

# walk

## 12th annual meeting April 9

How many steps can Mark Fenton take while giving a presentation? The answer might surprise you! To find out, you'll have to attend WalkBoston's 12th annual meeting, which is set for 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 9. The event again will be held at the beautiful meeting room at Hale & Dorr, on the 26th floor at 60 State Street. In addition to scrumptious food, friendly fellowship and presentation of the annual Golden Shoe awards, guests will be entertained by speaker Fenton, host of the new PBS television series "America's Walking." The effervescent Fenton's presentation is titled "Walking the Walk: Sticking With It." RSVP to the WalkBoston office: 617-451-1570/ info@walkboston.org

## Interview: Cara Seiderman

How do you take a dense urban area and make it an exemplary environment for pedestrians? It's being done in Cambridge and the results give Massachusetts citizens reason to be proud. To learn more about how Cambridge has made such progress, we interviewed Cara Seiderman, Cambridge's Transportation Program Manager.

**Q: How did Cambridge get started on its traffic calming and improvement program for pedestrians and bikes?** There were several factors that were critical. Around 1990, Cambridge's mayor appointed an Ad Hoc bike committee to look at ways to improve the environment for bikes. This was part of a very active citizens' effort to push for better conditions for pedestrians and bikes. Then in 1992, Cambridge passed the Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance. This gave legal backing to efforts to encourage non-automobile modes in Cambridge, and required creation of a pedestrian master plan and development of pedestrian amenities. Another key was that the Cambridge City Manager set this as a goal for the city—there is a basic assumption that every public works project will include pedestrian and bike improvements. Developers are also asked to do mitigation projects to offset development impacts.

**Q: What departments participate in these efforts, and how do they coordinate?** There are monthly meetings of the Public Works, Water Department, Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, Commission on Persons with Disabilities, and Community Development departments. At these meetings they discuss projects that might impact each other, and look for ways to include pedestrian and bike improvements. Each department is responsible for incorporating improvements.

**Q: Is there a signalization policy?** Yes, there are several elements that are meant to make signalized intersections better for pedestrians. In order to minimize waiting time, Cambridge uses short signal cycles and concurrent cycles where possible. In concurrent cycles, where pedestrians and vehicles move together on the green, we often use a leading pedestrian interval to allow pedestrians to enter the intersection before motor vehicle traffic. We keep the number of pedestrian-activated signals to a minimum, and where we do use them, we try to make sure the pedestrian signal comes up as quickly as possible. We have also installed countdown signals, which tell pedestrians how much time remains for them to cross.

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Member responses to WalkBoston's renewal questionnaire provided many useful comments. You want advocacy for pedestrian safety, design, livability and good transportation policies. You supported links with "healthy community" activities, town pedestrian groups and MassBike, and regular newsletters. You want education about traffic calming, a map of dangerous intersections, state road standards that address town pedestrian needs, WALK light recalibration, and much more.

I am pleased to say WalkBoston is working in most of these areas, and we thank you for volunteering to help. We are collaborating with the MA Department of Public Health on a cardiovascular study and with Boston's Public Health Commission on its Pedestrian Protection Program to make Boston's most dangerous intersections safer. Last year, Boston EMS data recorded 1,100 calls for "struck pedestrians."

We are advising ped groups in several metro towns. Martha Taub heads up a new outreach to towns that want to preserve their town "main streets" from commuter thruways. Brookline's new Master Plan will have the able assistance of WalkBoston's Jon Seward. We are working with the Boston Transportation Department and Redevelopment Authority to develop an area-wide pedestrian plan for the South Boston Waterfront before it is too late.

As I write, legislation establishing 25 mph as the speed limit in thickly-settled areas is close to passage. Photo-monitoring at intersections is progressing. Your letters to elected officials help achieve these gains.

Finally, Mark Fenton, the liveliest man we know, will be the speaker at WalkBoston's Annual Meeting on April 9. Do join us for good food, good company and Mark.

  
Ann Hershfang

**Q: How do you handle controversial issues?** Loss of parking is a controversial issue; it comes up, for example, when we are designing traffic calming projects. Sometimes the City is able to remove parking, but only after a long community process. Controversy will delay a project, since there are more requests for traffic calming than the City can handle, and projects with consensus will move forward earlier. The city has been able to remove traffic lanes, but this is usually after a careful analysis to insure that the new configuration will be able to handle the traffic. Some compromise is required to get a solution that abutters, businesses, neighborhoods and advocates can agree to, but the result is always an improvement over the typical traffic-centered solution.

