

**City of Keene**  
**New Hampshire**

**BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, August 12, 2020**

**8:15 AM**

**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

Drew Bryenton, Vice Chair  
Brad Dufresne  
Councilor Jan Manwaring  
Michael Davern  
Todd Horner  
Rowland Russell  
Charles Redfern, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician  
Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation and Facilities  
Kürt Blomquist, Public Works Director

**Members Not Present:**

Dillon Benik, Chair  
Dr. Chris Brehme, Alternate

**1) Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice Chair Bryenton called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Roll call was conducted.

**2) July 8, 2020 Minutes**

Mr. Dufresne moved to accept the July 8, 2020 minutes with revisions, Mr. Redfern seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously

Revisions as follows: Change “Roland” to “Rowland.”

**3) Wayfinding**

**a. Thoughts on UNH Webinar**

Mr. Bohannon shared that he and Mr. Lamb met with the folks from UNH via Zoom and they said that the program is a good fit for Keene, although they lack staff for implementation in Keene, they feel Keene is more than ready to have a Downtown trails program. They spoke about the ability for the City to gain instruction on training to recruit their own volunteers which he stated that many BPPAC members already possess, for example, performing bike counts. Mr. Bohannon said that they cannot do anything this fall so he informed them on the timeline for the MAST grant and if that is successful, it would take a few months of incorporation and they suggested a time frame for later in the spring. He said this allows the BPPAC and the City to

clear their agendas and have a roll out of the initiative in the spring. He said that UNH Extension is very interested and there is a minimal fee of \$3K that existing budgets can provide. Mr. Bohannon said if members had a chance to view the webinar, they have a good sense of what this program will be for Keene. He stated that they will build steps, for example, the MAST grant, then the UNH program for downtown and the trails and then go on to a larger grant that he is working with Mr. Redfern on to get some additional funding. He hopes to get all the funding they require in a 1.5-2-year timeframe. Councilor Manwaring stepped away from the meeting for a few minutes. Mr. Redfern asked if the webinar is still up and running. Mr. Schoefmann said he sent out an email link on August 7 which included the recorded webinar. The slide presentation and a list of resources.

Vice Chair Bryenton agreed that the program seems to be a good fit for Keene. He asked if there is a nationally recognized status for the program and how many volunteers they are looking for and what the time commitment would look like. Mr. Bohannon replied he will get back to the committee on the designation. In terms of volunteer commitment. He said considering what BPPAC already does, he does not foresee a lot of additional time commitment. He said they would work with the public on questions while on the trails. He suggested that the time they spend on bike counts would be exchanged for this type of work which should not involve more than a few more extra hours per month. Mr. Bohannon said he could ask more specific questions in January when they reconvene for the spring initiative planning. Mr. Russell added that Keene is not well-situated for public restrooms and asked Mr. Bohannon how he plans to address that need. He said that in Bristol, NH they used the library restrooms, and perhaps the Monadnock Co-Op could provide that service after their expansion is complete. Mr. Bohannon replied that public restrooms are available 24 hours in City Hall and the Police Station, and the Transportation Center currently has tenants in it but the new barber shop will include public access to restrooms during business hours if all goes smoothly on that front. He added that there are long-term plans for the City through the Arts and Culture Corridor or Transportation Hub to provide public restrooms and those are currently being explored through the CIP process. He stated that a dedicated facility for public restroom should be available in the next few years. Mr. Russell replied that he was unaware that those options were in the works so it would be important to provide that information through the wayfinding program.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked if there are any additional comments or thoughts about the program.

