

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

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

**Wednesday, July 10, 2024**

**8:15 AM**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room,  
City Hall**

**Members Present:**

Samantha Jackson, Chair  
Dr. Rowland Russell, Vice Chair  
Councilor Edward Haas  
Autumn DelaCroix  
Charles Redfern, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

William Schoefmann, GIS Technician  
Carrah Fisk Hennessey, Parks and  
Recreation

**Members Not Present:**

Dillon Benik  
Michael Davern  
Diana Duffy  
Jan Manwaring  
Janelle Sartorio, Alternate

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

Chair Jackson called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM and invited Mr. Charles Redfern to attend as a full member.

**2) Approval of June 12, 2024 Minutes**

Chair Jackson did not receive the June 12, 2024 minutes. Mr. William Schoefmann stated they should have been included in the packet members received. Councilor Ed Haas said they were not included in the packet and believed they needed to catch up for a few months. Mr. Schoefmann stated they should be on the website, to which Councilor Haas responded that they had yet to be uploaded when he checked twenty minutes prior. Ms. Autumn DelaCroix did not remember receiving a packet and asked if she had missed it. Councilor Haas said she did not miss it, and he did not receive one either. It was determined that Mr. Schoefmann had prepared the packet but did not send it out. Dr. Rowland Russell suggested pushing the minutes' approval. Councilor Haas said they would need the past two meetings, to which Dr. Russell responded that the committee approved the May minutes. Councilor Haas clarified that he meant the minutes needed to be uploaded to the website would not be approved. Chair Jackson agreed to push the approval of the minutes off until next month.

### 3) Community Bike Share

Chai Jackson asked if this agenda item was about the meeting with Mr. Marcus McCarrel. Mr. Schoefmann stated it was broader, and Dr. Russell has previously brought up the topic. He added that the city looked at it four or five years ago. He shared that they had looked at multiple models. The main models are private, community-run, and hybrid models. Discussing and figuring out what route they want to explore is the first step for the group. Mr. Redfern asked to throw in another possibility of investigating whether there was space as a city facility. Mr. Schoefmann clarified that this was not about Mr. McCarrel and is specific to what bike share model the BPPAC is suggesting the city investigate further.

Ms. DelaCroix noted several holes while filling out the Bikeable City Silver award survey. Her first thought was that the BPPAC should put effort into filling those holes. She said there was specific talk about underserved populations, disabled riders, and making sure the space was more accommodating. While she believed that education about riding safely in different spaces needed to be included, she also thought that any bike share required a diverse range of bicycles to accommodate various riders.

Chair Jackson agreed that there needed to be some degree of education in the bike-share program to be multipurpose bike-focused. Chair Jackson recognized Dr. Russell, who noted that one driver that led to this discussion topic was the efforts of Gail Somers of Yahso and her discussion of the Jamaicans that come up for seasonal work. These individuals come to Keene to work at People's Linen, often stay at the Keene Inn, and rarely have transportation. Through her efforts, she was able to procure some donated bikes. Dr. Russell said many bikes were not in top condition and urged that repair should be a part of the bike share program.

Ms. Carrah Fisk Hennessey asked if the group knew about Chris Jackson and Pedals 4 People. Mr. Schoefmann responded that he was aware. She explained that he is a family friend who takes bikes in all kinds of disrepair, services them, and then finds people in the community to donate. Councilor Haas asked if he was local and then wondered why he was not part of the BPPAC committee. Ms. Fisk Hennessey noted that he is a one-person show, and the work of Pedals 4 People is done on the side when he is not working his regular job. He has been doing this for a long time, and many kids and families have been receiving his efforts and donations. Ms. DelaCroix asked if he had a dedicated facility. Ms. Fisk Hennessey responded no, saying he does this out of his heart and his house. Ms. DelaCroix and Ms. Jackson wondered about connecting Mr. McCarrel and Mr. Jackson. Dr. Russell noted that connecting them and finding funding and space is another. Chair Jackson added that it may require directing them as to what the BPPAC thinks is the right kind of facility or program.

Dr. Russell noted that Bellows Falls has a wonderful program. Chair Jackson agreed but needed to remember if that one was completely grassroots. Dr. Russell said it started as grassroots and has kept growing. He believed they owned the building they are now in or were in the process of buying it.

Mr. Schoefmann mentioned that Concord had one attached to its Goodwill Program and had a large space. He had not been in recent years and asked if anyone knew if the program was still going on. Mr. Redfern believed the program had stopped.

Councilor Haas said he heard mention of three options for bike share programs: a commercial approach of city bike model, a city-sponsored program/community-based partnered with a company, and the Pedals 4 People/ Marcus McCarrel/ Bellows Falls model. He asked if there were any other options they should examine. Mr. Schoefmann said the options are to grow and manage it yourself or pay a company to do it. Dr. Russell added that a coop model is common. Councilor Haas suggested putting the first one aside for now. He believed the second option would grow out of the third option. He thought there were many drivers in that Bellows Falls model direction and suggested focusing on the needs of a Bellows Falls-type model. He pointed out that two people are already doing this with an immediate need for a location. Ms. DelaCroix said there are years of effort, if not well recognized, and urged supporting them with resources if possible. Councilor Haas said he had yet to identify any potential locations but would try to. He was not sure how fruitful that would be.

Chair Jackson mentioned that the fellow in charge of the Silk Mill offers discounts to nonprofits, but it would require first turning the program into a nonprofit. Dr. