

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 8, 2016

8:00 AM

2nd floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair  
Christopher Brehme, Vice Chair  
Thom Little  
Don Hayes (until 9:15 AM)  
Ed Guyot

Staff Present:

William Schoefmann, Planning  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works (from 8:29 to  
9:15 AM)

Members Not Present:

Charles (Chuck) Redfern  
Emily Cooley, Alternate

Chair Rubin called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

1) Roll Call

Roll call was conducted.

2) Accept Minutes of May 11, 2016

Mr. Little made a motion to approve the minutes of May 11, 2016, with corrections. He stated that on page 2, in the first paragraph, they should change “Mr. Redfern asked” to “Councilor Jay Kahn was recognized by Chair Brehme. Mr. Redfern asked”

Mr. Little stated that on Page 4, “3) Project Updates, a) See Attached Table” is incorrect. He stated: “The updated table that corresponded to the minutes was not included in the minutes. It is assumed that this will be page 9 of 9. It is assumed this will not be labeled ‘DRAFT.’ It is assumed this will contain the date of May 11, 2016.”

Mr. Schoefmann stated that until/unless he gets permission from the City Clerk’s Office to include that project list in the minutes, he needs to send it as an attachment. Mr. Little replied that in that case, the “a) See Attached Table” wording in the minutes should be deleted, since the minutes do not include the table.

Discussion ensued about how to handle this. Mr. Guyot suggested that two separate issues are 1) correcting and approving the minutes from May 11, and 2) deciding how to handle the table. He suggested deleting the reference to the “attached table” (as Mr. Little suggested) in the May minutes, and keeping the sentence “Mr. Little stated that the

first two items on the table (Roundhouse T Phase II and Cheshire Rail Trail Phase II) can be deleted because they are completed.

Discussion continued about the table, regarding whether to have it included in the minutes, or have it be an attachment, or do away with it altogether and use the agenda to keep track of projects, like they used to. Mr. Little stated that Mr. Schoefmann came up with the idea of having the table to help move the meetings along and it has been effective. But how it gets incorporated into the formal minutes, so people in years to come can see it when they look at meeting minutes/the BPPAC's historical record, is what he was trying to clarify. It is up to staff to decide how to include information in the minutes. After more discussion about how to best use the table, Chair Rubin stated that she thinks it would be appropriate to have the table as a working document. She continued that when Mr. Schoefmann goes to update the table based on the updates given during the BPPAC meeting, that updated table should reflect the date the changes were made and that table should go out with the minutes two weeks before the next meeting. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they can try to arrange something like that.

Mr. Brehme seconded the motion to approve the May minutes with corrections. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

### **3) Project Updates**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that the Roundhouse T Phase II and Cheshire Rail Trail Phase II have been removed as requested.

#### **A) Jonathan Daniels Trail**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Mr. Bohannon is still getting estimates from a couple companies. He continued that hopefully they will have answers solid towards the end of the summer. Mr. Brehme asked if there is a certain design in mind for surfacing the trail. Mr. Schoefmann replied crushed stone dust with drainage and grading improvements and some brush cutting. Mr. Brehme replied that that is significant. Mr. Schoefmann replied yes, it could be up to a \$100,000 project.

#### **B) Jonathan Daniels Trail Phase II**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that as noted, the City Council removed this from the CIP. There is no other status update. Based on the last meeting, BPPAC added it to the priorities list in the first category of "trail construction."

#### **C) Cheshire Rail Trail - Park Ave Loop**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that they are in scope and fee negotiations with the selected engineering design firm. There will be a public meeting at the YMCA and the BPPAC will be notified.

#### **D) South Bridge**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Mr. Little has updates.

Mr. Little distributed copies of the following update, in writing:

“I asked Ronald Grandmaison (Project Manager) on June 6 if there was anything he would like to announce at today’s BPPAC meeting.

He stated ...

- Steel fabrication is in full swing.
- South pier
  - Contractor will excavate for the south pier footing June 7.
  - Pile driving will begin as early as June 8.
- A surcharge is “extra” soil piled on an area to get the underlying ground to settle so the structure can be constructed on a solid base.
  - Surcharges have been in place for a number of weeks and there has been very little settlement overall.
- There has been no changes at the abutment settlement platforms over the last two weeks.”

Mr. Schoefmann stated that it is slated to complete in the end of the construction season. Mr. Little replied that it must be done by Oct. 28 because they cannot process a change order after that. Mr. Hayes noted that the Oct. 28 date is noted wrong (on the Project Updates list that is attached to the BPPAC’s June 8, 2016 agenda).

