

## **Somerville Transportation Equity Partnership**

Regular Meeting of the Steering Committee and Members

**Date:** April 22, 2012, 7:00-9 p.m., at the VNA Community Room, 259 Lowell Ave.

**Attendees:** Ellin Reisner, Wig Zamore, Karen Molloy, Andrea Yakovakis, Naomi Slagowski, Paul Morgan, Heather Van Aelst, Lynn Weissman, Zijin Lin, Arpe Aroyian. (Meeting notes taken by Karen Molloy.)

**Quorum Present?** No.

**VOTES:** No. (Postponed annual vote for officers for 2012-2013.)

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- MPO vote on April 19<sup>th</sup> approved the Draft TIP with Route 16 funding. The Draft TIP will be released for a public comment period that will run from April 30 through May 29, with a final MPO vote to be held on June 28.
- MBTA Board will vote at the next meeting (May 2nd) about extending the GLX design contract.
- B2Green – Chamber of Commerce event May 3, 4-7pm, Holiday Inn. STEP & Friends will have a table there.
- ArtBeat will be held on July 21. Theme is *migration*. Community organization application deadline is June 8.
- The East Broadway design will be finalized at May 2 at the MassDOT Board meeting. The Plan, which is scheduled to start this summer, includes adding a bike line and widening the sidewalks.

### **PROCEEDINGS:**

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) conference in Washington DC. Wig attended this conference and had a poster. Discussions/presentations at e conference included traffic, affordable housing, noise, access to healthy food etc. Wig also attended, with two Tufts grad students working on the CAFEH study, a Health Effects Institute workshop in Chicago. Workshop was on methodologies, exposure analysis. The Health Effects Institute will put out an RFP in the fall to fund various studies related to pollution and health.
- STEP finances over the last year. Andrea presented annual report detailing financial transactions for 2011. Balance as of December 31, 2011 was \$22,169.00.
- McCarthy Overpass update and actions. The State is suddenly moving quickly on repairing the McCarthy Overpass on McGrath Highway despite public opposition and the community's the City's desire to see the overpass de-elevated. MassDOT, without any public process for the repairs, but in parallel with its public process for de-elevation of the overpass, quietly awarded an RFP for the repairs. The City agreed to the short-term repairs apparently not realizing it had signed away the opportunity to have McCarthy Overpass torn down in foreseeable future, since the repairs are supposed to hold for 15 years. Note again, no public process by City or State on this matter. (Compare this with Casey overpass in JP— the public wanted it torn down and the City of Boston knew enough to push for de-elevated it period. Mass Highway which is handling the project, has been uncommunicative about it, and about work on several bridges schedule to take place soon. This is not over...

- Vote for STEP steering committee officers for 2012-2013 (tabled due to lack of quorum). Attendees paid \$10.00 annual dues.
- Mayor's Transportation Research, Innovation and Planning (TRIP) Team. It's odd that STEP was not invited to join. Was this omission an oversight? Ellin will contact Hayes Morrison and find out.
- Somerville police are now ticketing cyclists, for not only breaking traffic laws but to enforce some arcane cycling-specific rules, without any previous notice and education about cycling-specific rules of the road. Karen will draft a letter from STEP to the City (find out who else besides Sara Spicer should see it) stating that the ticketing unfairly precedes needed education. Issue is not so much about running red lights, traveling the wrong way on one way streets, but little known laws such as ""When bike lanes are present, cyclists must stay in bike lanes, except when making a left turn, overtaking a slower cyclist, or avoiding a hazard. "... This law is a hazard in itself as it puts cyclist in danger of being doored, while setting up an assumption for motorist that cyclists belong only in a bike lane. Drivers in Somerville need to be educated about cyclists on the road too.
- ArtBeat: Karen will submit the application (and get a check from Andrea). Of course we will invite MGNA to join us. Any other groups? What would we like to have at the table this year?
- Friends of the Community Path met with SPCD (Sara Spicer, Hayes Morrison) about the issue of how to design the Path Extension to cross the Fitchburg line. The City favors an "Inner Belt Road bridge" (formerly known as "Urban Ring Bridge". But this plan decouples the Path from the GLX and jeopardizes the intention of having the Path built with GLX. (Right now the GLX station designs have the Path integrated with Lowell St, Gilman, Washington St, and Lechmere stations. This one gap, getting from Washington St to Lechmere needs to be filled.

**Next Meeting:** Monday 21 May, 2012, at SCAT, Union Square.