

City of Keene  
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, August 10, 2016

8:00 AM

2nd floor Conference Room

**Members Present:**

Ed Guyot, Acting Chair  
Thom Little  
Charles (Chuck) Redfern  
Emily Coey  
Don Hayes

**Staff Present:**

William Schoefmann, Planning  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works (arrived at 8:38 AM)

**Members Not Present:**

Linda Rubin, Chair  
Christopher Brehme, Vice Chair

Acting Chair Guyot called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM.

**1) Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted.

**2) Accept Minutes of July 13, 2016**

Mr. Little made a motion to approve the July 13, 2016 minutes with the amendments that he submitted in writing. The motion was seconded by Mr. Redfern and passed by unanimous vote.

**3) Project Updates**

**Cheshire Rail Trail Park Ave. Loop**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he has no real changes to report. He continued that they got through negotiations for the TAP project and the contract should be signed by the City Manager and everything is ready to move forward – the preliminary engineering and final design phases will be over the course of the next five months.

Mr. Redfern stated that the Keene Sentinel recently published a “reader opinion” article by a citizen who hopes that the City will not pave the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase III (Park Ave. Loop). He continued that he will call this person to tell him that crushed stone dust is the planned surface. Mr. Schoefmann replied that that is correct.

Mr. Little asked if there is a preliminary plan the BPPAC could look at. Mr. Schoefmann replied no, there is no plan, just the cost estimate so they could scope it. Discussion ensued. Mr. Little asked for further clarification about the surfacing. Mr. Schoefmann

Replied that he would say that the Amy Brown Road and rail trail are conceptualized as stone dust surfacing. He continued that there are also two trailheads scoped as part of this project, one at Whitcomb's Mill Road and the other at the corner of Summit and Summit Ridge. Mr. Redfern asked if that is City-owned property. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the City owns a small lot at the corner there.

Mr. Hayes asked about signage. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he was supposed to test some of the selected spots with the Highway foremen, but due to an injury it has been difficult for him to get out. He is hoping to do that by the end of the summer. The low-hanging fruit is the roundabout on Court St., for one of the smaller signs.

Mr. Little asked, regarding the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase III, if the materials will be made available to the BPPAC before the public meeting. Mr. Schoefmann replied that it depends on the timing. He can try his best.

### **South Bridge**

Mr. Little stated that regarding South Bridge, the south pier concrete was poured and the form was about three fourths taken off. He continued that the rebar and form is being finalized for the north pier.

Mr. Redfern stated that he knows they just shifted around some money for the consultant, Clough Harbor and Associates (CHA), to come up with plans that are more scoped out. He continued that after that will be a public hearing. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the initial public meeting will be September 16, 6:00 PM at the YMCA. He continued that CHA will be preparing preliminary engineering and doing the planning phase and so on and so forth. Hopefully next month he will have something to show the BPPAC.

Mr. Little asked for the last two pages of the handouts for today's meeting (the Project Updates table) to be filed with the meeting minutes, available online, so that people who look at the minutes years from now will be able to see them. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the final minutes that will be searchable will have those pages.

### **4) BPPAC Master Plan**

Mr. Schoefmann noted a typo in the priorities ranking sheets – there were two items labeled “BE17.” He corrected that in this handout and a new copy has been uploaded to the Google Drive. He distributed copies of a map, which he stated includes the locations of most of the physical projects on the list, but not conceptual ones like “Create a Maintenance Plan,” which could not be mapped. He continued that these points on the map are approximate, not exact. After brief discussion about other possible typos, Mr. Schoefmann stated that this is a first draft and he will upload another one as he refines it, between now and the next meeting.

Mr. Little requested that the BPPAC re-discuss BE6 – Cheshire Rail Trail Victoria Street Extension. Acting Chair Guyot asked for BE8 - Marlboro Line Trail to be addressed first.

Mr. Redfern stated that he contacted Jim Rousmaniere, one of the Selectmen in Roxbury, to inquire about the Selectmen's thoughts on the potential of reopening the rail line. He continued that Mr. Rousmaniere, who is a big trail advocate, spoke with and did research with the other Selectmen and they concluded that the property is so broken up in Roxbury that it would be impossible.

