

BICYCLE, PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

8:15 AM

City Hall, Second Floor Conference
Room

Members Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair
Chris Brehme, Member
Thom Little, Member
Charles Redfern, Member
Drew Bryenton, Member
David Souther, Alternate

Staff Present:

Will Schoefman, City Staff

Guests Present:

Charles Daloz
Tiffany Manion

Members Not Present:

Dylan Benik, Vice Chair

1) **Roll Call**

Chair Rubin called meeting to order at 8:17 am and roll call was conducted.

2) **February 14, 2018 Minutes**

Mr. Little moved to accept February 14 minutes with revisions, Mr. Souther seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Revisions as follows:

Page 1, Accept January 10, 2018, minutes change:

Page 5, KSC Wayfaring Project Presentation Discussion”

....to....

“Page 5, KSC Wayfaring Project Presentation Discussion, paragraph 2, change PR to public relations

Page 6, New Business, paragraph 2, change BMX to BMX (Bicycle Motocross).

3) **Project Updates**

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

-Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Ave. Loop (TAP)- Mr. Schoefman said they are in the process of transitioning into the engineering division managing the project. They are awaiting engineering study feedback from NH DOT and Federal Highway, hopefully in the next

couple of weeks. He said they are currently in a holding pattern and waiting to hear back about what might need to change in the engineering study phase and a notice to proceed onto preliminary engineering.

-Bike racks- Mr. Schoefman said some of the bike racks have been put out and he will need to update a map. He said he is open to ideas about where things can be moved to or tweaked and to feel free to email him, however, only bike racks on public property will be considered.

-NH Pass Signage- Mr. Schoefman said the sign shop replicated 10 signs that they needed. He referred to the NH DOT Encroachment Agreement dated April 2 in the packet attachment which states that all 13 sites were approved this time due to the reduction in size of the signs. He said the old ones were too large to be approved. Mr. Little stated that the new sign is understandable as opposed to the ones from the past 2 years and he approves of them. Mr. Schoefman said the template is included in the packet and the signs are a little bit larger than the "Hospital" sign. He said when the ground thaws out the sign shop manager and he will install the signs. He said the locations can be reviewed in the attachment.

Complete Streets grant- Mr. Schoefman stated that there is a new Complete Streets grant opportunity being managed by MAST. He said there are two attachments in the packet regarding the two letters of intent submitted last month. He said one project is for improved crossings at Main Street, one at Appian Way and one at Harborside closer to Wyman Way, including some tactile stuff, and possibly some fancy flashing beacons as well.

He said the second project (attached) is part of an old TAP grant that they had submitted in the most recent, last round of funding where they proposed intersection treatments at Grove Street and one at Baker which are similar in nature to the treatments they are proposing for the Main Street corridor, such as landscaped islands, bump out and traffic calming. etc.

Mr. Schoefman and newest planner, Ms. Mari Brunner, will be meeting with Mr. Don Lucier to figure out which treatments the City will go with based on funding alignment and the grant's timeline. He said Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) is inviting submittals until the end of June but the announcement will not be until November because the SWRPC Board of Directors does not meet in summer so the final determination will likely be October-November. He said he will keep BPPAC posted on the progress of the grant. Chair Rubin asked if Mr. Schoefman would like feedback from BPPAC on the projects. Mr. Schoefman replied that both projects hold merit, and both corridors and Complete Streets improvements are in BPPAC's Master Plan and project goals. He said he would accept feedback, however, the deciding factor on which project moves forward will be funding. Chair Rubin asked what Keene State College (KSC) is thinking and Mr. Schoefman said they would prefer it to happen this year which is problematic because the City is trying to leverage grant funds. Mr. Schoefman said KSC is interested in the Main Street project, whereas the City has CIP funds earmarked for the TAP grant portion considerably reduced for Marlborough Street improvements, so there are a couple of moving pieces in terms of funding that they are currently trying to nail down. Mr. Schoefman said he is open to feedback if members would like to email or call him.

