

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 9, 2017

8:00 AM

City Hall, Second Floor Conference
Room

Members Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair
Thom Little, Member
Charles Redfern, Member
Don Hayes, Member
Sam Hawkes, Alternate
Mr. Benik Benik, Alternate
Drew Bryenton, Guest

Staff Present:

Will Schoefman

Members Not Present:

Ed Guyot
Christopher Brehme, Vice Chair

1) **Call to order and roll call**

Roll call was conducted. Mr. Little stated that Mr. Benik and Mr. Hayes would be serving as full members to achieve quorum. The meeting began at 8:10 am.

2) **Approve June 14, 2017 minutes**

Mr. Little moved to accept the July minutes with revisions. Mr. Redfern seconded and it passed by unanimous vote of the committee.

Page 2, South Bridge, change: "Assistant Commissioner Clement and Grandmaison" to "Christopher Clement and Ronal Grandmaison."

Page 3, Lighting, change: "recommendations for preferred siting options" to "recommendations for preferred siting options."

Page 4, Lighting, paragraph 3, move paragraphs to become: Page 3, NH Pass Signage, paragraph 3

Page 5, Lighting, paragraph 1, change "North Bridge" to "South Bridge"

Page 5, Lighting, paragraph 2, change: "Mr. Little said his only concern with the report was the \$2 amount in Table 1, but the concrete to "Mr. Little said the concrete."

3) Project Updates

(Note: BPPAC Master Plan Documents available to committee members on google drive)

Cheshire Rail Trail- Park Avenue TAP project-Mr. Schoefman stated that the preferred alternative was coming from the Rail Trail from Hurricane to Amy Brown Road, drainage, draining, resurfacing, brush clearing, and then down Amy Brown Road will be a similar improvement to the Rail Trail. He said here will be some signage and a shared lane or shoulder marking in between Amy brown road along Skyline Drive down to Summit rd. Along Summit Road there will be a side path which will either be granite or paved depending on the budget, all the way down Summit Road onto Park Avenue will be 4 foot bike lanes preceding to shared lane markings underneath the overpass when it turns into West Street and then an improved transition into the Cheshire Rail Trail dog leg which is that connector by Kohl's to the Cheshire Railtrail path. He stated that this was the preferred alternative the City Council approved on June 1.

Mr. Hayes asked about the plan for the underpass. Mr. Schoefman replied that they will do shared lane markings in the underpass, that it is a very tight space and the State already did some work five years ago so any significant changes would be out of budget. Mr. Little asked whether there is sufficient funding to do everything presented to the MSFI. Mr. Schoefman said those alternatives were selected through project scope and funding availability. He said there were other considerations such as creating connectivity through the neighborhood, improving sections of Blossom Street and a couple of other pieces that in the long run ended up being outside of project scope and budget. Mr. Little stated that perhaps in the interest of freeing up some of the project's budget, that they could have the State do the work of putting the markings on the pavement instead. Mr. Schoefman said there are currently no problems with the project budget based on the preferred alternatives they have proposed.

Chair Rubin entered the room late. Mr. Little handed leading the meeting to Chair Rubin.

Mr. Schoefman stated the he and a CHA consultant attended the NHDOT Wetlands Review meeting last month. He said the consultant will participate in follow up meetings with the review committee which includes representatives from different agencies all throughout NH that manage wetlands resources, including the Army Corps f Engineers, NHDES and a couple pf other organizations. He also stated that the Division of Historic Resources meeting was last month which he did not attend, but he will be receiving feedback about meeting as well. Mr. Schoefman stated that they should have the engineering study submitted to NHDOT over the next couple of weeks. Mr. Redfern asked when the construction phase would begin. Mr. Schoefman replied next year with the new construction season.

South Bridge- Mr. Little stated that the South Bridge Mayor celebration was done two months ago. He said that the construction signs have been removed from the project area and the only thing item that is remaining at the site is the barrier around the bridge. He

asked Mr. Schoefman if the barrier will be removed. Mr. Schoefman asked if he was referring to the surface water runoff barriers. He said that they are most likely required to leave the barriers in place for filtering sediment during rain storms. He said that without knowing the actual regulations that they have to follow he could not reliably answer Mr. Little's question. Mr. Little asked if the project is officially done and Mr. Schoefman said he believes so. Mr. Little stated that the bollards on either side of the bridge have locks on them and he asked who has the keys for them. Mr. Redfern said that the City has a set of keys that is strictly for City use, emergency vehicles, etc. Mr. Little said there are access roads on either side and that those could be accessed if for example, Keene State College needed to use the bridge to access the fields.

