



City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, March 10, 2021 8:15-9:30 AM Meeting via Zoom Webinar

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86374413889>

- This meeting will be conducted using the online meeting platform, Zoom. The public may view the meeting online by visiting www.zoom.us/join and enter the **Webinar ID: 863 7441 3889**.
- If you are unable to attend the meeting online, you may call the toll-free **(888) 475-4499** and enter **Webinar ID: 863 7441 3889** to listen to the meeting.
- More info on how to access this meeting is available on the Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee webpage at ci.keene.nh.us/bicycle-pedestrian-path-advisory-committee.
- If you encounter any issues accessing this meeting, please call **(603) 209-4697** during the meeting.

Members:

Dillon Benik, Chair
Drew Bryenton, Vice Chair
Brad Dufresne
Councilor Jan Manwaring

Michael Davern
Todd Horner
Rowland Russell
Dr. Chris Brehme, Alternate
Charles Redfern, Alternate

- 1) Call to Order and Roll Call
- 2) February 10, 2021 Minutes
- 3) Old Business
Wayfinding: UNH Downtown Trails, MAST Grant, MRRTC
Amenities: Public Survey
Emerald Street Connectivity and Pocket Park: Parking
- 4) Regular Project Updates
- 5) New Business
- Items to be included for next meeting
- 6) Adjournment
Next meeting date – April 14, 2021



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Staff:

Will Schoefmann, GIS/Community Development
Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation Cemetery and Facilities Director
Kürt Blomquist, Director of Public Works

Guest:

Mike Kowalczyk, MRRTC/Town of Swanzey

Chair Benik called the meeting to order at 8:15 am.

1) **Roll Call**

Roll call was conducted.

2) **January 13, 2021 Minutes**

Mr. Russell moved to accept the January 13, 2021 minutes, with a minor edit, Mr. Redfern seconded, and motion passed by unanimous vote.

Edit as follows:

Remove incomplete sentence on page 2 “P1- Eastern Avenue- “*Mr. Schoefmann stated that they...*”

3) **Old Business**

Wayfinding:

-*UNH Downtown Trails*- Mr. Bohannon informed the committee that he reached out to UNH and has had some email correspondence; however, they have not arrived on a scheduled date to meet. He will provide more information come spring. He said that due to COVID, it is unlikely that there will be movement on this item this spring and more likely in the fall, or the following spring.

-*MAST Grant*- Mr. Bohannon stated that the MAST grant is signed, although he has to get a second signature from the City Manager before submitting it to Southwest Community Services, and it has been approved by City Council.

-*MRRTC*- Mr. Schoefmann stated that the Monadnock Regional Rail Trail Coalition (MRRTC) has been talking about wayfinding and Mr. Davern has done a great job with cost estimations and there may be some compensation there in regard to wayfinding He said he wants to brand Keene a bit more but they will explore what the costs of that may be.

-*Walk Your City template*-Mr. Schoefmann showed a slide with the additions to Mr. Horner’s Walk Your City template. The orange circles show the locations of signs. He stated that he and Mr. Bohannon expanded the scope slightly outside of the walk shed out to the facilities that will be built along Park Avenue-Summit Road, and the extension up to Amy Brown Road and Wheelock Park. He said they will also place some signage along Appel Way at either end, including one at the intersection at the Jonathan Daniels trail and the entrance to the Park, as well as the Cheshire Rail Trail at Bradford. Mr. Schoefmann said there will be another sign at Eastern Avenue and one at Kriff Road as well. He stated that this is a planning tool that is specific to the Walk Your City wayfinding template. He added that he will have some numbers and verbiage of what will be on the signs at the next meeting. Mr. Kowalczyk added that he is willing to show the committee the wayfinding design they are experimenting with on the southern sections of the Cheshire Rail trail. Mr. Schoefmann replied that they will place that discussion on the agenda for next meeting. Mr. Schoefmann encouraged members to provide him with their ideas and input on the placement of signs.

Mr. Horner stated that the Walk your City signs have a QR code that can be scanned by a phone which provides directions and information. He said those codes could be useful as there is a wayfinding value to the signs as well as the potential for data collection for the City. He said that the codes can help the City to gather information about what community members want and need in terms of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and other relevant issues. He encouraged the committee to think about what the QR code will direct users to. Mr. Schoefmann noted that he and Mr. Bohannon discussed that the QR code could direct users to a survey to collect information to present to City Council about a formalized wayfinding plan. Mr. Horner suggested that data they collect could include designs for permanent wayfinding and community feedback on prioritization for wayfinding.

