

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 8, 2019

8:45 AM

City Hall, Second Floor Conference Room

Members:

Dillon Benik, Chair
Christopher Brehme
Charles Redfern
Todd Horner
David Souther, Alternate
Thom Little, Alternate

Staff Present:

Will Schoefmann

Members not present:

Drew Bryenton, Vice Chair
Brad Dufresne
Linda Rubin

1) Roll Call

Chair Benik called meeting to order at 8:45 am and roll call was conducted. Chair Benik announced that Mr. Little will be sitting for Mr. Dufresne this morning as an Alternate.

2) Approve April 10, 2019 Minutes

Mr. Little moved to accept the April 10 minutes with revisions, Mr. Horner seconded and the motion was passed unanimously.

Revisions are as follows:

Page 2, March 13, 2019 minutes, paragraph 1, change: “minutes with revisions to “minutes as submitted.”

Page 7, Ashuelot Rail Trail Purchase, paragraph 1, change: “Mr. Little agreed with Mr. Little” to “Mr. Little agreed with Mr. Lamb.”

3) Old Business

Downtown Bike Racks: Update

Mr. Schoefmann stated that they are continuing to investigate spot locations throughout downtown for bike racks and long-term corral style bike parking as well. Mr. Brehme said there is still some uncertainty in the spot locations but otherwise Mr. Blomquist is working on identification of those spots. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will move forward with the Parking Enforcement Manager on long-term corral type parking underneath the Wells Street deck, underneath the Transportation center, as well as space along the bike path along the brick pavers between the bike path and the Commercial Street lot. He said he was still unclear as to whether or not Mr. Blomquist will be conducting an inventory on the racks but he will go down to Department of Public Works (DPW) and take stock if not. Mr. Schoefmann asked Mr. Horner for numbers of bike racks MAST donated that might be in storage with the City as he will start a process to request those. Mr. Horner stated that there was some pushback from the Farmer's

Market manager on placing a rack on the paver spot in the Market. He said it makes sense to have bike parking in the Farmer's Market. Mr. Souther asked which Manager complained as the Market is without a Manager currently.

Mr. Benik asked if the Transportation Center spot will be a problem as that building is being opened back up as a business. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the City owns the property and the spot they are looking at is on the backside along the trail. He said he would angle the u-racks so bikes could be parked on an angle alongside the trail. He said the tricky part will be mounting the u-racks on slats so they can be removed for maintenance purposes and for snow removal. Mr. Schoefmann said the Parking Manager seemed amenable to the spots he identified. Mr. Benik stated that he will try to find out who is the Manager at the Farmer's Market. Mr. Souther said Bruce from Abenaki Springs is heading it up now until they find a Manager. He said he can talk to Bruce and see what his thoughts are on placing a bike rack at the Market.

West Street Bike and Pedestrian Counting

Mr. Schoefmann sent out a sign-up poll for bike and pedestrian counting scheduled in two weeks. Mr. Benik encouraged members to sign up and get out there at least one day for a two-hour block. He said friends are welcome to assist with the counting as well.

Public Outreach and Events

Mr. Schoefmann stated that May is National Bike Month and showed members a poster Mr. Horner created of events for the month. Mr. Horner said it was a last minute effort but a starting point for the future to have a well-advertised schedule of events for bike-related events. Mr. Schoefmann said if the committee is looking to make a bigger impact, it would probably take a sub-committee to do heavier lifting for next year to coordinate an event during May. He said that the biggest gap right now is the commuter breakfast MAST and Southwest Regional Planning Commission have spearheaded the past. Mr. Horner said the Monadnock Co-op has expressed interest in supporting the event. Mr. Schoefmann stated that it might be a good idea to start planning early for May 2020.

Mr. Redfern said Pathways for Keene (PFK) is putting on a "Four on the Fourth" foot race and it might be a good idea to put a "save the date" on the event schedule for June for that event which takes places July 4th. Mr. Souther said there is currently no clearinghouse for information for bike-related events and Chair Benik suggested there should be a hub for information. Mr. Horner replied that MAST is considering developing a website. Chair Benik suggested creating a ride event in conjunction with the Wall Dogs event happening this summer. Members agreed. Mr. Schoefmann said the city is lacking an easy ride downtown. Mr. Horner asked if the City is planning to shut down Main Street for the Wall Dogs event. Mr. Schoefmann replied that there was a request from the block party organizers and BPPAC could perhaps piggyback off that request and request shutting down Emerald and Eagle all the way up Washington Street and Court Street, which would be a bigger request but could create a pop-up bike-pedestrian event. Mr. Horner said it is probably more realistic to have some sort of ride that is happening downtown. Chair Benik said it would be best for the cycling community to jump on other downtown events as those organizers have already carved out the space and the cycling community can piggyback off of them. Mr. Horner said they can do bike tours, for example, farm or ice cream rides. Mr. Schoefmann said they may want to consider creating a subcommittee for 2020. Chair Benik suggested adding that item to the next meeting to discuss

the goals and framework for the subcommittee. Mr. Horner asked if Wall Dogs is next month and Chair Benik replied that it will take place the week of June 22. Mr. Brehme stated that the poster Mr. Horner created is very well done.

