning. Huron Avenue from Concord Avenue to Raymond Street will be completed this year; Huron Avenue from Alewife Brook Parkway to 700 Huron Avenue is in the design & community-input phase; Highland Street-Brewster Street-Riedesel Avenue project will be completed this year. A project on Gore Street will begin. Inman Square project will continue. Playgrounds & play spaces under construction include a rebuild of ball fields and playgrounds at Glacken Field and a new Universal Design playground on Field Street. Franklin Street will begin construction. Construction at former Out-of-Town News will begin. Pedestrian Committee members are encouraged to report any needed sidewalk repairs (using [CommonwealthConnect/SeeClickFix](#) is the most efficient).

Development Project Updates

[Ragon Institute](#): New construction for an infectious disease research institute is proposed for 600–624 Main Street (across from Tech Square).

[Volpe Redevelopment](#): Project details were presented to the Pedestrian Committee in the fall. Final materials in support of a request for a special permit have been posted.

[Alewife Quadrangle Northwest Zoning Overlay](#): The committee agreed to send a letter to the city council expressing general support for a pedestrian bridge between the Alewife Triangle and Alewife Quadrangle.

Committee Business

Elections for committee officers were postponed until the March meeting.

Committee members are invited to send to Greg a brief description of their favorite walk in Cambridge for possible publication in an upcoming online city magazine. Photos to accompany the description are also welcome.

Upcoming meeting dates

March 17 (Wed.): Joint Meeting (Pedestrian, Bike, Transportation) 5:30–7:30 pm. Will plan to cover: Ragon Institute, Volpe, and Huron Avenue projects.

March 25 (Thurs.): Pedestrian Committee Meeting 6:00–8:00 pm. Focus will be transportation data.

April 21 (Wed.) Join Meeting (Pedestrian, Bike, Transportation) 5:30–7:30 pm. Tentative agenda: 5-year Sidewalk and Street Plan and mid-Mass Avenue project.

April 29 (Thurs.): Pedestrian Committee Meeting 6:00–8:00 pm. Focus will be Lighting.

Minutes submitted by Robin Bonner.