#### **E) Bike Racks**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that they have been set out downtown. He did a walk with Highway Foreman Billy Byrnes and looked at a couple spots where they might be able to augment some of the existing racks. They are looking at getting more meter hitches, like others in town that were fabricated in-house by the Public Works Department.

Chair Rubin asked for a new one in front of City Hall. The current one is old and not as safe or up-to-date. She asked if Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) has any of those left. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they could probably go on two by fours; they could not be permanent because of snow removal.

Mr. Blomquist arrived at 8:29 AM.

Chair Rubin talked more about the bikes and the bike racks at City Hall. Discussion ensued about how to safely attach bikes to racks. Chair Rubin stated that in front of City Hall they should have the most up-to-date bike racks to showcase them. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he will look into it. He will update the bike parking map and get that out to the public on the Keene Paths website. He asked if the BPPAC wants them to look into a different rack for City Hall. Mr. Hayes and Chair Rubin replied yes. Mr. Blomquist asked what to do with the blue one that is there now. Discussion ensued.

### **F) Complete Streets**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he does not have many updates. He continued that the resolution and the design guidelines are completed. Now it is a matter of implementation and baseline data collection. He has been batting around an idea with Mr. Brehme about a student project. Mr. Brehme replied that his students surveyed some of the gateway streets based on the criteria in the document, segment by segment. He continued that he will share that information with Mr. Schoefmann.

Chair Rubin stated that she appreciated Councilor Kahn's comments about public input. She continued that she started thinking back – the BPPAC had a presentation on Complete Streets. Can they do something in the fall to invite the public and talk about the strides the City has made and get some public input? They could get input on topics like what Councilor Kahn was talking about, such as where the public thinks sidewalks are needed or where they feel unsafe. There is an opportunity with this award-winning set of guidelines to share that with the community and get their input.

Mr. Little stated that two weeks ago there was a public event at Hannah Grimes - a high-level overview of what Complete Streets is. Mr. Schoefmann stated that it was part of Bike To Work Week. Mr. Little stated that there was a presentation followed by a tour of Keene. He continued that that might be a good tie-in. Mr. Schoefmann stated that there is a Complete Streets workshop that is coming up. He will send the BPPAC the pamphlet. Part of it is a demonstration but mostly it is an educational workshop. He understands what Chair Rubin is saying about involving the public. They can put this under "New Business" for next time. Chair Rubin agreed.

### **G) Master Plan**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that they are still plugging away.

### **H) Mayor's Challenge**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the Mayor made a proclamation for National Bike Month, National Bike to Work Week, and National Bike/Walk to Work Day, all in one, for the event the City held in conjunction with the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) and SWRPC. It was tied to goals that had been identified by the Mayor's Challenge. They still have the self-assessment that the BPPAC did, to help guide some of the goals in the Master Plan once he starts to formulate and write it. They can probably include it as an appendix.

Chair Rubin asked if it was submitted to the national people. Mr. Schoefmann replied that it was not really meant to be submitted; it is a toolbox for local municipalities and organizations to help them with their work. The Mayor's Challenge is ongoing. The goal is to ramp up bike and pedestrian infrastructure by March.

Chair Rubin stated that the BPPAC had asked a few meetings ago to get the final assessment. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he can post it to the webpage. He asked if

BPPAC members are successfully accessing Google Drive. He continued that he can post this and other documents there.

#### **I) Signage**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that they have some sites identified for the 3-foot passing signs that the Monadnock Cycling Club purchased. He continued that they have had to find locations. They worked with Dave Bergeron. Mr. Blomquist replied that the signs were designed to be on the highway, so they looked at locations at entrances to the highway, and gave some examples. They have two smaller signs to go in other locations. Mr. Schoefmann gave more information about what the signs look like.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that there is an internal group working on some wayfinding ideas. When they make progress he will update the BPPAC.

#### **J) Lighting**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Mr. Bohannon is working with one of Mr. Brehme's students on mapping and identifying trail segments that will be ideal for lighting. He will keep the BPPAC posted.

#### **4) BPPAC Master Plan – Priorities and Discussion Exercise**

Chair Rubin stated that they started prioritization last month and everyone was supposed to do some rating on their own in preparation for today's meeting.

Mr. Schoefmann went over the updates that were made to the document – On page 2, under “Trail System Categories,” BE9, Jonathan Daniels Trail II is added, with a description of what is intended for it. Considering it has been removed from the CIP two years in a row they have to get creative about how to fund it. Mr. Bohannon is working on getting a solid estimate. It is on staff's radar but they rated it “low.” The Recreational Trails Grant next year might be good; they can apply for that.