Mr. Redfern announced that in regard to the Cheshire Avenue-Park Avenue Loop TAP project, he spoke to the City Engineer and he indicated that NH DOT is reviewing the preliminary engineering study. Mr. Redfern explained that there are three steps to the process: after the study phase, the preliminary engineering design will be done by CHA, then

after that, the final design will be performed by CHA and then the last step is the final docks for CHA. Mr. Schoefman clarified that then they will need to negotiate right of way and a whole bunch of other things. Mr. Redfern said the City Engineer told him things were going well and Mr. Schoefman said they have not gotten an approval letter for that phase yet. Mr. Schoefman explained that based on NH DOT's guidelines and federal standards for how to manage projects, submittal is followed by a letter for approval, and they have not sent a notification letter yet for funding. Mr. Redfern said the actual advertising for bid is not expected to go out until this summer and construction will not be done until next year. Mr. Schoefman said they had some concerns about that and NH DOT said they will accept an extension as it was supposed to be done last year.

Mr. Little asked Mr. Schoefman if the street marking for TAP is still part of the project as opposed to being spun off. He said it has been noted in the past that street marking is the most expensive way you can follow federal criteria for a project. Mr. Schoefman replied they cannot have two construction projects as part of the TAP project. They asked NH DOT Project Manager and they were told that has never been done in the history of Transportation projects and it will not be done that way. Mr. Little asked if the City could do it as opposed to contracting it. Mr. Schoefman replied probably not. Mr. Schoefman said the entire road has already been surveyed during the planning phase. Mr. Little said that is unfortunate. He asked why BPPAC did not find out about the two projects submitted for grants. Mr. Schoefman clarified that the two grants are not complete; instead they are letters of intent which describe the potential projects and infographics. He said they are attached in the packet and the proposals were available for March's meeting, however, there was no March meeting. He encouraged members to review the letters of intent and he will consider the committee's feedback.

Bicycle Mayor of Keene, Ms. Tiffany Manion- Ms. Manion announced that she attended the National Bike Summit in Washington D.C., and acquired certification to teach a Driver's Safety Training that is practiced in 3 different countries and 39 states. She said it is a driver's education program so she is hoping to approach companies with fleets of vehicles and work with them on how to drive safely around cyclists. Ms. Manion said it is geared towards anyone who is driving on two wheels or four in the state of New Hampshire, and she is excited to bring programming on the local level.

Ms. Manion also applied for and received a grant for 100 helmets and will share the Bike Walk Alliance of New Hampshire's Safe Roads to School programming with fourth graders, targeting Swanzey and Winchester first until she runs out of helmets. She also sent bids out for \$250 to purchase fluorescent t-shirts for children in the program. She said Safe Roads to School will be a big part of her spring. Ms. Manion stated that she sent out the Bicycle Mayor of Keene April newsletter advertising the annual 10th annual Bike Swap in the center of the state, as well as other programming coming up, for example, Bike Fit in Vermont and bringing attention to biking events locally and regionally.

She said she taught TS 101 (Traffic Skills 101) over the weekend in Portland, Maine and had 8 participants. She spoke with Shannon Belt who works for Bike Maine and he has a fleet of 30 balance bikes that he uses to teach children how to ride on an obstacle course through a Learn to Ride course. She said she is working with 365 Cycles to see how to bring Mr. Belt's

programming to Keene. Ms. Manion said she reached out to a well-known Learn to Ride educator in Boston and she invited her to participate in one of her classes to design programming for adults.

Ms. Manion said she also spoke with a company called Cycle Life HQ and they have asked her to develop tours for bike riding in the state of New Hampshire and New England and she is going to start developing tours to put on their website for free. They are one of the global leaders on information for cycling tourism and they can throw marketing behind in an effort to put Keene and the region on the map as a bicycle tour destination. She is also putting one of the tours on Adventure Cycling (June 1-3 weekend) as an overnight tour and that can be set up as an Airbnb or as a camping trip, as another avenue towards promoting Keene as a bicycle tour destination.