Four on the Fourth

Mr. Redfern stated that the “Four on the Fourth” run is four miles and takes place on July 4th. He said walkers start at 7:30 am and runners start at 8 am. It starts at Railroad Square and goes out to Optical Avenue and back. He said there will be many gifts and prizes and donations go towards the trail system. Mr. Redfern said runners will be given a PFK water bottle and there will be a water machine available for runners to fill up. He said registration varies from 400 to over 600 and is weather dependent. He said they are currently trying to encourage pre-registration. Mr. Redfern said it is an energetic event that is over by 10:30 am.

4) Project Updates (Note: BPPAC Master Plan Documents available on google drive)

a) May Updates

b) Jonathan Daniels Trail Maintenance

Mr. Schoefmann said he included a schedule spreadsheet in the back of the packet. He said he also included a CIP page in the packet which members can reference. For the Jonathan Daniels Trail, there is \$25K set aside for improvements on that trail for 2021. He said in 2024 there is \$85K allocated to repave Appel Way. Mr. Redfern asked if there is a grant coming with that and Mr. Schoefmann said he does not know. He said Appel Way goes from Court Street to Wheelock and there will be five more years of poor trail conditions. He said the allocations are designed for the most part for recreational trail grants and every time they have applied for one, the City has gotten one. Mr. Souther asked if BPPAC posts pictures of the bad parts of the trail would the City go out and fix those areas. Mr. Schoefmann replied that Parks and Recreation might fix them but it depends on their summer maintenance schedule. He said in the summer they do mow and clear brush on the trails that the City maintains. He stated that the biggest challenge is getting a paving truck with patch out there but it is probably do-able and worth touching base with Parks and Recreation.

b. 2018 NHDOT TAP Grant

Mr. Schoefmann said the City was selected for the most recent round of transportation alternative funding for Marlboro Street and Complete Street improvements. He said there will be a connector to the Cheshire Rail Trail that is more formalized. Mr. Schoefmann stated that the City Engineer informed him that he received an agreement letter from NH Department of Transportation (DOT) which usually means that it has been approved by Governor and Council or is very close. Mr. Redfern asked where trail access will be to the Cheshire Trail and Mr. Schoefmann replied in the Department of Public Works (DPW) parking lot in the City of Bartholomew. He said there will be a phase where the public can provide ideas about where the people might prefer the connection and then there will be a public meeting about proposals and adjustments from there. Mr. Schoefmann said to bear in mind that the parking lot and options are fairly constricted in that vicinity. He asked if members had questions or comments.

c. Bicycle Mayor Update

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Ms. Mannion is running the Safe Routes to School grant program of events at the Keene Middle School next week and she will be going over safe routes programming and ride-safe materials in their PE curriculum at the start of the week. He said there will also be a Ride to School program from the YMCA with volunteers chaperoning groups of students as they ride from the YMCA to the Keene Middle School. He said there will also be a walking physical fitness activity on the track for kids on Wednesday. Mr. Schoefmann stated that Ms. Mannion updated a tool-kit on how to run a Safe Routes to School program which he will provide a copy for BPPAC members. He said Ms. Mannion also produced a series of five or six PSA stop action animation videos on riding safe which are due to launch along with the event next week. Mr. Brehme asked when Ms. Mannion's term as Bicycle Mayor is up and Mr. Schoefmann said it was a two-year term so after this year someone else will take on the position.

d. Cheshire Rail Trail Park Avenue Loop

Mr. Schoefmann stated that there is supplemental information in the back of the packet for a set of right-of way plans for the Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop project. He said Council heard a resolution to discontinue the Class 6 road and heard another resolution to create a Class 2 trail. He said there is another resolution to establish the easement as it is a CNS property and they have some right-of-way. Mr. Schoefmann stated it goes to Council committee this week. They are essentially in the right-of-way process which is the process right before final design approval. Mr. Redfern asked if the final design will then be sent over to DOT for approval. Mr. Schoefmann replied yes and maybe a portion will be completed this season. He said they bumped up the Park Avenue resurfacing project for this year to accommodate the new bike lanes as the edges are in poor shape and they did not want to install bike lanes on poor pavement. He said they will do the majority of Park Avenue or at least the very bad sections. Mr. Little asked if they were talking about Amy Brown road and Mr. Schoefmann replied yes. Mr. Little said it is strange that the MSFI meeting has asked for more time with four resolutions which is this (showed the map). Mr. Schoefmann replied that there are four resolutions as there are two owners and it seems extraneous but there had to be resolutions for each component. He said if members access the google drive link they can find the packet from Council that was heard of these resolutions on Thursday. He said then it will go back to committee for recommendation and then back to Council where it is usually approved. He said if members want to support it they can attend the MSFI meeting.

