

Holyoke Biking and Pedestrian Committee Meeting Minutes

On **Monday, November 1, 2021**, the Holyoke Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee held a hybrid public meeting at City Hall Annex Conference Room 403 and on zoom.us (Meeting ID: 820 4102 2277 Passcode: 880832 or call in 929-205-6099) This meeting took place at 6:00pm.

Attendance: Committee Members present–Kristen Sykes, Elena Langdon, Eduardo Baez
Shannon Bliven Municipal Staff: Cynthia Espinosa (OPED), James Czach (DPW)
Absent: Price Armstrong, Eduardo Baez

1. **Call to Order:** At 6:03pm, Cynthia Espinosa made a motion to call the meeting to order. Elena Langdon seconded the motion. All were in favor, via roll call, 7-0-0

2. **Review of minutes October 4, 2021:** James Czach mentioned that the last line on Item #4 should state that the City of Holyoke is working with MassDOT to approve the design. Shannon Bliven asked regarding the bike racks suggested locations that the committee talked about going out and checking places for bike racks. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that it was not capture in the recording. Shannon Bliven suggested that committee members visit different areas of the city to find where bike racks are needed. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that this item can be added to the New Business section. Kristen Sykes mentioned that she sent to Cynthia Espinosa the long-term bike parking resources and Shannon Bliven asked to have the other members receive the information. ***Cynthia will share the long-term bike parking information with all committee members.*** Kristen Sykes made the motion to approve the minutes with the amendments mentioned. James Czach second the motion. All were in favor, via roll call 7-0-0

3. **Public Participation:** Lucy Friedman-Bell from Safe Routes to School gave a summary of the walking school bus event on October 6th. The goal is to do another event in May with schools and Kelly and Lawrence School are interested in having a walking school bus and would like to see how to partner with community organizations near a school to be the leaders in getting volunteers for the walking school bus.

4. **Complete Streets- DPW**
 - a. **Complete Streets Prioritization Plan Review-** James Czach mentioned that the project is still moving forward to finalize it, once its finalized, DPW will submit a report and apply for another round of grants. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that the Complete Streets went out to bid in 2019, however, the responses were over budgeted and during COVID-19 pandemic response, the project took a pause and in 2021 its when the implementation started. Kristen Sykes asked how often the complete streets prioritization plan takes place? James Czach mentioned that he is not sure, but MassDOT may allow for update the plan.
 - b. **Virtual Public Hearing, Center City Connector-** Cynthia Espinosa shared the flyer of the virtual public hearing of the MassDOT project which many known as the CanalWalk

5. Events

- a. **Valley Bike Ride- Scavenger Hunt event-** Kristen Sykes is sharing the event on November 3, 2021, at 6pm meeting in South Hadley to bike 5-8 miles. The organizers did a similar event in Northampton and went well. MassBike is trying to sign up organizations for the Lights Brigade event for this wintertime and wonder if the Bike Ped Committee is interested in hosting one. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that OneHolyoke is hosting the Winter Wonderland event in December in which the committee can host give out Lights during this event.
- b. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that the committee in the past has hosted the **Winter Solstice event** and was wondering if the committee is interested in hosting it again. Kristen Sykes mentioned to see if during the December meeting, the committee can discuss it then.

6. **Valley Bike Update- Cynthia Espinosa and Shannon Bliven-** Shannon Bliven mentioned that there is a wait for any potential funding for increasing stations in the city. One location that would be ideal would be by Beaudoin Village as many users go to the Pedlar station to use the bikes. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that Community Field may be another potential location to have a station.

7. Old Business:

- a. **Bike Ped Brochure review-** Cynthia Espinosa shared a draft brochure in which she added more images and has a section for committee members to share quotes/testimonials. Shannon Bliven asked if an HCC student who can potentially be asked to do a logo. Kristen Sykes suggested to research color-blind friendly colors for the brochure. Elena Langdon mentioned that the call to action can be not only for people to join the committee but to also let residents know that the committee can be a voice for them when it comes to biking and pedestrian matters (concerns, suggestions, etc). Use language “Do you like to walk and bike?” A call for action wording. Kristen Sykes also mentioned about the close call accidents or “what if’s” can be collected. Elena Langdon shared a personal experience of a close call on Lincoln Street and mentioned the idea of creating a short video, a TikTok of how to use and bring awareness of the rapid flashing beacons. Elena Langdon will reach to Holyoke Media to see if they would like to partner to create the video. Kristen Sykes mentioned that MassBike has mini grants and Holyoke Media applied to do a similar video and Kristen Sykes will send the information to Elena Langdon. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned another source of media is Connecting Point at NEMP. Elena Langdon mentioned to share it in social media and schools. Cynthia Espinosa asked if the committee email can be shared for the public to share. James Czach also mentioned to be cautious on how to approach gathering data on the “what if’s” as we do not want to give more liability of the city. Shannon Bliven asked if the police department knows about the rapid flashing beacons and if there is a potentially partner with the committee. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that one way to engage the police department is to invite the Community officers to be part of the Tik Tok videos as collaborators. Shannon Bliven asked Lucy Friedman-Bell if there are any resources for students around bike safety. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned to connect with Israel Rivera, the Family

Engagement Manager. Kristen Sykes mentioned if the Tik Tok video can be a High School competition, and Lucy Friedman-Bell mentioned that Safe Routes to School has a video contest and created a flyer on how to be a bike friendly driver and will share it with the committee members. ***Committee members agreed to have an outstanding agenda item named Education as part of the committee meetings.*** Kristen Sykes asked Lucy Friedman-Bell if she can do a presentation about Safe Routes to School program and what they offer. Elena Langdon mentioned that if there is an online website to share information about walking or biking resources and suggestions, including walking/bike routes focused on needs such as food, schools, etc. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that the Explore Holyoke website could potentially be the host for this information. Kristen Sykes mentioned to plan out a meet and greet of all the committees in the city to get to learn about their work.

8. New Business:

- a. Committee by-laws review-** Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that Price Armstrong asked for the committee to review the by-laws specifically the election of officers in the new year. Cynthia Espinosa mentioned that another suggestion was to add another office, a secretary. Elena Langdon mentioned that the Officer term of one year feels short. Kristen Sykes asked if the committee can be invited to the committee as either members or guests. Elena Langdon mentioned that by the December Meeting, to have names of potential members for the committee.
- b. Bike Racks Scouting locations-** Shannon Bliven mentioned to have committee members to volunteer to scout parts of the city about the needs of bike parking. Shannon Bliven volunteered herself to scout from Northampton Street up to Mount Tom Road. ***Shannon Bliven mentioned maybe having a sub-committee to come up with the criteria for the priority of the needs of bike racks. Kristen Sykes, Shannon Bliven, Elena Langdon and Jes from MassBike will be the sub-committee.***

9. Scheduling next meeting: Monday, December 13, 2021

- 10. Adjourn meeting:** At 7:31pm, Elena Langdon made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Kristen Sykes seconded the motion. All were in favor via roll call, 5-0-2 (absent: Price Armstrong and Eduardo Baez)