

walk

Pilot Program Promotes Children Walking to School

The National Park Service recently sponsored a study for the Town of Arlington that promotes children walking and bicycling to school. WalkBoston, Sustrans, Inc. (a British charitable organization), and Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. conducted the study for the Park Service.

Nearly one in four children in America is overweight and inactivity is causing a decline in the overall health of the nation's youth. Children often get rides to school rather than walking or biking. Sustrans, Inc. has been directing Safe Routes to Schools programs in ten schools in the UK for the past five years. Sustrans has achieved success in increasing the number of students walking and biking to school and simultaneously making their journeys safer. At one junior high school, slow speed zones, safe crossings, bike training, and other actions led to a 30% reduction in parents driving their children to school.

The study for Arlington focused on the Dalvin Grade School and the Ottoson Middle School. Surveys of the Dalvin children found that around 70 percent were driven by car to the school. On the other hand, a survey of the parents found that around 78 percent had walked

to school when they were in elementary school and a similar number commented that in an "ideal Arlington" they would like their children to walk to school.

Unfortunately, the Dalvin neighborhood has many streets without sidewalks, and many locations that seem dangerous to children and their parents. Ironically, one of the worst places may be near the school itself as parents maneuver their cars to drop off and pick up their children.

The study made recommendations for change tailored to the needs of each school. These included:

- (1) Initiate "walking buses," for the younger children where a group of children walk to school by a predetermined route with two parent volunteers and a wagon/cart for backpacks.
- (2) Help organize youth walking groups.
- (3) Mark the pedestrian and bike routes and crossings.
- (4) Install additional and continuous sidewalks.
- (5) Install pavement striping to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists.
- (6) Implement traffic calming measures adjacent to the school, including more Walk signals.
- (7) Offer safety training to the children.

Boston

A NON-PROFIT
PEDESTRIAN ADVOCACY
ORGANIZATION

SPRING 2000

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

WalkBoston is celebrating, and we want you to come and bring friends. March 30 is our 10th—anniversary Annual Meeting, and speakers Robert Campbell and Peter Vanderwarker will contrast old and new streetscapes—the good, the bad, the correctable. There will also be delicious home-made food, warm and friendly schmoozing, the coveted Golden Shoe awards for outstanding pedestrian achievements and a clear view from Hale and Dorr's glorious 26th floor at 60 State Street. We will have a blast. Please join us to reminisce and look forward.

As we look ahead, we have a new newsletter format and are celebrating a doubled corporate membership and a 36% larger general membership. We are a mainstay of America WALKs nationally and the Massachusetts Trails and Greenways Network statewide. Most exciting, our ideas are spreading. You can see it in letters to newspapers, in neighborhood demands for traffic calming, and gradually in government responses. To see our ideas spreading is the highest satisfaction.

See you on March 30 to celebrate.



Ann Hershfang

Boston Study to Create a New Transportation Vision

Boston is undertaking a citywide transportation plan with the purpose of improving the city's transportation system while also preserving communities and enhancing the environment. The project is being undertaken by Rizzo Associates and Frederic. R. Harris, and is being managed by the Boston Transportation Department. WalkBoston's Dorothea Hass is serving on the Advisory Committee on Transportation (ACT) that will provide continual feedback to the study as it progresses.

ACCESS BOSTON 2000-2010 will involve many different groups, including neighborhoods, businesses, environmental and advocacy groups. Neighborhood meetings and project workshops so far have helped define four goals: serving the neighborhoods (recognizing the community-building capability of transportation projects), balancing transportation needs, managing park-

ing, and enhancing regional connections. Community Workshops to discuss related topics will be held each month at the Boston Public Library, Copley Square, 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

A draft mission statement and project goals were announced at the January 2000 Community Workshop. More information as well as notes from the past workshops can be viewed on the project web site at <http://www.cityofboston.com/accessboston>. Upcoming meetings include Parking and Commercial Vehicles (April 19), Bicycle and Pedestrian Issues and Introduction to Traffic Calming (May 17), and Neighborhood Traffic Calming Practices and Policies (June 20). These workshops are an excellent opportunity for all who love to walk and want a safer and more pleasant walking environment to make your opinions and ideas heard.