Master Plan-Mr. Schoefman said that he has not recently worked on the Master Plan as he has been working on a grant opportunity for a Complete Streets project. He said he will hopefully be getting back on track and providing a revised schedule for production to the committee. Mr. Little said he provided two descriptions and Mr. Schoefman said he received them and that they will be rolled into the next release for the committee.

-Sidewalk Pedestrian Connectivity Condition Assessment –Mr. Schoefman explained that the Department of Public Works is currently utilizing an app to complete a sidewalk condition assessment for sidewalks across the city. He said the Department has a part-time employee working on the assessment which he believes is about 65% complete. He said that the condition assessment of the sidewalks can be utilized for assessing the walkability of sidewalks which is an exciting step.

Lighting Project-Mr. Schoefman referred to the KSC geography student who completed the lighting study and said that if committee members had not yet seen the study he would send them along. He said preferred siting options have been selected by Pathways for Keene and that they are in control of the selection of lights and is putting together a private RFP process for vendor applications. Mr. Redfern said a 1.5 page RFP was put out and is now in the hand of the vendors. He said there are at least 4-5 vendors that will be responding and probably more. He said that they kept the RFO simple so that it would be easy for vendors to put together proposals. He stated that vendor presentations were important for learning about the industry and helped inform the RFP. Mr. Redfern said the due date on the RFP is most likely the end of August or first week in September. He said a 3 person committee will review proposals, rank them, develop recommendations and present it to the Board. The committee consists of Jan Manwaring, Phil Jones and himself. The Board will then vote on recommendations. Mr. Redfern said he believes that there will be additional funds for the project beyond the \$31,000 and he anticipates it will amount to at least \$20,000 for a total of \$50,000 for the project segment.

Mr. Little asked Mr. Redfern if there is consideration of the concrete foundations and the poles that are being used due to the ever evolving technology for the lighting systems. Mr. Redfern replied that they are certainly looking into modernized systems that can be replaced easily. He said that the fixture heads can hold the solar panel and the battery that keeps a charge much longer than an average battery, however, they are considering the expense of replacing those batteries and will most likely work with the City on these

questions. Mr. Little asked if the City requires a standardized bracket and if they will be complying with those guidelines. Mr. Redfern stated that they would work closely with the City on the best options for the foundation of poles per City guidelines.

Chair Rubin asked Mr. Redfern what role he sees BPPAC playing in the gift from Pathways for Keene. She asked Mr. Redfern if City staff is on board to support the lighting project. Mr. Redfern stated that BPPAC's role was primarily in securing the study for the lighting project and that the results of the study were instrumental in developing insight and soliciting funds. He said Pathways could also give a presentation if BPPAC is interested. He also suggested having a vendor come in and present a lighting system to BPPAC. Chair Rubin said a vendor presentation may not be necessary but that she thinks it would be helpful for BPPAC to support the recommendations before they present to the Council. Mr. Redfern said he will have selection committee members deliver a presentation to BPPAC once they have narrowed down the vendors.

Mr. Hawkes motioned to craft a letter to thank the KSC undergraduate geography student who produced the study, Zach Pero, Mr. Schoefman said he could provide Chair Rubin with letterhead to construct a letter. Mr. Redfern suggested including in the letter that the study results have been used extensively in Pathways for Keene's public outreach program.

Mr. Little asked who would be held responsible if someone were to be injured by the light poles or components. Chair Rubin said that the issue may be outside the scope of the committee. Mr. Little disagreed. Mr. Redfern said the City will be doing the installation as it is a gift so the infrastructure will be covered under the City's standard policies for infrastructure. Mr. Redfern said the City may choose to contract the infrastructure out but that the RFP does not include installation.

4) Bicycle Mayor Initiative

Mr. Schoefman referenced a letter he wrote as Chair of MAST which details the Bicycle Mayor initiative. He said that the letter was written as part of one of MAST's projects and is centered on what can be done to make Keene a League of American Bicyclists, bike-friendly Silver level city. He said Mr. Hawkes helped put him in touch with Tiffany Mannion, who is currently the only League of American Bicyclist certified instructor in the area. Ms. Mannion attended a MAST meeting and they spoke about her interest in the Bicycle Mayor initiative. Mr. Schoefman said that as Bicycle Mayor, Ms. Mannion would coordinate across all different groups from private to public sector, to bring a handful of her initiatives throughout the community together. He said it is a great opportunity for the city because there are currently no Bicycle Mayors officially appointment by Cycle Space in the United States yet. He said she has received a Monadnock Buy Local crowd funding sourced grant opportunity to support her work on a part-time basis throughout the year. Mr. Schoefman said she has 3 focus areas which are aimed at coordinating with different groups and he would like to bring her into BPPAC to introduce herself and present her ideas. Mr. Bryenton added that he sees her as the point

person for MAST's initiatives which is a benefit to the objectives of MAST bicycle-friendly initiatives.

