



# City of Cambridge

43.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 17, 1997

- COUNCILLOR DAVIS
- MAYOR RUSSELL
- VICE MAYOR BORN
- COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
- COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
- COUNCILLOR REEVES
- COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
- COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
- COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to implement a plan to register bicycle couriers in the wake of the accident that seriously injured **William Spring**, a Federal Reserve Bank Vice President and a member of the Boston School Committee, while he was crossing the street; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Council go on record extending its best wishes for a speedy recovery to Mr. Spring on behalf of the entire City Council.

In City Council November 17, 1997.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk

ref to # 43

THE BOSTON GLOBE • FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1997

# Chamber urges firms to use licensed bike couriers only

By Zachary R. Dowdy  
GLOBE STAFF

The Boston Chamber of Commerce yesterday urged all firms to employ only licensed bicycle couriers who follow rules and regulations, and the Police Department announced the imposition of high fines for a courier who struck a pedestrian and left him in a coma two weeks ago.

Paul Guzzi, president and chief executive officer of the 1,600-member chamber, said, "The reason for taking this action was to say to our members that at minimum, we should make sure companies we do business with are complying with current ordinances."

The unanimous decision by the chamber's executive board was the most recent development in a burgeoning campaign to better regulate the bicycle couriers. The attempts at a crackdown were spurred by an accident involving William Spring, 62, a School Committee member and vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, who was struck by a bicycle courier as he walked in a crosswalk on Oct. 30. Spring remained in the intensive care unit at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center last night.

The courier, Jonathan Gladstone, who was not licensed, was cited Monday by Boston police for failing to yield to a pedestrian in a crosswalk, even though the light was green for Gladstone just before impact, said Margot Hill, a police spokeswoman.

She said the crash is still under investigation.

Hill said that Gladstone was fined a total of \$220: \$100 for not wearing the vest required under a city ordinance; \$100 for not being li-

**Some courier firms said that reckless messengers are on the roads because existing laws are not enforced.**

enced, and \$20 under the state law mandating deference to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Gladstone, who declined to comment yesterday, has 21 days to request a hearing.

Hill added that a task force reviewing strategies to increase safety on the streets is considering proposals including a new ordinance that would hike fines and require couriers to carry liability insurance.

Some courier firms said harsher laws and higher fines are not necessary, that reckless messengers are on the roads because existing laws are not enforced.

Hill disputed that.

"The ability to enforce lies heavily on people to abide by the rules set out in the guidelines," Hill said. "It's hard to enforce laws, as so often is the case, in hit and run cases."

But Regina Stone, president and owner of Boston Bicycle Couriers, said city leaders' focus on couriers amounts to a "witch hunt," and that they are generating fear of couriers when few violate the laws.

"First they have to make sure they can enforce what's already on the books," Stone said. "If they can't enforce what is there now, then how will putting stiffer fines on couriers

change anything?"

But Jack Avery, vice president of branch operations for Choice Courier Systems, Inc., welcomed stricter guidelines.

"If higher fines are what it's going to take, then it's important for us all to follow through," he said, adding that couriers should carry liability insurance.

Conrad Willeman, executive director of the Bicycle Coalition of Massachusetts, said the crackdown on the courier industry is "well-intentioned, but misguided" since couriers are not the only travelers who break the laws, nor are they the most perilous travelers, he said.

"There's a lot of abuse by bicyclists, motorists, and pedestrians," he said, adding that education for all parties, including pedestrians, would make the streets safer.

Couriers need only pay \$20 to become licensed. They are subject to a criminal background check and must wear a vest displaying a number for identification purposes.

Though some firms, like Choice Courier, have their couriers complete an orientation course that includes discussion of traffic laws, the completion of a standardized course is not required.

One courier, Tim Morris, said that pedestrians place everyone at risk when they dart out from between parked cars and tend not to look when crossing streets. Indeed, Boston police say that Spring was crossing against the light.

"It doesn't appeal to me to hit anyone," Morris said, adding that in his four years working as a courier, he has never struck a pedestrian or motorist. "When we hit something, we usually get hurt, too. We might be intimidating, but we're not trying to hurt anyone."