Mr. Schoefmann replied that he has not yet done the research on the property in Keene. He continued that it really is just a concept, brought up by some members of the public, to investigate the potential. Brief discussion ensued about the location. Mr. Redfern replied that he would rank a feasibility study "medium." He asked what staff rank this. Mr. Schoefmann replied "low."

Mr. Blomquist arrived at 8:38 AM.

Chair Guyot stated that he would choose "low." Mr. Hayes agreed. Chair Guyot stated that they would not want to create a "trail to nowhere." Mr. Redfern stated that he could go with "low." He continued that if Mr. Schoefmann has time to map it out and wants to do it, he does not think anyone would object to it, whether it is next month or in two years. Ms. Coey replied that she votes "low." Mr. Little replied that he says "medium" and thinks the BE6 discussion would inform BE8.

Chair Guyot recognized Mr. Little. Mr. Little distributed copies of a handout, his written thoughts about the BPPAC's evaluation process and BE6. He stated that he was confused about BE6, because it says "establish" and he does not know what that meant. He assumes it means "define, design, and construct." If they are talking about constructing, the question is how to apply the criteria they said they would be evaluating projects on (safety, accessibility, availability, connectivity, and sustainability), for something they do not have a plan for yet. The conclusion he came to is: they define what the assumptions are, evaluate based on the assumptions, and document them both. He ranks this project "high" if these are the assumptions. He recommends changing the word "establish" to "design."

Discussion ensued. Mr. Blomquist stated that this exercise is to help the BPPAC, the City, and the community think about resource allocation. He continued that the question for the BPPAC is, how does BE6 fit into the big picture of the trail system, recognizing that there will be a need to expend resources (staff time, funding, etc.)? Is it low, medium, or high? It comes down to resource allocation, whether it is establishing, designing, constructing, etc., and he does not want them to get hung up on these details/the wording. Mr. Little replied that he is stuck on the wording. Discussion continued, regarding how to word the description of project BE6.

Mr. Little noted that the current trail, built with funds from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT), complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He questioned whether this new trail would be ADA-compliant. Mr. Blomquist explained that yes, it would continue to be ADA-compliant per the grantor's requirement.

Mr. Little asked how safety for small children will be taken into consideration. Mr. Blomquist replied that there are many ways of ensuring safety for children, and this is something any project would have to take into account.

Mr. Redfern asked when the design is, in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Mr. Blomquist replied that in the FY17 to FY22 CIP the Victoria St. Extension project is scheduled for FY22. He continued that this is staff's plan, but the City Council could, of course, move it to whatever time the City Council wants. Mr. Redfern asked, wasn't there a funding shift that just occurred, putting some surplus funds into this project? Mr. Blomquist replied no. He explained the history, and reiterated that there is no planned work for the Victoria St. Extension right now and it is scheduled for FY22. Discussion continued.

Acting Chair Guyot returned the conversation to Mr. Little's concern with the wording of the project description. Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Blomquist stated that they can change the word "establish" to "design and construct." Mr. Little replied that then they would need to include what the assumptions are. Acting Chair Guyot replied that they can just say "design and construct" and see if that changes how the BPPAC ranks this project. He continued that a separate conversation would be to revisit the BPPAC's methodology and criteria for evaluating the projects, so they all stay on the same page and they can clear up confusion. Mr. Little replied that he was not recommending a change to the ranking; he was recommending that if the description includes "construction" then they ought to document what the assumptions are. If they change it so it does not include construction, it is irrelevant. Mr. Blomquist proposed just saying "design," in that case. Chair Guyot agreed.

Mr. Little stated that he had three projects to add to the list. He asked when they will talk about them. He continued that Mr. Bohannon was interested in one of them. Mr. Hayes suggested they go through what they have already. Mr. Redfern agreed. Mr. Little asked if they can identify them to add them to the list. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the idea would be to put it on New Business for next time. Mr. Little can say what they are, for the committee's consideration, and the group can talk at the September meeting about whether or not to add them.