Mr. Guyot spoke about how the BPPAC is advisory to the City Council and should be advising the City Council on what they, as the BPPAC/supposed experts, see as the priorities, not necessarily reacting to Council positions. Chair Rubin replied that the BPPAC can rate it “high” – there are two axes on the matrix. Staff rates each project and the BPPAC rates each project. Mr. Schoefmann showed the matrix and talked about how projects are ranked from staff's perspective. He stated that he personally this project was important enough to put in the CIP as a request for the past 3 years.

Mr. Little stated that the term “priority” can be confusing - for example, it could imply choosing which project out of five projects is the priority and should be done first, but that is not what they are doing. They are talking about how important each project is. He does not know how to prioritize one project without thinking about all of them. They can make the judgment of importance by just focusing on a single project.

Mr. Little stated that he thinks there is a need to add three projects to this list. Chair Rubin stated that she thinks it is fine to add projects. Mr. Little replied that they keep

going back and forth with “priority” and “importance,” using the words interchangeably, but he thought they were talking about “importance.” Chair Rubin replied that the BPPAC is ranking projects, prioritizing them on community safety, accessibility, sustainability, connectivity, and availability, regardless of how staff has ranked them. What they do next, regarding which projects they want to advocate for there being movement on, they can decide. For example, the Jonathan Daniels Trail Phase II project - if it is low for staff but high for BPPAC, it does not mean that they do not advocate for it. They could say that the top five that got high rankings from both staff and the BPPAC should be worked on in the next year, but then they need to do organizational advocacy to projects the BPPAC rated high but staff did not. There are multiple things that could come out of this. Initially it gives direction to the BPPAC and staff to see which are short-term priorities in the next one to two years. If the Jonathan Daniels Trail Phase II is high priority to the BPPAC they should think about how to advocate for that. Mr. Schoefmann replied yes, it will guide the approach that might be necessary from the BPPAC and maybe with assistance from other organizations.

Mr. Guyot replied that he thinks he is hearing the next step is a ranking. He understands Mr. Little’s point – one definition of “priority” is like what he said, ‘what is the first thing to do, then the second.’ They are not applying that definition. They can have 25 high priority projects. It does not mean they will do all 25 immediately. They have to rank them.

Mr. Little replied that it helps to be very precise about what the project is. The one they are about to come up with is BE3 – Address Six Foot Wide Trail Section on Emerald Street. They got bogged down last month talking about how wide it should be and what the wording should be and whether or not it is possible. A suggestion he had for an additional project was BE36: any trail in concrete should be marked so people know it is a trail. The real issue is that there is a 6-foot wide concrete sidewalk that people do not ride bikes on as the City expects them to. People ride in the street. They are talking about a transition between a current project that was just completed (Roundhouse T Phase II) and a new one that has not been designed yet, going from School Street to Main Street. There is a half block between the two of them. To him it is of high importance to mark all the concrete sections of trails so people know they are trails.

He continued that he has another project to add. He thinks getting the bicyclists onto the sidewalk is a high importance. Chair Rubin replied that he can write it up and send it to everyone for consideration at the next meeting. Mr. Little replied that he has it written up, and sent it to staff a month ago.

Mr. Brehme stated that he thinks that idea is covered by the wayfinding signs project. It is a wayfinding issue regardless of where it is applied. Mr. Little is talking about one example of wayfinding.

Chair Rubin replied that they do not have to argue the validity of any project on here. They can just rate “low” or “high” and move on, instead of arguing to take something off the list. She suggests they trust the process. They will rate according to what they

determine to be the definition of “importance”. They can add new things and rate them too.

Mr. Little asked what they should do with BE3. Mr. Blomquist replied that he concurs with Chair Rubin that they need to first go through the list. He continued that they need to identify the importance of each, then see how many high/highs, high/med, etc. they have, and prioritize based on that. Then they can explore the validity of a project.

Mr. Little stated that if BE3 is not broken up into two sections it is given, in his opinion, an abnormally high importance. Mr. Blomquist replied that there are six other members to give their opinions on it. He continued that they can leave the project as proposed and go through the process. Mr. Little replied that the project was for widening a 5 foot sidewalk to 6 feet. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he fixed it for this meeting, so it says to increase the width to 8 feet on the sidewalk segment from School St. to Emerald St. Look at BE18: there is an overall Complete Streets implementation that was an overall project that characterizes the other projects he has, like sidewalk connectivity. There is this great document with momentum and he thought it should be part of the plan.

Chair Rubin asked what people think BE3 should be ranked. Mr. Little stated “high.” Mr. Hayes stated “medium.” Chair Rubin and Mr. Brehme stated “low.” Mr. Guyot stated “medium.” Chair Rubin stated that she could go to “medium.”