Ms. Manion said she and Mr. Schoefman will be on the radio this Saturday with Chris Coates and Mondanock Radio at around 10 am. She also shared that 5 people are already signed up for Traffic Skills 101 and expressed that she is happy about that number of people as it is an intensive course and hard to get enrollment. Ms. Manion stated that the more representatives demonstrating safe cycling, the better. She also encouraged members to sign up for the Bicycle Mayor of Keene newsletter and to share it widely to engage others.

Mr. Redfern stated that Ms. Manion is now certified to train trainers for biking. He shared that years ago in the Rockingham area, there was an individual who trained the UPS drivers and informed Ms. Manion that there is a grant available for that (\$5,000 locally), however, he said she must be a nonprofit. Ms. Manion replied that she is not currently a nonprofit. He said she could easily become a nonprofit or get a fiscal agent such as Pathways for Keene.

Ms. Manion shared that she is working on the Bike to Work Week programming and this year she will be pitching a letter to local business owners to ask them to sponsor a breakfast for their employees who bike to work. She is hoping that businesses sponsor riders for that week and contribute towards breakfast. She then would like to generate a list of those businesses as a gateway for bicycle friendly businesses in Keene. She said she is excited to check numbers this year and compare them with last year and to try to create vested interest in business owners.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Counting Program Recap- Mr. Schoefman recapped that BPPAC completed its first round of counting for the corridor at the designated spots chosen. He shared that he received a spreadsheet that was formatted for input of data they collected in conjunction with the Complete Streets Advisory Committee Counting Guide which is what they based their counting process on. He said he will enter data into spreadsheet and then upload the spreadsheet to the Google Drive to share with members, and it will also be submitted to NH DOT and the greater counting program nationwide. Mr. Schoefman said the next counting week is May 14-20 and BPPAC should check member availability as the next BPPAC meeting is May 9, 2018. Chair Rubin asked Mr. Schoefman if there were any improvements that could be made on the counting process. Mr. Schoefman said they covered most of the shifts that they needed and there were not any gaps. Mr. Souther shared that people in the community saw him counting and he has been using the opportunity to spread the word. Mr. Schoefman said he will update social media to share the initiative as well to include the larger community.

Mr. Bryenton inquired to Mr. Schoefman if the update about NH Pass Signage had been shared with the Monadnock Cycling Club (MCC) and asked if he could share that information himself. Mr. Schoefman said he could go ahead and share the information. Mr. Bryenton asked if the MCC is responsible for installation and maintenance and Mr. Schoefman said MCC and the City are responsible. Mr. Bryenton said he would share that information with the MCC Board as well. Mr. Bryenton updated Ms. Manion that at the last meeting they pitched the Bike to Work concept and produced a short list of potential businesses that may be interested.

4) Upcoming CIP Infrastructure Projects

Mr. Schoefman showed members the CIP book they had been curious to find out about and said it is also available online through the City of Keene website. He said he went through the Consolidated Infrastructure Report in the Department of Public Work's (DPW) transportation section in the CIP book, which describes the amount of money allocated to certain street improvements for each fiscal year. He indicated that in fiscal year 2019, which begins July 1, he looked at what amount of funding is earmarked for certain streets using the Complete Streets designators from the guidelines. For example, for Carpenter Street, which is a neighborhood street, there is \$44,000 earmarked for roadway improvements, for Court Street (Central Square to West View Terrace), a gateway street, there is \$181,000 earmarked for roadway improvements. For Marlborough Street, there is \$79,500 allocated for roadway improvements and infrastructure projects, \$63,000 specifically earmarked for curbside improvements and some drainage, sewer and water improvements.

Mr. Schoefman said his idea is to go through and formalize the funding allocations for the next 4 years so the committee can bring it to DPW's attention as to the Complete Streets designations outside of rural that are coming up. He said in regard to the Complete Streets Design Guidelines, there is a typical cross section of what the City envisions these different street designations to look like. He said if they could tie the Complete Street type into the improvements it may change how DPW performs improvements. Mr. Schoefman suggested for next month he could update the committee with a spreadsheet highlighting categories of Complete Streets. Mr. Brehme asked Mr Schoefman which categories of Complete Streets are not getting highlighted. Mr. Schoefman said the rural roads, bicycle streets, slow streets and gateway streets are of concern. He also suggested simply adding a Complete Streets column to the spreadsheet. Mr. Redfern asked how members could get a copy of the CIP book. Mr. Bohannon said there may be copies upstairs on the 3rd floor in the Finance Department and Mr. Schoefman said he will also email the web link. Chair Rubin asked if it is a 5 year plan and Mr. Schoefman replied it is technically a 6 year plan.

Chair Rubin stated that it is important to get West Street on the radar as it is probably not included in any of the years. Mr. Schoefman said most of the allocations are pretty skinny in terms of what would actually be needed, however, he said the Engineering Department and DPW are innovative so they could make money go far. Mr. Souther asked if the roundabouts at Winchester Street are included in the fiscal year and if construction will start the beginning of next year. Mr. Schoefman replied that the City's portion is earmarked and is part of a 10 year project and the meetings would be the best source of information. Mr. Souther said he had not heard of anything since they moved it forward. Chair Rubin said she liked the idea of adding a column for Complete Streets for indicating its alliance with Complete Streets

guidelines, and Mr. Schoefman said it was certainly something they could use to track that information. He said there will be an update on the spreadsheet next month.

5) **Old Business**

- Pathway Maps Review and Input- Mr. Redfern stated that the map project has been on the back burner and was supposed to have been completed 2-3 years ago. He said the reason he feels strongly about it is because it was a private initiative to build kiosks in which Benson Wood gave a significant discount, Monadnock Conservancy bought a kiosk and Pathways for Keene donated money for the other 2 kiosks. He said he has been warning the City that if the maps are not put up, teenagers will vandalize the kiosks. Mr. Redfern said he would like to see movement on this project. He said once maps are done, it would be easy to come up with a smaller map for public distribution. He said bike shops are asking for maps and he suggests they donate money to create their own copies of the City maps.

Mr. Bohannon shared that the bike shop maps were not completed as they did not have enough advertisers for funding and the company they used was not helpful. He said the resort maps have the paths on them; however, those maps are not what the City needs. Mr. Bohannon said he, Mr. Schoefman and the IT department are working on an initiative that he believes will set them apart from anyone else in the area and help draw people into the City for its parks and trails. However, he said they will need more time and money for that initiative. Mr. Schoefman asked if anyone knows how to find trail maps on the City of Keene website. He said he will send the link to members so everyone knows how to access those trail maps.

Mr. Bohannon said they created Keene Pass about 5 years ago at the request of the City Manager as an initiative to promote trails. He said they tried to create a non-City entity that turned into Keene Pass; however, the initiative waned as he began to promote the Parks and Recreation Department more. He said the Keene Pass page and the Parks and Recreation page needed to be combined and the web page now contains a trail link on Keene Pass page which will eventually be turned into the Parks and Recreation page. Mr. Redfern asked if the kiosks were even necessary and Mr. Bohannon replied that yes they are. Mr. Schoefman said he still has some edits to do on the maps as there are some unofficial trails that need to be removed and reproduced. Mr. Bohannon said the lights are going in first but they will attempt to combine the map project with the light project to complete it.

Mr. Brehme stated that there was a student project in his cartography class last fall aimed at developing a Swanzey-Keene bike path map in collaboration with Mr. Bohannon and his uncle Bruce. He said he owes Andy a version of that map to start reviewing it and he would like to bring it in for review to BPPAC. Mr. Bohannon shared his department was approached by a website called Trailfinder.com whose mission is to publish every trail in northern New England, Vermont, Maine and New Hampshire. They have completed ME and are now focusing on NH and VT. He said they have an impressive amount of information and Mr. Schoefman is providing layers to them as another means of promotion.

- Project Funding Approach and Strategy Letter- Mr. Schoefman said that the House Bill did not pass in regard to the ability for municipalities to raise the transportation improvement fee from \$5 to \$10. He said one of the legislators is trying to attach the letter to another bill.

Chair Rubin said she changed the letter to include the purpose of earmarking funds for projects aligned with Complete Streets. She said she revised the letter after she discovered the Bill did not pass and Mr. Schoefman can circulate the revised letter to BPPAC. Mr. Schoefman said the list of projects that the funds have been earmarked to and they included the Cheshire Rail Trail projects. Mr. Redfern said he called into a radio show and stated that none of the money was being used for the trails; however, he now knows that is not true. Chair Rubin said she included the projects in the letter. Mr. Schoefman said one of the ideas behind the letter was to bring to City Council's attention that there are opportunities for some Complete Streets improvements, such as in-street facilities for bicyclists and safer crossings for pedestrians, however, DPW does not have a pool of funds anywhere do these improvements. Therefore, he suggested they could encourage City Council to consider applying fees to in-street facilities. Chair Rubin agreed and said she will send revised letter to Mr. Schoefman to send out to committee.

Mr. Bryenton asked for clarification about how the fee system would work out. Mr. Schoefman clarified that the improvements are not contingent upon the \$5 additional fee; it would hinge on the fees already being generated and connect revenue streams to where they could be used most effectively. He said Mr. Lindquist would be in support of anything bolstering his own projects.

- KSC "Freedom by Design" Ashuelot River Park pumptrack- Mr. Schoefman said there is a group of students from the Keene State College Architecture program looking for a project to design and build. Mr. Bohannon asked Chair Rubin to consider removing this item from BPPAC's agenda list because it is a park feature and not related to pedestrians. Mr. Schoefman informed the committee that the pumptrack location is next to a levee, which is not an ideal spot for the project, so plans for the project are limbo as of now. He said he will let committee know when the location issue is clarified.

- Public Outreach and Events- Mr. Redfern asked Ms. Manion what the Earth Day events will be this year. Ms. Manion replied that different groups are hosting Earth Day celebrations and the Monadnock Food Co Op celebration is Saturday, April 21 from 12-4 pm. She said she put a Recycle and Ride event in her newsletter to encourage the public to pick up winter trash on their favorite trails. Mr. Bohannon said the City is working with Antioch New England and the Monadnock Co-Op for a Green Up Keene event on Saturday, April 21st as well. Ms. Manion said there are also free blue bags available for trash pick-up.

6) **New Business**

Mr. Schoefman said the SWRPC is putting together an Ashuelot Rail Trail Advisory Committee to come up with a plan for the entirety of the Ashuelot Rail Trail. He said towns along the rail trail have been asked to nominate committee members. Mr. Schoefman and Ms. Brunner will fulfill the staff side and he asked if 1-2 people from BPPAC are interested in participating. Mr. Brehme and Mr. Bryenton said they are already involved through KSC and MCC. Mr. Redfern said he put his name in and asked if has been included and Mr. Schoefman stated that he would follow-up. Mr. Schoefman said he will keep committee informed on the output of that committee.

Mr. Daloz asked committee members what their thoughts are about placing fruit trees and blueberries along the trails. Mr. Schoefman said it is a great idea and referred to Mr. Bohannon as the point person for that initiative. Mr. Redfern said maintenance would be the major issue. Mr. Daloz stated that there is a piece of land between Antioch and Pearl Street that is being considered for pollinator gardens and if anyone is interested in that project to please contact him.

7) **Adjournment- Meeting adjourned at 8:28 am.**

Next meeting date –**May 9, 2018**

Respectfully submitted by,

Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute-Taker