Mr. Schoefmann agreed and said it would be most valuable for City staff to understand what wayfinding signs should look like, including the elements that are most important, to justify what to City Council what the permanent signs should look like. Mr. Redfern proposed that the public should be informed before the pilot project roll out, perhaps through a press release and radio show appearance. Mr. Schoefmann added that they can also place announcements on the City's social media platforms. Mr. Bohannon said that City Council is more interested in the infrastructure but any type of public outreach will be important. He said that the new bike park will attract a lot of visitors this summer. Mr. Russell agreed with using the QR codes as a way to assess where users access the survey from. Mr. Schoefmann said XY data can be accessed through social media platforms as well.

Amenities:

-Public Survey- Mr. Schoefmann stated that the committee has discussed gathering survey information on the trails to assess what public opinion is on the need for amenities. Mr. Russell stated that the survey will be very useful and perhaps they can determine a list of amenities to gather information about at a future meeting. Mr. Schoefmann added that the Geography department at Keene State College (KSC) has used software to collect public information and he will reach out to Dr. Brehme at KSC about using those tools. Mr. Russell agreed that they could also ask users to identify where on a map they would place certain amenities. Mr. Schoefmann encouraged members to provide him with a list of questions to include on a five to six question survey, with half of the survey focused on amenities. Chair Benik asked if the survey will be entirely button response or include a verbal response as well and Mr. Schoefmann said he is not sure yet. Mr. Russell asked if BPPAC has a shared Google Drive and Mr. Schoefmann said they do and he will send it out again. Mr. Russell suggested that they all provide feedback in an Amenities folder on the shared Drive.

- Emerald Street Connectivity and Pocket Park- Mr. Russell stated that he has been advocating for this as it presents the nexus point of where the two trails meet. He said he still does not know where the lost bike repair station is but that would be the ideal placement for it, as well as some dedicated parking spaces at the Center of Keene for trail users. He stated that getting to the pocket park from the east and west due to the Colony Mill parking lot, however, they want to encourage better use of the trail in that direction and address the crossing safety concerns there as well. He stated that the Gilbo Street crossing by the east side of the Center of the Keene is tricky as well. Mr. Schoefmann added that hopefully the MAST grant can address some of those issues, as well as the wayfinding. Chair Benik noted that he crosses through the Colony Mill as well and most users do not know they are not supposed to cross through there. He agreed that tenants at the Colony Mill may begin to complain about that traffic. Mr. Russell added that the wayfinding map at School Street and Gilbo Street will be helpful for directing cyclists and pedestrians, as well as the one on Island Street. He said that the kiosk at the pocket park will help encourage people to use that route and Mr. Schoefmann agreed that it is a good hub or destination to bolster the facilities around it. Mr. Horner noted that parking is encroaching on City land there as well, for example, Mr. Tousey's request for additional parking spaces. Chair Benik asked if the City of Keene lot is owned by the corporation that owns the buildings and Mr. Schoefmann replied yes. Mr. Russell suggested that they

speak to the owners about adding dedicated parking spaces by explaining that parking would help limit the amount of people crossing the lot.

Mr. Blomquist added that they should avoid making reference to controlling people's behavior as it is not always possible to do so without local enforcement. Councilor Manwaring added that location would be ideal for public restrooms as well as restrooms are lacking along the corridor.

4) **Regular Project Updates**

Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop-

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the City submitted a request for authorization to advertise again looking at the specific costs that were contributing to high bids. He said they should be good to go for the spring and he will keep committee updated.

Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 4-

Mr., Schoefmann stated that Mr. Kowalczyk, with the Monadnock Regional Trails Collaborative, is working on developing promotional materials for wayfinding along the trail and the City Engineer drafted a letter of intent to apply for 2021 TAP funds. The letter is included at the end of today's agenda packet

5) **New Business**

Mr. Horner asked if the committee should reach out to the owners of the Center of Keene parking lot. Mr. Bohannon replied that it has been a challenge to convince the owner Brady Sullivan; however, it might be worth engaging him again to break that barrier down. Mr. Schoefmann noted that they may need a solid elevator pitch before they talk to him. Chair Benik added that if Mr. Sullivan asks for a fee from the City that may be a nonstarter. Mr. Russell noted that there may be other locations, for example, where the former Aikido business is being sold. Mr. Horner suggested that they keep this item on the next agenda for new business.