Mr. Schoefman said Ms. Mannion completed a training program in Portland, and her focus is bicycle education and perhaps creating content for a web portal for safe cycling and helping to coordinate community events that showcase bicycling.

Mr. Redfern asked if Ms. Mannion wrote a letter to Pathways for Keene and if a letter of support should come from BPPAC as well. Mr. Schoefman said he would like to bring her in to present first before asking BPPAC to support her with a letter. He said he just wanted to put her on the committee's radar because if she is appointed by Cycle Space as Bicycle Mayor, she could become the first Bicycle Mayor in the region and that could create interconnectedness with a network of international bicycling communities. Mr. Bryenton asked if her appointment is contingent upon how successful the Buy Local funding campaign is. Mr. Schoefman said that was a way for her to create an internal revenue stream to do about 3-4 hours of part-time work. He said she has met with the Mayor and will get a letter of support from him as well and the Mayor may announce the crowd funding campaign at one of the fall festivals to help launch the initiative. He said she is currently plugging three focus areas that relate to MAST initiatives and also components of the Master Plan.

Chair Rubin said she also spoke to Ms. Mannion and visited the Cycle Space website and wondered if the City could appoint her or someone else as Bicycle Mayor as opposed to having Ms. Mannion exist outside of the infrastructure of the City. She emphasized that pathway could be more impactful in terms of infrastructure. Mr. Schoefman said he has already encouraged her to line up resources through the Southwest Planning Commission and Keene Parks and Recreation. He said that avenue may be more feasible in terms of securing City support. Chair Rubin said she disagrees and that they could mobilize resources within the City to have a Bicycle Mayor in the City of Keene who brings a face to advocacy around building bicycle infrastructure and the public will for supporting bicycle projects and infrastructure. Mr. Hawkes said he was under the impression that the City was going to adopt her as a Bicycle Mayor and Chair Rubin said that Ms. Mannion made it clear that that was not the avenue they were taking with this initiative. She emphasized that there should be an entity she is associated with and would like to see a big picture approach to the opportunity as someone dedicated to the City of Keene. Mr. Benik agreed that the opportunity should be seized to have the City create the possibility of a Bicycle Mayor appointment by creating a committee and then taking it from there.

Mr. Redfern asked if Chair Rubin was thinking about a budget from the City for the position and Chair Rubin said no and she referenced the website and encouraged others to learn more about the role of Bicycle Mayor in other locations. She emphasized that if a city adopts a Bicycle Mayor they are demonstrating their commitment to bicycle infrastructure, education and community involvement. She said the issue deserves more discussion. Mr. Brehme asked if it would be appropriate to ask the City of Keene if they are interested in having a Bicycle Mayor. Chair Rubin again encouraged everyone to visit the Bicycle Mayor website by searching Cycle Space.

Mr. Little added that the initiative is more likely in parallel to what BPPAC is doing as opposed to directly relevant and he suggested creating a petition independent of BPPAC. Chair Rubin agreed that a petition would be a great Pathways for Keene initiative. Mr. Redfern said Ms. Mannion has engaged with Pathways and he thinks that for recognition purposes her initiative could earn the region a silver-level award. He said it is unclear how that would impact Keene specifically but that BPPAC should support her enthusiasm for the current initiative and see where it leads after her presentation. Mr. Hawkes said that a City-appointed Bicycle Mayor would most likely have more leverage in the application for silver-level recognition. Mr. Schoefman suggested maybe they gauge her interest for City-appointment during her presentation and in the meantime he would ask her if she would like to attend the next committee meeting.

West Street

Mr. Schoefman asked Chair Rubin if she would like to move West Street to next month's meeting as they are low on time and she asked Mr. Schoefman to give a quick synopsis.