Mr. Little stated that the three projects he proposes adding are:

1. Mark trail sections which are on concrete to indicate that they are part of the trail
2. Plan a trail crossing of Factory Road and the Rt. 101 overpass
3. Cheshire Rail Trail Phase IV, to go from Phase III to the Keene city limit.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the first project would be part of BE13 – Wayfinding Facilities and Signage. He continued that if it helps, he can update the project description to be more explicit about it including what Mr. Little is talking about. That concept of "pavement marking where appropriate" is part of any very good wayfinding system. Mr. Little agreed and stated that this does not need to be a new project.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will send an email with these proposed projects' descriptions, for the group's consideration, although they should not discuss them via email. He continued that they can discuss them at the next meeting. Acting Chair Guyot asked if the photos Mr. Little has can be integrated. Mr. Schoefmann replied yes.

Acting Chair Guyot stated that they will continue evaluating the listed projects.

**BE13 – Wayfinding Facilities and Signage**

Mr. Redfern, Mr. Hayes, Acting Chair Guyot, Mr. Little, and Ms. Coey all agreed with “high.”

**BE14 –Wayfinding Plan**

Mr. Hayes, Mr. Redfern, and Ms. Coey voted “high.” Mr. Little asked if they should merge it with BE13. Mr. Blomquist replied that they can figure that out later.

**BE15 – South Bridge/Ashuelot RT Asphalt Gap**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that it is a small segment but it is low-hanging fruit to take care of, from staff's perspective. Acting Chair Guyot replied that it is a safety concern. Mr. Little explained why he thinks this section of the trail should be improved with stone dust surfacing, to match what is on South Bridge, based on the fact that there will be snowmobile usage and snowmobiles are dangerous on asphalt. Brief discussion ensued. Mr. Redfern suggested changing the description to “Improve surface on the trail segment between South Bridge and the existing extent of paved surface near Keene State College (KSC) and Walmart Plaza,” without specifying the type of surface. He continued that KSC should be involved in that conversation. Mr. Redfern, Mr. Hayes, Acting Chair Guyot, and Ms. Coey ranked it “high.” Mr. Little ranked it “low.” Discussion ensued about whether the group needs to reach consensus or if the majority vote is enough. Acting Chair Guyot stated that they will mark this down as “high.” The goal is consensus but it may not always be possible.

**BE16 - Ashuelot Green Space Trailhead**

Acting Chair Guyot, Ms. Coey, Mr. Hayes, and Mr. Redfern voted “medium.” Mr. Little asked for an example of “facilities.” Mr. Schoefmann replied trailhead or bike racks would be examples; the Ashuelot Green Space group has a plan. Mr. Little voted “medium.”

**BE17 – Main Street (overall plan)**

Acting Chair Guyot, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Redfern, Mr. Little, and Ms. Coey all ranked it “high.”

**BE18 – Emerald St. Bike Route/In Street**

Mr. Little asked if Victoria St. is on this list. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they are just talking about Emerald St. Acting Chair Guyot added that this is about integrating the path that was just completed. Mr. Blomquist stated that the question for the BPPAC is, how important is it to connect the “slow street” concept (from Complete Streets) to the

facilities at the other end? Mr. Schoefmann added that there is potential for improved shoulder, wayfinding signage, and so on and so forth.

Mr. Little stated that previously they had a discussion about widening 6-foot sidewalks to 8-foot ones. He asked if it would make sense to include the section from Ralston St. to School St. to tie that into the rest of what is going on on Emerald St. He continued that perhaps they could do away with the 6-foot sidewalk and make the street six feet wider with an 8-foot bike lane, for example. Mr. Schoefmann asked if he is proposing combining the two projects. Mr. Little replied yes. Mr. Redfern replied that they should talk about Ralston St. and School St. in a different project. Acting Chair Guyot stated that his concern is “project creep” – this is a finite project and combining too many projects could lead to one big project, which would be difficult to manage. He continued that they will not vote on BE18 right now and will continue discussing it at the next meeting.

**5) Old Business**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Ms. Rubin was trying to get the community to think about where they want to focus outreach to glean public opinion on certain topics. He continued that they talked about the TAP public meeting coming up at the YMCA, and maybe including Complete Streets, but he has not made much headway with this. He suggests keeping it on Old Business.

**6) New Business**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that they will talk about Mr. Little’s ideas for two new projects (planned trail crossing at Factory Rd., and Cheshire Rail Trail IV), at the next meeting, and his idea about combining BE18 and BE3.

**7) Adjournment**

Chair Guyot adjourned the meeting at 9:28 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Britta Reida, Minute Taker