Mr. Horner informed the committee that in January there was a serious hit and run at the crossing of the Ashuelot Rail Trail at Winchester Street; he said at one point there were flashing beacons at that location but they have been removed and not replaced. He said he would like to see those beacons replaced. Mr. Schoefmann added that replacement of those beacons is part of the improvements of the Winchester Street corridor project and he will ask Mr. Lussier from Public Works for an update on that. Chair Benik suggested they keep this item on New Business for next month.

6) **Adjournment**

Chair Benik adjourned the meeting at 9:13 am.

Next meeting date – March 10, 2021

Respectfully submitted by,
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute-Taker

Additional edits by,
Will Schoefmann, KGIS/Community Development Staff

Project	PRIORITY	Master Plan Project #	Status	Budget *		Schedule			Updates (changes and relevant updates)
				Cost	Status	Start	Finish	Status	
Master Plan	N/A	N/A	Delayed	City Staff \$5K	N/A	Spring14	Fall 2021	Behind	Introduction and Background available for BPPAC Review, Trail Specific Maps and details regarding North Bridge inserted. Developing a scope of work and seeking funding to work with Southwest Regional Planning Commission to finish work on the plan in 2021
Jonathan Daniels Trail Maintenance	N/A	P3	Planning	\$25K	Even	Summer20	Fall 21	N/A	\$25k set aside in CIP FY' 21
Bike Racks	N/A	P21	Working	N/A	N/A	ongoing	N/A	N/A	Bike Racks taken in by DPW - will look for updated 2021 distribution. Jeff Murphy, owner of Brewbakers/Terra Nova and others along Emerald Street interested in old "rack it up" racks. Will is compiling the inventory after a visit to DPW garage for "Rack it Up" racks.
Lighting	N/A	P22	Completed	City Staff, PFK	Even	complete	N/A	On Schedule	Pathways for Keene are making an additional donation this year to the City. Appel Way lights installed.
Cheshire Rail Trail - Park Ave. Loop	N/A	N/A	Working	\$411,615.51	Over	Spring19	Fall 21	Behind	Engineering division of DPW is managing this project now. Engineering received authorization to re-advertise from NHDOT and FHWA. Bid documents to be released ASAP.
NHDOT TAP Grant 2018	N/A	BE22	Submitted	\$674K	N/A	Winter 2018	Summer 19	On Schedule	City of Keene has been selected as a TAP grant recipient for Complete Street improvements to Marlboro Street that tie into other planned improvements, infrastructure, economic development goals and the Cheshire Rail Trail. Funding issues between FHWA and NHDOT possibility of longer range date of completion. Repaving has commenced for 2020
Arts and Culture Corridor	NA	N/A	Planning	N/A	N/A	Planning	N/A	N/A	Monadnock Economic Development Corporation has begun the community input/visioning process for an Arts and Culture Corridor from the Railroad Land Development Area on the east side of Main Street westerly down Gilbo Avenue to School Street. Downtown infrastructure funds being associated with some elements of this more planning is underway.
Bicycle Mayor	N/A	N/A	Working	Safe Routes to School	Even	Winter 2018	Fall 2019	On Schedule	Project is inactive, program has material that could be incorporated in current websites of the City but outreach must occur to Tiffany Mannion for access to the safe routes to school material.
MASTER PLAN PROJECTS									Cont. on following page
Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 4 - CRT Eastern Ave to NH 101 Transportation Heritage Trail	TOP 5	P1	Planning	\$ 587,000.00	Even	Planning	N/A	N/A	Project submitted as a supplemental CIP - unfunded but in the plan book. Project includes from Eastern Ave - 101, Bridge to Span 101, improvements to Old Stone Arch Bridge and potential crossing at Swanzev Factor Rd. Collaboration with Heritage Commission to conduct research and outreach on hold. Letter of Intent submitted to NHDOT for 2021 TAP round. Application being compiled. Letter of Support from BPPAC Chair, City Council Etc.