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WALKBOSTON NEWSLETTER

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and advocacy.

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

mission

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walkboston

calendar

Walk Boston Annual Meeting

We're celebrating our 10th anniversary gala at Hale and Dorr, 60 State Street, 26th floor, 5:30—8pm. Thanks to Rob Tuchman, the location will provide us with a wonderful view of Boston as we sample excellent food and drink. Bring a friend. Take the Orange or Blue line to State Street, or the Green line to Gov't Center. Parking is available. RSVP to: 617.451.1570

Statewide Pedestrian Conference

will be held in Worcester MA on May 24. For information call Josh Lehman at 973-7329 or josh.lehman@state.ma.us.

11th Annual ProBike/ProWalk

Conference will be held in Philadelphia, Sept. 5-9,2000. Email bikefed@aol.com for information.

achievements

WalkBoston received a 3-year grant from Massachusetts Cultural Council.

WalkBoston is in the 1999 Catalogue for Philanthropy as "the first charity in the nation to give pedestrians a voice in transportation."

The American Institute of Architects honored Ann Hershfang for her contributions to "a new urban vision" for Boston.

Rebecca Barnes won election as Boston Society of Architects Vice-President/President-elect.

Thank you MBTA The Cambridge Pedestrian Committee thanks General Manager Robert Prince for the MBTA's snow plowing from the Somerville Ave. sidewalk approaching Porter Square Station.

walktalk

"A recent study showed that walking improved the mental abilities of people over 60, including those who had previously been sedentary."
— From NYT 1/18/00

Design is never a problem, resistance is, and changing minds.
— Dan Burden, *Walkable Communities*

wish list

Volunteers needed

- bookkeeping skills, 6 hrs. a month.
- assemble WalkBoston news-clips.
- entrepreneurs to sell the Shawmut Peninsula Map.

MacIntosh Power PC or better.

ongoing projects

Working with Boston Pedestrian Protection Program to change its focus to dangerous driving and improving WALK signals, rather than lecturing pedestrians.

Assisting formation of a new pedestrian group in Arlington MA.

Advising developer on a pedestrian-friendly redesign of the Porter Square Mall in Cambridge.

Comments on:

- Mass Turnpike/Millennium project
- Strategic Development Study for MassPike air rights
- Fan Pier Proposal

Supporting legislation to:

- Lower speedlimits
- Make crosswalks safer
- Extend hours of MBTA service

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 walkbos@shore.net | www.walkboston.org

name(s) _____

address _____

phone:daytime _____ evening _____

e-mail _____ fax _____

- check one: STUDENT / SENIOR OVER 70 \$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.

America WALKs

America WALKs membership is now up to 15 groups from around the country including BayPeds (San Francisco), Feet First (Seattle), Los Angeles Walks, Na Kama Hele (Honolulu), PEDS (Atlanta), PhillyWalks!, Oakland Pedestrian Safety Project, WALK Austin, WalkBoston, Walk/Bike Nashville, WALK DC, Walk New York, WalkSacramento, Walk San Diego, and the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition (Portland, OR). Current activities are to develop a start-up kit to assist new groups, and to provide resource speakers, training materials and workshops. The next meeting will take place in September at the ProBike/ProWalk Conference.

Poster supports greenway project

The Emerald Necklace "Greenway" is a proposed continuous path system from Franklin Park to the Charles River for pedestrians and bicyclists. A beautiful 18" by 24" poster, suitable for framing, is now available to promote the project. The poster was designed and written by WalkBoston member Don Eunson, and includes a fanciful, full-color illustration on the front by Jamaica Plain artist Paul Normandia.

Posters can be ordered by mail for a \$10 donation (includes postage and handling) from:
Emerald Necklace Greenway Project, c/o BikeBoston, P.O. Box 743, Boston, MA 02130.