# Boston

A NON-PROFIT  
PEDESTRIAN ADVOCACY  
ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2002

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## WALKBOSTON NEWSLETTER

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WalkBoston promotes walking for transportation and recreation. Our mission is to create and preserve walkable, livable communities through education and advocacy.

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## walks

**Sun. May 5** — 1:00 pm  
 Roslindale Village  
 WB member \$20 | others \$25

**Sat. May 11** — 1:00 pm  
 Savin Hill and Malibu Beach,  
 Dorchester  
 WB member free | others \$5

**Sun. May 19** — 12:30 pm  
 South Bay Trail — Southwest  
 Corridor Park to Fan Pier  
 WB member free | others \$5

**Sun. June 2** — 1:00 pm  
 East Cambridge/Kendall Square  
 WB member free | others \$33

**Sun. June 9** — 10:00 am  
 Brookline's Secret Pathways  
 & Stairs  
 WB member \$20 | others \$25

**Sat. June 22** — 10:00 am  
 Bowfronts and Balustrades in  
 Federalist Boston  
 WB member free | others \$5

**Sat. July 13** — 10:00 am  
 Parthenon, Palladio and Paris in the  
 Financial District  
 WB member free | others \$5

**Registration required**  
 space limited  
**Reservations:**  
 Roslindale & Brookline walks:  
 call BCAE @ 617.730.2700 or  
 www.brooklineadulted.org  
 E. Camb. walk: WB members call WB/  
 others call CCAE @ 617.547.6789 or  
 www.ccae.org  
 All other walks/Information/Weather:  
 call 617-451-1570

## office news

**Ken Krause, new Office Manager**  
 He is a native of Ohio who brings a background in journalism, 10 years in community organizations, and fresh views, ideas, and energy to WalkBoston. Ken is usually in the office on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and welcomes calls and volunteers.

**New email address @ WalkBoston**  
 WalkBoston has three new email addresses so that members and others can request general information, information about the Safe Routes to Schools program, and information about our walks. The new emails are:  
 info@walkboston.org  
 srs@walkboston.org  
 walks@walkboston.org

## walking facts

Annual federal funding for stand-alone pedestrian and bike projects nationwide rose from \$ 17.1M in 1991 to \$339.1M in 2001.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg of New York City rode the #6 subway train from his residence on East 79th Street to City Hall for his New Year's Day inaugural. He has ridden the subway to work each day since. (From Mobilizing the Region, January 7, 2002)

A Federal Highway Administration study in 2001 found that the new countdown pedestrian lights resulted in a higher understanding of when to cross than to standard signals.

Narrowing a travel lane from 11 feet to 10 feet reduces speed by 7 mph.

## membership application

Complete this form & mail along with your check made payable to:  
 WalkBoston, 156 Milk Street, Boston, MA 02109.  
 T: (617)451-1570 F: (617)451-6475 info@walkboston.org | www.walkboston.org

name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

address \_\_\_\_\_

phone: daytime \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ fax \_\_\_\_\_

check one:  STUDENT / SENIOR OVER 65 \$10  SUPPORTER \$50  
 MEMBER \$25  FRIEND \$100  
 DUAL / CONTRIBUTOR \$35  CORPORATE \$250 | \$500 | \$1000

circle committees you are interested in. (to contact them directly - see front)  
 membership  advocacy  education/pr/publications  
 legislative  fundraising  programs

Your donation is tax deductible as a charitable contribution.

## Walk to lunch day

What are you doing for lunch on Wednesday, May 1? Why not get your friends, family, or co-workers together and join WalkBoston for National Walk to Lunch Day! The rules are simple: instead of eating lunch at your desk or driving to the nearest fast-food window, get on your feet and stroll to one of your favorite places. It could be a park, restaurant, or even your own backyard. Enjoy the benefits of nature, pleasant exercise, and companionship. Pass the word and we'll see you walking to lunch on May 1. For more information or to share ideas call the WalkBoston office at 617-451-1570.

## America Walks

America Walks organized a highly successful National Congress of Pedestrian Advocates on August 16-18 in Oakland. Delegates included more than 160 advocates, transportation officials, and public health professionals. Membership is 33 advocacy groups around the country.

The Journal of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals carried an interview with Ellen Vanderslice, President of America Walks. Asked which individual inspired her the most, Ellen answered, "Dorothea Hass of WalkBoston and Mark Fenton of Walking Magazine. Dorothea is my model for being grounded and effective as an advocate, while Mark inspires me with new enthusiasm every time we talk."