Wayfinding Signage Facilities and Plan	TOP 5	P11	Working	City Staff, \$42,000	N/A	Planning	N/A	On Schedule	BPPAC Considering overall wayfinding plan with Parks/Rec, DPW and Comm Dev Departments. Complete Street Grant Awarded; Pilot Program being funded with temporary signage https://walkyourcity.org/ with MAST Complete Street Grant funds for 2020. Regional sign design pilot through MRRTC.
Prowse Bridge - CRT NH 101 Overpass to Stone Arch Bridge Transportation Heritage Trail	TOP 5	P4	Planning	\$ 1,470,000.00	N/A	Planning	N/A	N/A	Installation of the Historic Prowse Bridge at NH Route 101 and connecting the Cheshire Rail Trail to the Old Stone Arch Bridge and safety improvements (railings) to Old Stone Arch Bridge
West Street - Complete Street	TOP 5	P19	Planning	City Staff Unknown	N/A	Planning	N/A	N/A	Designated as a Gateway Street in the Complete Street Design Guide. BPPAC discussing interim and long range solutions for bike/ped facilities along the corridor. Spring, Summer and Fall Counts completed for 2020. City submitted West Street improvement project into the DOT 10 Year Plan.
AMENITIES	TOP 5	P21	Working	City Staff, Facility and Maintenance Costs	Under	Planning	N/A	On Schedule	Staff should establish a base line of existing amenities and propose types and locations of future amenities in a plan. These should include Kiosk/Trailhead facilities, Trailside Facilities such as bathrooms, potable water and tune up stations and efforts should be made to engage the artist community to create spots along the trails for public art which will enhance the unique qualities of our system. BPPAC/Staff to draft public survey

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City of Keene

New Hampshire

January 28, 2021

Thomas Jameson, P.E.
Bureau of Planning and Community Assistance
New Hampshire Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302-0483

RE: Keene #40439 – Cheshire Rail Trail, Phase III
Rebid

Dear Tom,

Thank you for your letter dated January 22, 2021. After the City rejected the bids last fall, I had an opportunity to discuss the project with both firms that submitted proposals. I share your concern that some of the reasons driving the higher than expected project cost will not change by rebidding. However, we continue to believe that rebidding will attract greater interest and more competitive pricing. Therefore, The City respectfully requests authorization to re-advertise this project.

Our design consultant is currently updating the bid documents and will provide you with an updated document set by the close of business on 2/5/21. The documents will be revised as follows:

- Thermoplastic pavement markings will be changed to retroreflective paint
- Update Davis-Bacon wage rates
- Include most recent OFC documents (as required)
- Provide current Contract No, dates, deadlines, etc.

I've also asked our consultant to review their Construction Cost Estimate in light of the NHDOT weighted average unit pricing and the unit pricing received for the project in the fall. An updated estimate will be provided with the bid document package.

If you have any questions, please contact me at 352-6550.

Sincerely,



Donald R. Lussler, P.E.
City Engineer

CC: Andrew Bohannon, Parks & Recreation Director
John Parrelli, P.E., CHA

K:\ENGRNG\2016 Projects\16-01 Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 3\4-Bidding\2021 0128 letter to NHDOT, request to rebid.docx

City of Keene, Public Works Department • 350 Marlboro Street • Keene, NH • 03431 • www.ci.keene.nh.us



City of Keene

New Hampshire

March 19, 2021

Mr. Thomas Jameson, P.E. TAP Program Manager
NHDOT Bureau of Planning & Community Assistance
John O. Morton Building
7 Hazen Drive, PO Box 483
Concord, NH 03302-0483

RE: City of Keene TAP Application
Transportation Heritage Trail

Dear Mr. Jameson,

My name is Dillon Benik. I am writing on behalf of the Bicycle Pedestrian Pathway Advisory Committee (BPPAC) to express our support for the proposed Transportation Heritage Trail Project (THT) and for the grant application submitted for Phase I of that project.

BPPAC is an advisory board to the City Council concerned with advocating for pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure and accessibility within our beautiful community. In addition to the expansion of shared access to our roadways, it remains a priority of BPPAC to see our trails preserved, and improved to enhance their use. The City of Keene has, with the help of BPPAC, improved miles of existing trails and paths to date. In addition to recreational use, these paths and trails foster greater connectivity by providing alternative access to economic centers both in Keene and neighboring towns.

The THT will provide a considerable boost to this connectivity. Once completed, the THT will serve as an important thoroughfare between Keene and neighboring Swanzey, as well as a recreational destination for the surrounding region.

Phase 1 will see approximately 4,100 feet of existing railbed improved, stretching from the current trailhead on Eastern Avenue out to NH 101, thereby connecting the Chapman Road and Marlboro Street neighborhoods with Keene's larger trail system. Put simply, this is exactly the type of project the folks serving on BPPAC are passionate about, and we as a committee support it in the strongest possible terms.

Sincerely,

Dillon Benik, Chair
City of Keene, Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee (BPPAC)