GREATER BOSTON CHAMBER

ONE BEACON STREET. BOSTON. MA 02108-3114

617.227.4500 FAX 617.227.7505 WWW.GBCC.ORG

**Press Release**

Contact: Ed Pignone (617) 557-7325

**CHAMBER URGES BOSTON BUSINESSES TO DEAL ONLY WITH  
LICENSED BICYCLE MESSENGER SERVICES**

Boston, Mass. (November 13, 1997)--The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce today urged the Boston business community to take immediate action to curb abuses by bicycle messengers. At a regularly scheduled meeting held this morning at Chamber offices, the organization's Executive Committee unanimously voted to urge all Boston businesses to:

- Only use commercial bicycle messenger services that are licensed by the City of Boston and that strictly comply with city ordinances governing these services;
- Insist that bicycle messenger services only employ messengers licensed by the city, and
- Insist that all messengers carry their licenses and wear the commercial bicycle messenger vest required by city ordinance.

Paul Guzzi, president and chief executive officer of the Chamber, said, "Immediate action is needed to curb the safety hazards created by discourteous and reckless bicycle messengers. By insisting that all messenger services and their employees comply with already existing laws, Boston's business community can have a dramatic impact on improving pedestrian safety in our city.

"This is an important issue that effects not only Chamber members, but every pedestrian in Boston. The Chamber will work closely with Mayor Menino and Police Commissioner Paul Evans in determining how existing laws can be changed to eliminate any threat to pedestrians caused by bicycle messengers who disregard public safety."

Members of the Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce include the region's leading financial institutions, health care organizations, educational institution, technology companies, and professional firms, as well as businesses of all sizes from virtually every industry and profession.

-end-

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Chamber Members

**FROM:** Paul Guzzi

**SUBJECT:** Action to Curb Abuses by Bicycle Messengers

**DATE:** November 14, 1997

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The Greater Boston Chamber's Executive Committee unanimously voted yesterday to urge all Boston businesses to take action against abuses by bicycle messengers. The press release outlining the Chamber's recommendations on this important issue is attached.

The Chamber urges all Boston businesses to deal only with licensed bicycle messenger services who understand and comply with city ordinances regulating this service. Working together, we can curb abuses by bicycle messengers and dramatically improve pedestrian safety in our city.

BOSTON HERALD, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1997

# Chamber to boycott outlaw bike couriers

By MARK MUELLER

Ratcheting up the pressure on reckless bicycle couriers, Boston's largest business organization yesterday urged a boycott of messenger companies that flout the law.

The Greater Boston Chamber of Commerce, following a morning vote by its executive committee, urged businesses across Boston to use only those courier services whose employees obtain and carry city licenses and wear vests emblazoned with a large, three-digit number, making them easily identifiable to motorists and pedestrians.

Licenses and vests already are required by city law but Boston's estimated 500 couriers routinely work without them.

Yesterday's action was the latest in a campaign to rein in couriers considered rude and dangerous. The move was sparked by an Oct. 30 accident between a bicycle courier and Boston School Committee member William Spring, 62, who remained in the intensive care unit of Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center yesterday.

No charges have been filed.

"By insisting that all messenger services and their employees comply with already existing laws, Boston's business community can have a dramatic impact on improving pedestrian safety in our community," said John Hamill, president of Fleet Bank and a member of the chamber's executive committee.

A task force of police and community officials also is looking to revamp courier regulations, hiking fines and perhaps requiring liability insurance.

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# City of Cambridge

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IN CITY COUNCIL

Councillor DAVIS

ORDERED:

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to <sup>implement</sup> ~~develop~~ A PLAN to Register bicycle Couriers in the wake of the tragic accident that injured William Spring, A Federal Reserve Bank Vice President and A member of the Boston School Committee, while he was crossing the street; and be it further

Ordered that the City Council go on Record extending its best wishes For A speedy Recovery to Mr. Spring on behalf of the entire City Council.

see today's  
Globe  
front page

C. Davis

RECEIVED BY  
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK  
97 NOV -7 AM 9:30  
CAMBRIDGE MA.

ASK CM for

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bicycle carriers

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that  
injured

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educational efforts & FR VP  
Bo School

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the CC



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Consent Order #43

CM-790

62

Councillor Davis and Mayor Russell re:  
Implement a plan to register bicycle  
couriers in the wake of the accident  
that seriously injured William Spring.

In City Council November 17, 1997

**ORDER ADOPTED**

8-0-0.