Mr. Bohannon stated that when volunteers go out to do bike counts, they can ask questions to the public about their thoughts. Mr. Schoefmann suggested that they can go out to do bike counts in pairs and one individual would perform counts and the other can interface with the public. Vice Chair Bryenton proposed that they think about wrapping up bike counts in the fall and then transitioning to public outreach in the spring. Mr. Schoefmann agreed that is a good item for discussion. He said that they had discussed refocusing count efforts towards the Cheshire Rail Trail going out to the Transportation Heritage trail public to bulk up some data for that as there are some grants on the horizon and they require baseline information. He said this is all up to discussion from the committee to make decisions based on their priorities. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if they have gotten a sufficient amount of data from West Street. Mr. Schoefmann said they have a pretty good cross-section as this is their third year of data collection and he can plug in their data into an estimator to start looking at where they are at in terms of data needs. He said

they can include that item on the agenda for next month. Mr. Dufresne proposed that if they are taking a more active community role, they can brand some gear like rain jackets for visibility and discoverability. Mr. Schoefmann said the closest thing they have had is cards to hand out, but it might be nice to have a branding strategy to make the effort more visible. Mr. Dufresne said any sort of brand recognition could be very helpful; as they are surveying people to provide more legitimacy with an affiliation. Mr. Schoefmann said they can start with the cards he has printed out and expand the discussion from there.

Councilor Manwaring asked if anyone on the committee would be interested in a Monadnock Profile in the Keene Sentinel as that is another way to humanize the effort and talk about their involvement. She said they did that at Fast Friends, and they received some good publicity. Vice Chair Bryenton stated that is great idea to launch things off in the spring. Mr. Horner agreed that Mr. Dufresne's ideas about branded t-shirts is a great idea. He said it is tough to stop folks on bicycles if you appear as a random pedestrian standing on the trails. He added that a sandwich board informing pedestrians that volunteers are interested in talking to the public about the trail would also help make volunteers more visible and legitimate. Mr. Schoefmann informed Vice Chair Bryenton that there is a sandwich board in the works. Mr. Horner added that if they know when they will do these outreach activities, they can set up the automatic counters to gather counting data on that spot on the trail simultaneously as survey data to bolster the effort. Mr. Davern stated that he agrees with everything that has been said; he suggested they pick their locations based on natural stopping/slowing down points to augment chances of talking to people. Vice Chair Bryenton replied that historical MAST counts from the trails might lead them to higher utilization trails and they can discuss further specific intercept locations at the next meeting. Mr. Schoefmann said he will add that to next month's agenda.

Vice Chair Bryenton stated that the data from the Bristol surveys involved a three-level approach which included interviews with businesses, residences and leaders, intercept surveys and a larger list to the general public. He asked if that survey data was used to bolster the larger grant applications. Mr. Bohannon agreed that is the rationale, they would gather the data for the MAST grant, then the UNH grant and compile those datasets to create a stronger application for the larger funding organizations. He said there is a buy-in from the City Manager and once they get there, they can implement this project on the CIP program through a grant process. He said there is support from management and this is a good first conversation point. Vice Chair Bryenton stated that the timeline seems reasonable, the survey training can take place January-March and then start outreach in May, as he is not hearing any opposition from the committee and members appear to be very supportive of the process.

Mr. Bohannon added that UNH Extension would come to a BPPAC meeting in January or February to share insights and directions for the initiative if that is acceptable to the committee. Vice Chair Bryenton said that Mr. Brehme can perhaps mobilize his students to help with the volunteer efforts. Mr. Schoefmann said that is highly likely and they will keep this conversation going at the next meeting to keep Keene State College (KSC) involved in the initiative as well. Mr. Russell proposed that Antioch University New England (AUNE) graduate student interns could be of assistance as well. He said students can out together capstone projects for groups of AUNE students.

**b. New Ashuelot Trail Kiosk**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he put a proof at the end of the packet which Mr. Peter Poanessa had sent along with a draft map he based off of information Mr. Schoefmann provided him. He said that Mr. Poanessa expanded the scope based on feedback to get out towards where the new Amy Brown-Park Avenue Loop is happening in conjunction with the Cheshire Rail Trail. He has not seen those proofs yet, but the design looks unique and it will be a great addition to the rail system. Mr. Russell asked if there is a second side. Mr. Redfern said there will be a historical rendition put together by Mr. Alan Rumerell which will include pictures of the trains on the tracks. He said he has followed through diligently.

