

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 13, 2018

8:15 AM

2nd floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Dillon Benik, Vice Chair
Christopher Brehme
Thom Little
Charles (Chuck) Redfern
Drew Bryeton
David Souther, Alternate

Staff Present:

William Schoefmann, Planning
Andrew Bohannon, Parks, Recreation, and
Facilities (left early)

Members Not Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair
Ed Guyot

1) Call to Order

Vice Chair Benik called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM. Chair Rubin was unable to attend the meeting. Roll call was conducted.

2) Accept Minutes of May 9, 2018

Mr. Little made a motion to approve the minutes of May 9, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Souther and carried unanimously.

3) Project Updates

a) Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop (TAP)

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Engineering is taking over during the design and construction phase. He noted that most of the management for the project is transitioned through the Engineering division of the Department of Public Works. Mr. Schoefmann reported the preliminary engineering plans and report have been submitted to NH DOT for approval. Mr. Little asked City staff to confirm when construction would begin and end. Mr. Bohannon replied that construction would be ready to start in the Spring of 2019 and projected to finished in the Fall of 2019.

b) Bike Racks

Mr. Schoefmann stated there was no further update since last meeting. He encouraged members to provide him feedback about placement of bike racks around the City as long as it is in a public way. Mr. Bryeton asked if the City would be footing the bill for these bike racks. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the City would move one or two of the bike

racks to a better location. In addition, Mr. Bryeton asked if the racks could be placed at bike friendly businesses, if requested. Mr. Schoefmann replied that a discussion would need to take place before granting a request of this nature.

c) Master Plan

Mr. Schoefmann reported that he sent an updated draft to the Committee, noting that he left off on reporting of the current conditions for trails. He stated that he needs to add a section on sidewalks and pedestrian facilities. In addition, he is working to fill out the history and funding sources in order to capture how the City has gone through projects with the help of PFK (Pathways for Keene) and the Monadnock Conservancy. Mr. Schoefmann noted that that he wanted to emphasize how these have been a recipe for success by documenting this in the table. Mr. Redfern stated the he could provide Mr. Schoefmann with the numbers for PFK up until 2015.

Mr. Little provided the BPPAC with a list of his recommendations for the Master Plan. He noted that he thought that it was a waste of time and energy to put any dollar amounts in the Master Plan. Mr. Little explained that history has shown that the numbers are always going to be wrong. He stated that in the case of North Bridge, the contribution was \$100,000 and it was shown as \$40,000. Mr. Little stated that the problem is that in the end things that published are inaccurate, which creates confusion. Mr. Schoefmann noted that this is a working document and was soliciting feedback from the BPPAC. In addition, he stated that he would review Mr. Little's recommendations and make the edits at a later time.

Mr. Little stated that some of his recommendations were important to discuss amongst the Committee. He made the following recommendations:

- “PFK” to “Pathways for Keene”
- Page 5, “not handicapped accessible as defined by the American Disabilities Act (ADA)” change to “not American Disability Act (ADA) compliant”.
- Page 8, last paragraph, change “after South Bridge” to “near South Bridge”
- Page 11, Uses, change....“snowmobiling” to “snowmobiles (snowmobiles are not allowed on North Bridge)”
- Page 18, paragraph 1, change...“raise \$100,000 towards the Downtown Cheshire portion of the Cheshire Rail Trail in Keene in 2001” to “raised over \$300,000 towards trail improvements”. Mr. Little noted to get the total number from the current Pathways for Keene Treasurer.
- Page 18, paragraph 2, change “TAP” to “Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)”
- Page 19, change North Bridge amount of \$40,000 to \$100,000
- Page 19; delete columns with specific dollar amounts.

Mr. Redfern noted that it is important to have all sources of funding so people understand the mix. Mr. Bohannon noted Mr. Schoefmann reached out to him to provide him with the sources of funding. He noted that he has this information because he has gone

through Council to present this information. Mr. Bohannon will provide Mr. Schoefmann with this information.

Mr. Schoefmann asked the members to wait until the draft was completed before having a formal discussion about adding or removing numbers to the Master Plan.

d) NH Path Signage

Mr. Schoefmann reported that a total of 13 signs have been installed in the NH DOT right-of-ways. He noted that these signs are the replacement for the signs that were a donation from the Monadnock Cycling Club (MCC). Mr. Bryeton reported that the MCC Club has noticed these signs being installed and everyone is excited about these installations. He asked where the old signs are located and if it was possible to get these signs back for the MCC. Mr. Schoefmann suggested the President of the MCC submit a letter of request to Kurt Blomquist, Director of Public Works.

Mr. Schoefmann reported House Bill 1731 passed on May 17, 2018. The bill establishes requirements for crossing double yellow lines on a highway, hand signal requirements for bicyclists, modifies headlamp requirements for bicycles and requires the department of safety to inform licensees of laws relating to bicyclists rights and safety and to examine first-time driver's license applicants on such laws.

e) Pathways for Keene- Lighting Project

Mr. Bohannon reported the lighting for the Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop has been completed. Mr. Redfern stated that he has received complaints about positioning of some of the pole lights. Mr. Souther explained that the main issue is that two pole sides are placed on the side trail and kick out the berm. He continued to explain that there is a pole at the entrance and at the exit lights. In addition, he noted the lighting area is very narrow. Mr. Schoefmann noted that it was just the users and not the neighbors that have expressed their concern. Mr. Souther further explained that as someone rides underneath the light it gets brighter passing through the light.

4) Bicycle/Pedestrian Counting Program

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Ms. Mannion helped coordinate a number of programs for Bike to Work Week. The events included a movie and a Friday social "Five at the Hive".

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he got counts for West Street done in May and will work on updating the spreadsheet for next meeting. The next count is next nationwide official count is in September. However, he will try to schedule another count in July. Mr. Schoefmann will the BPPAC a Doodle Pole and discuss results next meeting.

5) Grant Opportunities 2018

Mr. Schoefmann stated the Complete Streets Grant is up to one million dollars. He stated the BPPAC made a recommendation based on Mr. Redfern's idea of the grant be for the Cheshire Rail Trail floor, from Eastern Avenue to Route 101. Mr. Schoefmann reported that the DPW is also interested in applying for grant funds for some improvements along Marlboro Street. He noted that City staff will be in charge of writing two grants for the

BPPAC. Mr. Schoefmann noted that East Side Redevelopment is a hot topic at this time because of the opportunities the City is looking into for economic development. Mr. Schoefmann reported the City was trying to make a formal connection between the Baker Street corridor up to the Cheshire Rail Trail. Mr. Redfern stated that he is disappointed that the City is choosing to write two TAP grants at the expense of the Cheshire Rail Trail. He noted that PFK would be specifically funding rail trails as an organization. He stated this area of the Cheshire Rail Trail would be lost unless there is an approval for a grant. Mr. Little noted that the PFK status may be in jeopardy if PFK does not enforce this because it is the purpose of the organization. Mr. Schoefmann stated that the important thing to remember about the TAP grant is that it is not just the typical RTP (Rails to Trail Program) grant anymore. He said what they are looking for is a multifaceted approach because they piled all this money from other programs such as Safe Route to School, transit funding and Complete Streets funding. He said in order to make grants competitive and meet criteria they have to address some of those other things.

Mr. Redfern stated this Committee was the BPPAC, not the Complete Streets Committee and that the Committee should be a little more focused. In addition, he stated that he wished there would be more advocacies for completing the Cheshire Rail Trail System, which is almost complete.

Mr. Schoefmann reported that Mr. Redfern brought forward to the City, that a memorial bridge taken from I93 widening project is available. The cost for the bridge is \$1. Mr. Schoefmann stated the bridge would fit the Route 101 gap with lots of engineering. He reported that the City has submitted a letter of interest. Mr. Little stated that most bridges that are for sale for \$1 are too short. He suggested finding out from NH DOT if there is a change in the 200 foot minimum span that was required for both North Bridge and South Bridge.

Mr. Bryeton asked if there was a chance that by submitting two grants, there is a chance that it will make either less competitive. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he was unaware.

6) Old Business

a) Pathways Maps Review and Input

Mr. Schoefmann presented an example of the map that would be displayed at the Rail Trail. The map provides an idea of the surfaces as well as the layout of the different trails. Mr. Redfern commented that Mr. Schoefmann did a great job on the maps and that it looks fantastic.

b) Public Outreach and Events

Mr. Schoefmann reported that 4 on the 4th Road Race is on July 4th. Mr. Redfern stated that the BPPAC was welcome to have a table at the event. Mr. Schoefmann asked if PFK needed any volunteers for the event. Mr. Redfern replied in the affirmative and that potential volunteers could reach out to Ted McGreer, Volunteer Coordinator.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that if he receives additional updates from Ms. Mannion he will inform the Committee.

c) Upcoming CIP Infrastructure Projects

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he was working on that the outlook for streets that at getting improved in order to look for any opportunities.

d) TAP Grant Resolution

Mr. Little asked what the Resolution was on the Cheshire Rail for the TAP grant. Mr. Redfern replied that it communicated that the desire of the BPPAC is for the TAP grant to be dedicated to the Cheshire Rail Trail. Mr. Little asked if there was a rough estimate for the cost of the project. Mr. Redfern replied that cost would be determined for the TAP grant application. In addition, Mr. Redfern reported that the area is in reclaimable shape and that there are no encroachments. Mr. Little stated that he thought there was a swamp that needed to be drained. Mr. Redfern replied that was correct and that drainage would be an issue. After a brief discussion, the BPPAC decided to make a motion.

Mr. Little asked if the wetlands police would become involved since there would be some drainage of a swamp. Mr. Schoefmann replied that this would be determined during the engineering phase.

Mr. Redfern made a motion to recommend that the City Manager apply the TAP grant for the Cheshire Rail Trail South. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Benik.

6) New Business

None at this time.

7) Adjournment

Vice Chair Benik adjourned the meeting at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,
Will Schoefmann, GIS Technican
Department of Community Development