Discussion ensued. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he is hearing people say that you cannot necessarily control people’s behavior (e.g. get them to bike on a created trail, as opposed to what people think is the most direct/easiest route, even if it is not an official trail) by widening a sidewalk. Mr. Brehme replied yes, he thinks people would continue using the route they are using already instead of following the sidewalk, no matter how wide the sidewalk is. Mr. Hayes stated that six feet is pretty wide already. Mr. Brehme stated that he agrees with Mr. Little that wayfinding on this trail segment would be a high priority.

Mr. Hayes changed his vote to “low.” Mr. Little stated that he thinks people would bike on the six foot wide sidewalk, instead of the street, if they knew that that was allowed, but it is ingrained in people’s minds that they cannot ride on a sidewalk in downtown Keene. That is why he is talking about the importance of marking the concrete to make this clear.

Chair Rubin asked how making a wider sidewalk would change people’s mindsets about whether to use the sidewalk for biking or not. Mr. Little replied that the question was what is the safety of this project. Mr. Hayes stated that BE12 would address the signage.

Chair Rubin stated that there are four “low” votes and one “high.” She asked if they need consensus. Mr. Guyot stated that he started out at “medium” based on his own thinking, and through listening to the dialogue from other members, he changed to “low.” Chair Rubin asked if they can say that the group says “low” although there is one person saying “high.” Mr. Guyot stated that he totally agrees with Mr. Little about the marking, but if they are talking about widening from 6 to 8 feet, he says “low.” Mr. Little stated that if

marking the sidewalk is a separate project coming up in the list, he would rate this one as “low.” Mr. Schoefmann stated that BE12 is about markings and wayfinding. It is coming up.

Discussion continued about whether the group needs consensus about each ranking. They decided yes.

Chair Rubin asked how people rate the Jonathan Daniels Trail Maintenance.

Mr. Guyot replied “high,” because he would hate to see something they have built go by the wayside for the sake of maintenance. Mr. Blomquist replied that that is a good point. They are picking out one section. There are about 5 or 6 miles of trails in the city. Are the others important for maintenance? He does not see any other trail sections on the list for maintenance. If there are others, maybe combine them into one project called “maintenance.” Otherwise, this tells staff to stop maintenance everywhere else and focus here on this trail segment.

Mr. Schoefmann replied that a maintenance document will be separate. The BPPAC believes that maintenance is important. It is up to staff to create a plan. Mr. Blomquist replied that their mantra at the City Council is “We should maintain what we have built.”

Mr. Brehme stated that he thinks this project is more of an upgrade, not maintenance. Mr. Blomquist replied that that makes more sense. Mr. Brehme replied that the way that it winds through the woods means it needs more maintenance than general trails. Mr. Guyot replied that that is a very important distinction. He might vote differently if it is an upgrade, rather than maintenance. He might even say that a maintenance plan maybe should not even be part of this document.

At 9:15 AM, Mr. Hayes stated that since he has to leave right now, he will say, although they have not gotten to these on the list yet today, he ranks projects BE4 and BE7 as “high.” He and Mr. Blomquist both left.

Discussion continued on whether the project being ranked right now should be “maintenance” or “upgrade.” Mr. Schoefmann asked if they need another project that says “development of trail maintenance plan and strategy.” He continued that directing staff to produce that plan and strategy is a reasonable project and priority. He can add that. With that understanding, they can move forward with the list. It can go in “Trail System Projects.” Chair Rubin agreed.

Chair Rubin asked if they want to change Jonathan Daniels Trail “Maintenance” to “Upgrade” or “Improvement.” She continued that that is what it sounds like. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the last time it was worked on was approximately 5 years ago and all they did was remove dangerous trees from the middle of the path. Chair Rubin asked if people are okay to changing it. Mr. Brehme replied yes and suggested the word “improvement.”



Mr. Brehme ranked the project as “high.” It is such a gem. Many people visit Ashuelot River Park without realizing this trail continues on. Mr. Schoefmann stated that once they get going with the wayfinding, showing people where to ride or walk or informing them of destinations, will help. Mr. Little voted “low/medium.” Mr. Guyot voted “medium.” Chair Rubin voted “low/ medium.”

Chair Rubin stated that she is thinking of people needing to get places safely, like work or errands. Recreation is important, but only one piece of it. She sees this trail as more recreational. Mr. Brehme stated that he thinks people who live by Wheelock Park use this trail to get into town. He thinks the City should embrace the riverway.

Mr. Schoefmann asked if “medium” is reasonable. Mr. Brehme replied yes. Chair Rubin and Mr. Little agreed to bump up to “medium.”

Chair Rubin skipped ahead to BE7. She asked for more description regarding Appel Way. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they would go in, see what needs repairs, come up with a maintenance plan, and implement it as fiscally possible over the next four to five years. Repaving would be huge, whereas filling potholes and trimming brush would be fiscally possible. This is not a reconstruction project.

Chair Rubin asked if there is something from a safety perspective that puts the City at risk with the way Appel Way is at now, that would pull it out of a plan about maintaining the trail system. Is there something about it that is highly unsafe? Mr. Little stated that he keeps looking for precision, and he would delete “and work that follows,” because he could answer the question many different ways. What is the boundary for what it is that they are trying to evaluate? What is the project? It cannot be so wide open.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he does not know everything that needs to be done there. “Work to follow” means they will not just assess it and let it sit there. It means that they will come up with a plan and actually do the work. Mr. Little asked how they can tell what the importance is before they have answered that question. Mr. Schoefmann stated that as a whole, maintenance of the system is “medium” from his perspective. Without knowing the specifics, he knows that maintenance is a value, like Mr. Blomquist’s sentiment – maintenance is continually talked about at City Council meetings. Chair Rubin stated that that is why she was asking if there is something unsafe on that trail – she does not feel unsafe on that trail. Mr. Schoefmann stated that there are some pretty bad spots in terms of paving.

Mr. Brehme stated that he thinks whatever they rank the Jonathan Daniels Trail, they should rank this. Chair Rubin asked why they would not say “Appel Way Improvement.” If you do an assessment, there would be improvements. She thinks that should be a new title, instead of “maintenance.” If this trail is so important to connectivity, accessibility, etc., then is it really maintenance, or is it improvements?

Mr. Guyot replied that a definition would help. His is that “maintenance” is continuing the infrastructure with its designed condition in place today. For example, if it is a 4-foot

trail with a gravel skirt, you maintain it to 4-feet with a gravel skirt. An improvement would be to widen it two feet and get rid of the gravel skirt. Maintaining Appel Way is very important, but improving it might be completely different.

Mr. Schoefmann replied that if they change it to “improvement” he might have to go back and reevaluate. He thinks Mr. Guyot’s description is pretty accurate. Chair Rubin asked if repaving a path is maintenance, not improvement. Mr. Brehme agreed. Mr. Guyot replied that they talked about importance versus priority, and “improvement” versus “maintenance” is just as important. Mr. Schoefmann replied that it is kind of open. Maintenance is something they are just scratching the surface on. Mr. Guyot replied that to create a maintenance plan, they need to first define “maintenance,” and it might be helpful to the City Council to better understand it that so they can differentiate when they are considering projects. Mr. Schoefmann replied that it is important.

Chair Rubin stated that she ranks this as “low” because of the “work to follow.” This would be put in a maintenance plan. Mr. Guyot replied that he agrees with Mr. Little’s comments. Chair Rubin suggested they vote on this as is. Mr. Little suggested that the project could be the analysis with a recommendation on how to proceed. Chair Rubin asked if that would be part of the maintenance plan. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they know Appel Way needs help. They included it because they identified that and knew the maintenance plan might not be forthcoming before the Master Plan gets written. Hopefully with Mr. Bohannon they can produce that in tandem with this.

Chair Rubin asked for people’s rankings. Mr. Guyot replied “medium.” Mr. Brehme replied “medium/high,” but he can go with “medium.” Mr. Schoefmann noted that Mr. Hayes voted “high.” Chair Rubin and Mr. Little stated “medium.”

Chair Rubin stated that that is all they have time for today.

#### **5) Old Business**

#### **6) New Business**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Mr. Redfern and Mr. Bohannon have another commitment on the second Wednesdays for the next 6+ months and ask for the BPPAC to consider changing the meeting time, although nothing requires the BPPAC to do so – Mr. Redfern and Mr. Bohannon could just be absent.

Discussion ensued. Chair Rubin asked Mr. Schoefmann to send out a Doodle poll with a few options for the BPPAC to consider, and everyone can respond with their availability. She continued that the July meeting will remain at its usual time on its usual day. Mr. Little asked that people try to start the meeting on time.

Mr. Little asked if Mr. Schoefmann can send them an update (re: the project scoring that they did today) in a week or two. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he planned on being more punctual with the updates for this meeting but was out of commission with a broken leg for two weeks. He will get materials out earlier this time.

**7) Adjournment**

Hearing no further business, Chair Rubin adjourned the meeting at 9:39 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker