

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAM

57 Inman Street • Cambridge MA 02139 • 617.349.4604

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
From: Cara Seiderman, Environmental Program *CS*
Date: May 31, 1994
Re: Council Order #36, dated 4/11/94 re: Report of the Work Program and Plans of the Bicycle Committee

Please find herein a review of the work of the Bicycle Program, including the work of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee.

1. Bicycle Committee

The Bicycle Committee, which consists of Cambridge residents and representatives of several City departments, meets on a regular basis once every three weeks. They participate in most aspects of the work of the Bicycle Program, particularly those related to safety and education, promoting bicycling as transportation, proposing safe bicycle routes in the city, and working with private businesses in the installation of bicycle racks.

2. Safety, Education and Promotion

Hang Tags. Last year, the Committee developed bright yellow hang tags that were distributed to all local bicycle shops for placement on bicycle handle bars. These hang tags promote safe riding habits and continue to be used for distribution in schools and at relevant public events.

Neighborhood newsletters. Tips for safe travel (for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians) were developed for publication in local newsletters; they have been published in one newsletter and will be published in another upcoming one. These are being further developed into a brochure that will be distributed free of charge to the public at many public locations.

Bumper stickers. The Committee designed bumper stickers for promotional and safety use ("Bicycle - Cars: Same Roads - Same Laws" and "Bike to the Future").

Notice to school parents. The Committee developed a notice to distribute to parents of children in the Cambridge public schools, grades K-8, promoting the use of helmets (reminding them of the law that all children under age 13 must wear helmets) as well as safe riding techniques. These will be distributed before the close of school this year.

Educational "ticket" for distribution by the Police. The Committee is working with the Police Department in developing a "ticket" that will have safety education information on it. This will be used by police officers to hand to bicyclists who are bicycling incorrectly or in an unsafe manner.

Bike to Work Week. Committee members participated in various activities around the city and the Boston region for National Bike to Work Week, May 16-20.

Improving Physical Facilities. One of the most important elements of a safe bicycling environment is the provision of safe bicycling facilities (bicycle lanes and bicycle paths, for example). This is important not only for the bicyclist, but for pedestrians and motorists as well, particularly in terms of safety. The presence of bicycle lanes will make it much less likely that people will ride on the sidewalk; people ride on the sidewalk because they do not feel safe in the street and bicycle lanes encourage people to ride in those designated zones. Travel space in the roadway is also clarified, with each part of the traffic mix having a designated portion of the roadway; this reinforces more predictable, and thus safer bicycling patterns, reducing weaving of bicyclists in and out of motor vehicle traffic and reducing against-the-flow bicycle travel.

3. Bicycle Parking Facilities

The Environmental Program will be installing bicycle parking racks ("post & ring" types such as have been installed in front of City Hall) at public facilities and high demand areas throughout the city. There is also a limited subsidy program where private businesses can request and contribute to the cost of installing bicycle racks near their facilities.

4. City Bicycle Fleets

The Program has purchased seven bicycles (plus helmets, lights and other safety equipment) for use by city employees. These will be located at city facilities at DPW, 51 Inman St., 57 Inman Street, Cambridge Hospital, Lombardi Building, Danehy Park, and Fresh Pond Reservation; secure, sheltered bicycle parking will be provided at all these locations.

The Cambridge Police Department is also creating a new patrol unit where the officers will use specially equipped bicycles for transportation.

5. Physical Facilities

Planning, Design and Review of Projects

The Environmental Program continues to work in close cooperation with the Traffic & Parking, Public Works, and Community Development Departments on projects that involve reconstructing or revising streets or intersections in order to see how they may be designed to be safer for bicyclists as well as for pedestrians and motorists. In addition to the regular DPW schedule of roadwork, current projects of this nature include the Massachusetts Avenue/Lafayette Square Reconstruction project, improvements to the intersection at Brattle/Craigie/Sparks Streets, analysis of traffic and safety issues Porter Square, and the Central Square Urban Design Process.

ISTEA Funding Requests

Through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the federal government, through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation and Construction, is providing funding opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle-related projects; we have submitted requests for a number of projects that will enable us to make improvements specifically for bicycle and pedestrian mobility. In particular, a major funding request was made for bicycle and pedestrian connections in the Alewife area, with particular attention to how people can travel safely by bicycle and foot to the Alewife MBTA station, the Fresh Pond Shopping Center, Linear Park, Minuteman Bikeway, Danehy Park, and Fresh Pond Reservation. These proposed projects submitted by the City have been strongly recommended for funding by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council; EOTC is expected to announce funding decisions in the near future.

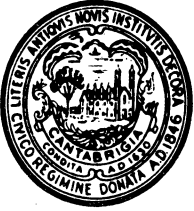
6. Research

Bicycle & Pedestrian Counts

The Program is undertaking regular bicycle and pedestrian counts in high-use areas throughout the city. Several members of the Committee have volunteered their time to help with the counts.

Review of existing studies and reports and interviews with planners, engineers in other cities

Program staff and Committee members are involved in ongoing research on the experience with bicycle programs and facilities in other cities around the country.



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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TEL 349-4300
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June 6, 1994

To The Honorable, The City Council:

With reference to Awaiting Report Item No. 18, regarding a report on the work program and plans of the Bicycle Committee, please find attached a response from Cara Seiderman of the Environmental Program.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy", is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachment

Consent Agenda # 14

S-269

Response to Awaiting Report Item Number
Eighteen regarding a report on the work
program and plans of the Bicycle
Committee.

*for original. Aseller see
1994 City Manager Request.
#108.*

In City Council,

June 6, 1994

Placed on file