Mr. Bohannon thanked Mr. Russell and Pathways for Keene for their contributions to the kiosk efforts and he will let BPPAC know when the addition is installed. Mr. Schoefmann suggested they put out a press release when the time is right. Mr. Redfern said that they recently purchased a bench in dedication to Mr. John Summers for his years of service to Pathways for Keene (PFK) and they would like the bench to be placed in that area as it will serve as an information system and resting spot. He added that they need to be mindful that Mr. Tousey's facility places a large snow pile in the expanded parking lot adjacent to the kiosk location area every winter. Mr. Bohannon said they will keep that in mind. Mr. Russell informed Mr. Bohannon, that as they expand the area into a pocket park, if there is a desire for another bench, he would be happy to see the bench built with old bicycle parts relocated there as it does not get much use in its current location. Mr. Bohannon thanked Mr. Russell and said he will take that offer into consideration.

**c. Mast Grant 2020 – <https://walkyourcity.org/>**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he included the 2020 MAST grant application in the agenda packet for members' reference. He said the scope includes three Complete Street area improvements along the "Roundhouse Tea Area" which is along the Cheshire Rail Trail; as well as accessible crossing buttons at Cheshire Rail Trail-Church Street and Gilbo Avenue; and improved overhead night time lighting at the intersection of the multi-use sidewalk in the vicinity of the proposed pocket park, and some improved tip downs and ADA improvements to the crossing at West Street and Island where some of the proposed Complete Streets items and the Walk Your City campaign is budgeted in the grant. It is a scalable grant where certain items can be dropped out if funding is not available, however, MAST wanted to partially fund the program that they have put up. He said hopefully everyone finds it to be a good grant proposal. Mr. Schoefmann said they should hear back about the grant in the late fall-early winter.

**4) Old Business**

**a. Monadnock Region Rail Trail Collaborative**

Mr. Schoefmann said he was given an update by Mr. Mike Kowalczyk on some conversations he had with the trail on the Brattleboro side about outlining plans and improvements and connectivity into the Fort Hill trail which in turn connects to the Ashuelot Rail Trail into the Winchester-Hinsdale area. He said the more information that comes out of those meetings he will channel into BPPAC.

**b. Downtown Bike Racks and Emerald Street**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he forwarded the email on last month's agenda that was sent to Chair Benik from the owner of Terra Nova Mr. Jeff Murphy about bike racks and if there were racks available to be placed in that area. He said he has to do a bit more research in terms of acquiring the racks. He said there are a number of U racks available that he has the inventory for, however, he needs to match up the rack make that the City bought to release them to interested businesses. Mr. Schoefmann said that Mr. Lussier informed him that if he can figure it out how many Rack it Up racks they have available, the City can have them. Mr. Schoefmann said he will follow up with Mr. Horner about the identification of the U racks so he can match them up at the garage. Mr. Horner asked if the City had possession of some U racks, would they all be at the Department of Public Works (DPW) garage or elsewhere. Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Bohannon replied that all U racks are stored at the DPW garage. Mr. Schoefmann asked for Mr. Horner's help in the make of the racks so he can more easily identify them at the garage. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if that would help them manage the racks more easily and Mr. Schoefmann replied that yes part of the Rack it Up program concept was that the business requests the racks, the City provides the racks and the business pays for the installation.

**c. Bike Counts**

Mr. Schoefmann said bike counts typically happen at the end of the second or third week of August and he will send out a Doodle Poll for members to sign up for counts. He said members can go in and change their availability as needed. Mr. Bryenton noted that this could potentially be their last round of counting if they shift their efforts into the rail trail program so they should prioritize getting the most counts possible.

