

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of April 11, 2012 Meeting
Public Services Administration Building
Needham, MA
DRAFT

IN ATTENDANCE

TMAC Members: Thomas Stokes, Lt. John Kraemer, Jeffrey MacMann, Tony DelGaizo
Robert Wilson, Glen Schneider, Robert Meltzer, Richard Merson,

Guests: Gary Levine, Michael Mathias, Peter Zheutlin, Joeray Drewitz, Deborah Vlock, Paul Hunt, Dan Valero, Margaret Dozark, Rick Mullen

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was convened at 7:05 PM by Mr. Stokes

I. NEEDHAM BIKES PRESENTATION

Gary Levine of Needham Bikes opened the meeting with a brief presentation that summarized: 1) a history of the advocacy organization and master bike plan for Needham; 2) the phased in implementation of Needham Bikeway Network; and 3) the proposed plans for placement of “sharrows” on Webster Street. The presentation was followed by an open discussion with community attendants. A variety of opinions were voiced including:

- Traffic volume and the number of intersections on Webster Street make it an inherently dangerous road for bicycle riders.
- Sharrows might serve to encourage ridership on Webster Street when it may be wiser to discourage it.
- Signage and markings do not alter cyclists’ routes and riding patterns. As such, aim must be to make riding as safe as possible.
- Sharrows may inadvertently send a message that implies a degree of riding safety that may not be warranted.
- Sharrows may be more noticeable than one more sign among an over-abundance of signs.
- Sharrows will “validate” the presence of bikes and help to promote a mutual awareness of both cyclists and motorists.

The discussion was intertwined with an update on the three phase reconstruction of Webster St. where several additional observations and opinions were offered including: 1) the Town of Needham missed the opportunity to incorporate more formal bike lanes during the reconstruction; 2) line striping is considerably more effective, safe and desirable than the sharrows; 3) residents living in the phase two section of Webster Street expressed strong opposition to the use of striping; 4) in addition to creating dedicated bike space, line striping also serves as a speed deterrent; and 5) the “complete streets” concept is continuing to gain traction in Needham and must be able to accommodate bicycle traffic. The **Committee passed a motion** to first have the Public Works Department review and approve the proposed plan for Phase III of Webster Street which calls for line striping on both sides. Subsequently, the DPW will use this as

an opportunity to re-open the discussions of line striping on the Phase II section of Webster Street since it could be most efficiently done at one time.

II. INTERSECTION/CORNER OF CENTRAL AND CEDAR

Using a diagram and a series of police reports, Ms. Vlock summarized a series of accidents on Central Avenue at the corner of Cedar (in front of her house at 209 Central). They are concerned for their property and safety as three cars have already end up in their front yard after failing to navigate the slight curve on Central. Lt. Kramer cited accident statistics since 2006 to support the observation that this is a problematic intersection. **The Committee passed a motion** to install a reflective guard rail at the back edge of the sidewalk on the affected stretches of Central and (as needed) Cedar Street.

III. OTHER BUSINESS.

The Committee passed several additional motions:

- Cancel the May TMAC meeting due to conflict with the Town Meeting
- Approve the minutes of the March 14, 2012 meeting
- Table two April agenda items to a subsequent meeting when complainants are present

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM.

Minutes compiled and summarized by Glen Schneider