

walk

Boston

**MAKING OUR COMMUNITIES
MORE WALKABLE**

FALL 2003

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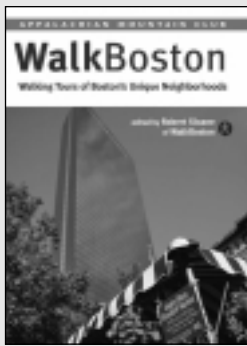
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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

WalkBoston this month celebrates two beginnings — WalkBoston's new space in Old City Hall and our first book of 30 urban walks, *WalkBoston*. Its editor, Bob Sloane, is masterful, the Appalachian Mountain Club a generous collaborator.

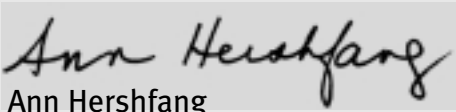


WalkBoston is lengthening its stride. Statewide, we are the lead for recommending pedestrian design guidelines for the rewrite of the state Highway Design Manual. And, thanks to Rep. Anne Paulsen, pedestrians will join the state's Bicycle (and Pedestrian) Advisory Committee.

Nationally, WalkBoston members supported an amendment to restore Enhancements funding in the six-year federal transportation funding bill, TEA-3. The amendment passed overwhelmingly, thanks to the leadership of Rep. John Olver (Amherst). Pedestrians, bicyclists and trails are beneficiaries of these monies. WalkBoston organized a Real Intersection Design workshop at the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals annual meeting. Finally, America Walks' national office moved to WalkBoston.

Of course, these advocacy activities take resources—money. You will be receiving a special appeal letter from us soon and, hopefully, you will feel warm and generous

Sadly, we said thank-you and good-bye to our co-vice president Judy Wagner who left for a new life in Pittsburgh. We wish her well.



Ann Hershfang

BY KEN KRAUSE

WalkBoston—the Book!



Bob Sloane/editor/walks chair

It's been said that WalkBoston wrote the book on interesting walking tours around Boston. Now, it's a fact. "WalkBoston: Walking Tours of Boston's Unique Neighborhoods," a 240-page book, was recently published with the Appalachian Mountain Club. A collection of 30 walks by WalkBoston

members, the book grew out of the organization's annual series of walks enjoyed by thousands since 1990.

"We were doing walks, with nice brochures, and we began talking about having them available for people to do any time," said Bob Sloane, the book's editor. "We concluded we had so many of them, they should become a book." Sloane got AMC on board, then spent nearly two years on the project, doing everything from recruiting member/authors to organizing "test walks" to check for accuracy.

The result is a one-of-a-kind assortment of neighborhood tours in and around Boston that touch on culture, history, architecture and nature. "One of the goals was to have some diversity in the region along with suburban locations — places that hadn't been thought about before," Sloane said. "We want to show that you can walk anywhere . . . almost any neighborhood has something distinct and is walkable." Each walk has a detailed map created by Ken Dumas — including the location of public restrooms — and step-by-step directions. All are accessible by public transportation.

This is the first book of urban walks published by the AMC, which is well known for its hiking guides and nature walks. Publisher Beth Krusi was delighted with the result.

"WalkBoston" is the culmination of an outstanding effort by both WalkBoston and AMC Books," Krusi said. "I was constantly amazed by the dedication and enthusiasm of the individuals working on this project. Their passion for the organization shows in the quality of their work."

List price \$14.95/member price \$14. To order visit www.walkboston.org. or call WalkBoston at 617.367.9255

BY ANNE MCKINNON

Memorial Drive Initiative

Thanks to the MDC (now the Division of Urban Parks in the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation) and the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, Memorial Drive between the Longfellow Bridge and Magazine Beach is getting a new look. A new project to protect and enhance Memorial Drive is one of two demonstration projects under the state's Historic ParkWays Initiative. The other is Greylock Parkway in western Mass.

The Historic ParkWays Initiative seeks to protect and restore historic roads in Massachusetts while making them better for bicyclists and pedestrians. Memorial Drive was laid out in the late 1890 to promote residential development similar to that in the new Back Bay, but development was stalled and the broad parkway and lawn ended abruptly. The two-phase project will increase green space along the parkway and improve conditions for pedestrian and bicyclists. [continued]

BY DICK VACCA

Neighborhoods step up safety

Sometimes, you've just got to do it yourself. That's the conclusion reached by John Archibald, WalkBoston member and president of the Union Park Neighborhood Association in Boston's South End.

In late 2000, Archibald asked the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) for a "yield to pedestrians" sign at the intersection of Tremont Street and Union Park. Pedestrian traffic is heavy along this block of restaurants, shops and the Boston Center for the Arts.

