

Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee Fiscal Year 2014

The Public Transportation and Bicycle Committee advocates increasing access to Public Transportation and Bicycling as alternatives to using the automobile in Amherst and the region. It engages with planning to improve infrastructure, policy to improve support and communications to encourage and facilitate these alternatives.

Public Transportation:

Received regular updates from UMass Transit on ridership on the PVRTA buses.

Worked with PVRTA on its Comprehensive Service Analysis of the bus routes done by Nelson Nygard consultants. This project resulted in the restructuring of the bus routes and a substantial increase in ridership.

Advocated for a bus stop at the new Survival Center location on Sunderland Road. This was included in the new bus routes.

Listened to citizen requests to increase bus service to Applewood and to the Malls from both the Amity Street Shuttle and from the East Hadley Road, but these proposals were determined to not be cost effective or feasible at the time.

Advocated for bus service to the sections of East Pleasant Street that received reduced bus service as a result of the bus route restructuring.

Advocated for better coordination of bus schedules between the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA) and Pioneer Valley Regional Transit Authority (PVRTA).

Supported State legislation that would allow Towns to set the maximum speed limit in urban areas to 25 miles per hour.

Bicycling:

The PTBC applied for and received a \$50,000 CPA grant in conjunction with an in-kind match from UMass to explore the feasibility of a bike path that would run from the northwest corner of campus to North Amherst. Preliminary engineering work has been done but there are a number of right-of-way concerns that still need to be resolved. This project is ongoing.

Advocated for and participated in ongoing efforts to install additional bike racks and to obtain funding for covered bike storage.

- Advocated for bike lanes on Route 116 south.
- Participated annually in Bike Week.
- Advocated for annual line painting of bike lanes and pedestrian crosswalks.
- Participated in the planning process for the reconstruction of the Norwottuck Rail Trail.
- Worked on bicycle safety posters to be placed on UMass transit buses.

Planning:

Reviewed plans for bicycle and pedestrian concerns for Sand Hill Road, Big Y, Wildwood Safe Routes to School, Spring Street, Atkins Corner, Triangle Street, the Mill Street Bridge, and Pine Street.

The PTBC members participated in the Transportation Plan Task Force that worked with a consultant (Nelson Nygard) to create a transportation plan consistent with the Town's Master Plan. That report is now complete and the implementation phase is just beginning.

Endorsed unanimously a "Complete Streets Proposal" to the Select Board to have the Town make all streets "accessible and safe for all kinds of users, not just motor vehicles, and they should include sidewalks, bicycle lanes and public transportation infrastructure such as bus pull offs and bus shelters."