Mr. Schoefman suggested that BPPAC refresh their memory on the Complete Streets Guidelines and coordinate a 15 minute Q&A session with the engineer to assess what a Complete Street on West Street would look like. Chair Rubin said they should have an informational session next month without the engineer in preparation for the meeting. Mr. Schoefman said he would resend the Complete Streets Guidelines as a main item so that members can review it again and familiarize themselves with issues, such as the sidewalks, crossings on West Street, etc. Chair Rubin asked if the Southwest Region Planning Commission have done pedestrian audits and Mr. Schoefman said he would ask them but he does not believe they have done a pedestrian survey of crossing activity. Chair Rubin agreed that they need additional data to create a case for support and members should review the Complete Street Guidelines for next month's meeting and come up with thoughts on improvements that could be made to West Street. Mr. Schoefman said he will email the Guidelines to committee members or print out copies to those who need them.

MAST Complete Streets Mini Grant Award- Mr. Schoefman announced that he secured a \$10,000 Complete Streets Mini Grant Award through SWRPC for Complete Street improvements. Mr. Schoefman said the City Engineer and he put together an application. He referred to the map in the packet for the proposed project which includes about 650-800 feet of bike lanes from the State right of way on Main Street up to where the inline parking begins. He said that will transition into sharrows that are framed by hashed lanes in the right lanes and there will also be signage advising people what the lane marking mean. He stated there will also be sharrows in the roundabout positioned appropriately per Federal Highway MUTCD guidelines and then more signage and sharrows continued through Main Street downtown and the circle. He said the biggest feature is the installation of bike boxes at Main Street and Central Square, northbound and southbound. He said there is a little image on top right of the poster illustrating what a bike box is and explained that it is a 12-15 foot shaded cuing area for bicycles ahead of where traffic stops at intersections to help give bicyclists visibility when entering

intersections. He said the bike boxes will be in the two right lanes heading northbound in the circle and southbound if you are crossing over from West Street. He said he does not know of any other municipalities that have bike boxes in New Hampshire.

Mr. Bryenton asked if there was a bike box proposed for the intersection at the underpass (Amy Brown Rd) as one of the main advantages of bike boxes is it prevents the right hand turn cutting of the cyclists and he says there is a safety issue at the location. Mr. Schoefman said he does not think there was one proposed for that area but he says there will be pavement paint and signage for motorists and bicycles.

Mr. Schoefman also referenced the Complete Street Guidelines for understanding keys on map. In response to Chair Rubin's inquiry about West Street, he said West Street is a slow street on the map until it hits the School street intersection and then it opens up into a gateway street. Mr. Little said he parks in the Wells Street garage and the markings have disappeared and now bicycles come through at a great speed and he is afraid that someone will eventually get hurt. Mr. Schoefman said that it is a parking lot -type situation and it is hard to address. Mr. Schoefman said people ride wrong way on bike lanes all over town. Mr. Little said there should be markings and Mr. Schoefman said it is a larger issue than just that area. Chair Rubin agreed that was a bigger discussion. Mr. Schoefman said the grant needs to be implemented by November and an RFP will go out for the striping.

5) **Complete Streets** - Moved to next month's agenda.

6) **Old Business**- None at this time.

7) **New Business**

Mr. Redfern stated that the Keene Federal Congressional Delegation, Senator Jeanne Shaheen has put in an amendment to the appropriations bill to allow ATVs on the trails if there is an economic value to the activity.

He requested that organizations submit letters of concern (e.g. Pathways for Keene, Healthy Monadnock, BPPAC, etc.) about this bill because the law currently prohibits it. He stated that Keene built the trails and they will not last two years if ATVs are allowed to ride them. He said he is looking for letters of support and will send templates by email to the committee to speak out against the amendment. He emphasized that years of work is at jeopardy in two seasons if ATVs are allowed to utilize trails.

Mr. Little stated that if snow is on the ground the ATVs are treated as snowmobiles and allowed on the trails. He said he researched the issue and discovered the top speed is 90 mph, which is alarming. He suggested BPPAC put in a motion to City Council against including ATVs on multiuse trails. He stated is in full support of the way in which Keene is handling the situation and perhaps BPPAC should recommend that City Council take action beyond a letter. Mr. Schoefman said the BPPAC is advisory to City Council so the

motion would involve making a motion to City Council to recommend not changing the current policy.

Chair Rubin motioned to write a letter to City Council requesting that federal guidelines on ATV use on New Hampshire's rail trails be upheld with regard to Senator Shaheen's amendment. Mr. Little seconded and motion was passed by unanimous vote of the committee.

8) Adjournment-Next meeting date –September 13, 2017

Chair Rubin adjourned the meeting at 9:20 am.

Respectfully submitted by,
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,
Will Schoefmann, Planning Department Staff