**d. Downtown Sidewalks**

Mr. Horner stated that with outdoor dining happening all over downtown, there are certain areas that have more sidewalk space than others and they had discussed Chair Benik reaching out to City Council to follow up on that situation. He said he wonders if downtown businesses have enough space downtown to dedicate to outdoor seating, both for dining and walking, as those are two uses that are butting up against each other. He said he would be more inclined to eat downtown if he were not a foot away from pedestrians passing by on the sidewalks. He said the mask ordinance makes him feel a bit safer, however, prior to that there was too much proximity between diners and pedestrians. Mr. Horner stated that perhaps it would help businesses to have outdoor sidewalk space allocated to them for business and walking if it is perceived by businesses as an issue. Mr. Russell added that during the Mural Festival they intentionally placed murals at the back end of the buildings, for example, Modest Man Brewing is successfully using that back-end space and some businesses may have room to go into the back end of those buildings where there is less foot traffic. Mr. Russell stated that Mr. Ash Sheehan is exploring roof top seating with an architect at his place of business at the moment as well. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if anyone has heard from the Chamber of Commerce as far as businesses reaching out with concerns or issues. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they could perform a survey with the Downtown Business group. Mr. Horner said that the Mayor was holding virtual Town Hall meetings with businesses. He is unsure if those are still happening, but they could provide a

natural forum for discussion for these issues. Mr. Schoefmann stated that they could remind Chair Benik of addressing this issue and asked Mr. Horner if he could reach out to start a conversation. Mr. Horner said it could be just some basic information gathering and nothing too elaborate. Mr. Schoefmann said if businesses are looking for more space, they might consider allocating it so it is worth exploring. Mr. Russell noted that the colder weather will present new challenges, so it is worth also discussing the idea of space heaters and other factors as well.

## **5) Other Project Updates**

### **a) TAP Grant**

Mr. Schoefmann said the work for the TAP grant for the Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop will begin in the fall and he will keep committee informed on the progress of that project. Mr. Redfern asked if they could hold off on the striping this year as the paint typically wears before summer. Mr. Schoefmann said his assumption is that painting would not happen until they resurface Park Avenue as it is in shambles at the moment and would will not be ready for painting until next spring. Mr. Horner asked if BPPAC could review the final design for the project and Mr. Schoefmann replied that he will post a PDF to the Google Drive and send out a link.

### **b) Cheshire Rail Trail Phase Four – Transportation Heritage Trail**

Mr. Redfern said he spoke to Mr. Schoefmann earlier this week about addressing the re-prioritization of the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase Four-Transportation Heritage Trail as it is currently ranked as Seven and Eight and he is wondering if they can move up as it is now in the CIP. Vice Chair Bryenton said they can add a re-prioritization item on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Redfern stated that it is important for fundraising purposes to have it be ranked as Phase Five.

Vice Chair Breynton stated that Mr. Redfern had asked him to reach out to Monadnock Cycling Club in regard to the Ashuelot Rail Trail pocket park and a bike repair station and he said there is interest, however, the club is not functional at the moment. He asked Mr. Redfern if there is anyone at KSC who they can reach out to help with funding for the bike repair station project. Mr. Redfern said that would be a question for Mr. Brehme and suggested they add that item to next month's agenda.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked Mr. Schoefmann if funding from the Trail-Town project concept could also provide funding for the completion of the Master Planning document. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he has been in discussion with Mr. Mack at Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) about completing the Master Plan. He said he has to figure out the match on the City side and that could be a potential, but he first needs to discuss with Mr. Bohannon, Mr. Lamb and Mr. Blomquist about the necessary match the SWRPC would use to wrap up the plan. He said he will try and continue that process to have an answer for the next meeting.

Mr. Russell added that he dropped a link into the chat for America Walks which is worth checking out for their mission and small grants program.

6) **New Business**

a) **Items to be Included for Next Meeting**

- Re-prioritization of projects
- Bike repair station by kiosk
- Wayfinding and follow-up on the UNH Extension initiative.

7) **Next Meeting Date – September 9, 2020**

There being no further business, Vice Chair Bryenton adjourned the meeting at 9:31 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Edits by,  
Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff

Additional edits by,  
Katrnya Kibler, City Clerk's Office