Mr. Horner asked what the state is of the trail and if it is passable. Mr. Schoefmann said it is passable, rough in spots due to drainage issues but people run and bike it. He said the project is aimed at grading, resurfacing, drainage and brush clearance. Mr. Brehme asked if there is a plan for signage or a kiosk on Summit Ridge. Mr. Schoefmann said there will be a formalized trailhead down on Summit at corner area in the field of the CandS-owned lot. He said there also may be a formalized trailhead at Whitcombs Mill Road to get people off the roadway. Mr. Schoefmann said one of the recommendations was to do a mixed-use lane up the right hand side and downward side of Summit and Summit Ridge to carve out space on the roadway for walkers and bikers to get up on the trail. He said a concern of the members of the public was that mountain bikers bomb that hill regularly so signage could serve to dissuade that. Chair Benik asked how long it takes for NH DOT approval and Mr. Schoefmann said perhaps 30-60 days to get it out to bid for construction.

e. Complete Streets Report Card

Mr. Schoefmann stated that a group of Geography students at Keene State College did a Complete Streets assessment report card to see how the streets measure up to the City standards. He said these are standards they have set for the City's streets that have not been met and if there are opportunities for improvements there should be more complete advantage of those. Mr. Horner said in the CIP there is a schedule of repaving projects and the measures should be synced up to the re-pavement schedule, for example, before pavement goes down they should do an assessment. Mr. Schoefmann said they should go to talk with Mr. Lucier to talk about the report. He said maybe they can talk about the report at the next meeting. Mr. Brehme said there might be opportunity to get students to come in to committee. Mr. Schoefmann suggested they add the student presentation to the agenda for next month and also give Mr. Blomquist and Mr. Lucier an opportunity to attend. He said he can try to schedule it for June's meeting. Mr. Brehme said BPPAC is about bike and pedestrian safety and Complete Streets is foundational to what their objectives are. Mr. Schoefmann said that he would invite Councilors and other people of interest as well to that presentation. Mr. Horner said a lot of other towns have Complete Streets; however, it is all about how to roll them in to the City's process.

f. **Wayfinding**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he is unsure about the timing for DPW's Downtown Revitalization project but they remainder of the funding is scheduled for FY21. He said as he learns more they can assess when there will be opportunities for public input. Chair Benik said there is a whole other committee for that project. Mr. Brehme asked if the wayfinding includes the white signs on Main Street. He said the approach is wrong because there needs to be an infinite amount of signs and a map would be more effective. Mr. Schoefmann said another approach would be to show civic destinations, as promoting one business over another can be problematic. Chair Benik asked how they are choosing the restaurants to put on signs and asked what criteria they are using. Mr. Schoefmann said it is ad hoc and he never notices them when walking and they are only visible from his car. Chair Benik said the signs are only obvious to cars. Mr. Brehme stated that a graphically attractive map on the banner of the light post could be a better idea. Chair Benik said he can talk to his brother about the signs downtown as he is on the Revitalization committee. Mr. Schoefmann said after they digest the Complete Streets report card they can send an informational memo to City Council with a summary of the report and it might be appropriate for the wayfinding signage report as well. Chair Benik said they should start by going through the report card the students did and take it from there.

g. **Main Street Complete Street**

Mr. Schoefmann said the Downtown Revitalization project is a project under DPW and they can get a status of the next steps for that committee and project schedule are. Chair Benik said he can also look at the minutes.

5) **New Business**

Chair Benik said Mr. Schoefmann will email the sign up link for counting and members should look at the Complete Streets Report Card. Mr. Schoefmann will also invite students to present in June or any other month this summer. Members will discuss possible sub-committee development to promote events on Bike to Work week and run event management for next year as well as create opportunities for the committee to get out there and create public awareness. Mr. Schoefmann added that there are additional resources at MAST and SWRPC. Mr.

Schoefmann said he can also invite the Bicycle Mayor, Ms. Mannion, in for July to figure out how to promote the next phase of that position.

Mr. Souther asked if there is a grant for the police to enforce keeping cyclists off the sidewalks. Mr. Benik said he has not heard anything other than they attempt to have police enforce the rule in the spring and not necessarily more resources being allocated.

6) **Adjournment**

Next meeting date – June 12, 2019

Minutes respectfully submitted by,

Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute-Taker

Additional Edits by,

Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff