

Arlington Bicycle Committee Minutes for December 2, 2002

In attendance were board members Jack Johnson, Ted Packard, Ron Sender, Stephan Miller, and Christopher Tonkin. Others present were , Bryce Nesbitt, Bobby Mac, Alan McClennen, Craig DellaPenna, Walter Maine, Mara Yale, Bill Reif, Joe Snodgrass, Sam NeJame, John Brennon and Joey Glushko.

The meeting was called to order at 7:35

Introductions were made around the room.

The minutes from the last meeting were approved as presented.

Recent Events The Massachusetts Bicycle Coalition's Bike Night was a big hit this year. Jack Johnson received an award for extraordinary service. Congratulations Jack!

America Bikes. ABAC has endorsed and signed up to belong to the America Bikes Campaign. Jack informed us that individuals can also join the campaign at www.americabikes.com

Aids Ride. Bobby told us that the sponsor of the New York/Boston Aids Ride has folded. At this time, it is not clear what the sponsorship will be but there are plans to continue the tradition of the ride this year.

Rails To Trails. Craig Della Penna gave us a presentation entitled Getting there, the geography of nowhere and divided highways. Stations on an imagined journey. Craig talked mostly about rail trail projects in New England and elsewhere. The emphasis was on the Central Massachusetts Rail Trail. Craig told us that the problem with most trail projects is that they are too small to get the states attention. The Central Mass Rail Trail will cross a good part of the state and has come to the attention of the Governor Elect. Portions of the trail exist and the rest is being worked on. Hopefully, this trail will eventually hook up with the Vermont Rail Trail and the Minuteman.

Craig told us stories of a number of trails that were opposed by abutters and others but ended up spurring economic development and increasing real estate values. He reminded us that next years Rails to Trails conference will be held in Providence RI and a workshop will visit the Minuteman. Jack filled us in on the current plans for the workshop with events taking place in each town along the trail.

Craig talked about the new push to get additional supporters for trails by forming partnerships between various groups and individuals and trails. He suggested that we put small signs along the bikeway mentioning the Conservancy and the Minuteman Bikeway web site. The signs could be unveiled at the workshop next year.

After Craig's presentation, we discussed the preliminary arrangements for the workshop that will take place in early June. Participants will be bussed from the conference to the bikeway (probably the Bedford end) to pick up their bicycles and helmets and meet the bus at the other end of the ride. Jack asked for suggestions of where the bus could park at the Arlington or Cambridge end. Bryce suggested using the Wyeth parking lot at Alewife. Stephan volunteered the MDC pool parking lot adjacent to Ringe Field in Cambridge.

The participants will have about 1.5 hours to do the ride. Someone commented that this seems a bit short. Jack answered that it might work out to 1.75 hours. Jack said that the plans are for the riders to be in small groups. Ted suggested that the presenters that will talk along the route, should remain stationary and not travel with any group. Jack reminded us that we need to give the talks off the path because it will probably be busy as the workshop will be on a weekend.

Bike Rack Questionnaire. The planning department has devised a questionnaire about bicycle parking [Jack, who is the target audience for this questionnaire?]. They would like ABAC to endorse this document. We all thought that it was a good idea. Jack also initiated the idea of resurrecting the bicycle parking warrant article he and Joey wrote last year and present it to Town meeting once again for approval. We discussed how the presentation could be organized to enhance the chances of it's approval.

Alewife Connector. Jack suggested that we need another site visit to the Alewife connection area. In addition new signs are required to direct bicycles to the existing bikeway from Rt. 16. The committee felt that we should map out the safest route. Bryce suggested that we enlist the assistance of the East Arlington Good Neighbors Association.

We took a vote on ABAC endorsing the route that had previously been presented to the Selectmen. The vote was unanimous in favor the motion.

Bryce talked about the MDC master plan for the Alewife Brook region between Little Pond and the Mystic River. This plan includes a bicycle path along the entire length of the brook. At the Alewife end, the path will connect with the Minuteman and Central Mass. Paths. Bryce emphasized that this plan is a vision not a complete plan but will eventually lead to an actual plan. ABAC endorsed

the idea of the path along the brook. There ensued a lengthy discussion about the politics of various routes for the path.

Lastly, Jack reviewed the 2003 ABAC meeting schedule and some upcoming events of interest including the East Arlington Good Neighbor Committee meeting on December 4, the Annual Jingle Ride on December 15 and the Solstice Eve Walk in Arlington's Great Meadows.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50