"BTD had all kinds of reasons why it couldn't help us, so in late 2001 the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services put out a sign — but it only faced in one direction," Archibald explains. The sign, along with a series of replacements, was soon destroyed by Tremont Street traffic. "The City told us there was no point replacing the signs because the traffic kept hitting them. 'Right,' we said, 'that proves our point!'"

Finally, BTD let the Neighborhood Association [continued]

WalkBoston promotes walking for transportation, health and recreation through education and advocacy. Our mission is to create and preserve safe walking environments that build vital communities.

mission

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walks

Smart Walks

Our walks this fall include two “Smart Walks” that focus on smart growth issues. Smart growth creates higher-density, mixed-use neighborhoods, reduces automobile dependency, and improves pedestrian/bicycle accessibility. Smart Walks discuss successes and missed opportunities while appreciating the surrounding natural beauty, architecture and history.

Two fall walks remain

Sat., Oct. 4, 1 pm: Understanding the Design of the Zakim Bridge, with architect Miguel Rosales.

Sat., Oct. 18, 1 pm: “Smart Walk” Alewife Reservation and Fresh Pond with Jim Stockard.

Reservations: 617.367.9255. members free/non-members \$5.

advocacy

New life for Old Northern?

Activist Mike Tyrrell is leading a group in examining Boston’s latest ideas for the Old Northern Avenue Bridge. New plans call for raising the height and fixing its position, with pedestrian traffic on one side, one lane of vehicular traffic on the other, and a central corridor displaying art exhibits. Call 617.266.7894 to join this effort.

CERC-ulating politics

WalkBoston is a prominent member of the Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Conventions. CERC is urging convention planners to promote and improve Boston’s walkability for the DNC. At our suggestion, the August Move Massachusetts meeting focused on transportation for the convention. Move Mass. president Curtis Davis pledged to convene a task force on the issues.

factoids

Average commute is 26 minutes

The average daily one-way commute to work in the United States takes just over 26 minutes, according to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics’ Omnibus Household Survey. The average commuting time has not varied significantly over the last three years. The survey found 94% of commuters spend 60 minutes or less commuting. Only 6% of commuters spend more than one hour commuting. Visit <http://www.bts.gov/omnibus>.

Check out the AmericaWalks website: <http://www.americawalks.org>

Real Intersection Design www.apbp.org

“In some parts of the world, people still pray in the streets. In this country, they’re called pedestrians.”

— Author Gloria Pitzer

news items

Toyota employees-please don’t drive

To alleviate daily traffic jams at company headquarters in Toyota City, Japan, the auto maker is asking its workers to avoid commuting by car. “It may seem like a contradiction, but if you think about the problems we are causing to the community around us, it can’t be helped,” Toyota spokeswoman Monika Fujita told Japan Today. “It’s also quite meaningless to drive in a traffic jam.”

Since February, Toyota has provided free bus shuttle service from two nearby train stations. The number of workers taking public transit to work had risen to 5,000 from 3,000.

One employee sold the car he once used to drive to the office. “It might be a minus for the company. But now I can use the time spent commuting for myself.”

membership application

Complete this form & mail along with your check made payable to: WalkBoston, Old State House, 45 School Street, Boston, MA 02108.
 T: 617.367.9255 | F: 617.367.9285 | info@walkboston.org | www.walkboston.org

name(s) _____

address _____

phone: daytime _____ evening _____

e-mail _____ fax _____

check one: STUDENT / SENIOR [65+] \$15 SUPPORTER \$50
 MEMBER \$30 FRIEND \$100
 DUAL / FAMILY \$40 ORGANIZATION \$250 | \$500 | \$1000

circle committees you are interested in. (to contact them directly - see front)

membership advocacy education/publications
 legislative development programs

Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

Ped safety [continued]

put up its own sign, so it bought a rugged sign from Atlantic Highway Sign Company in Hyde Park. The sign fits into a heavy base, and staff at the restaurant on the corner, Garden of Eden puts it out daily.

Pedestrian safety got another boost when the Druker Company, the developers next to the BCA, put a similar sign at nearby Hanson Street. “The two signs have calmed Tremont Street traffic,” says Archibald.

Archibald says the sign is a success. Motorists stop, pedestrians use the crosswalk, and there are fewer accidents. “I just wish we could get the City to pay more attention to what we’ve done.”

Memorial [continued]

Two of the most significant aspects of the project are elimination of a travel lane to increase the park and the creation of separate paths for bicyclists and pedestrians. Separate paths will reduce bicycle/pedestrian conflicts by helping organize users according to speed.

- Key aspects of the project include:
- Removal of one travel lane on the east side
 - Pedestrian improvements to Magazine Beach
 - Separate pathways for bicyclists and pedestrians
 - Improvements to bicycle connections to the Longfellow Bridge
 - Bank stabilization
 - Historic lighting and landscaping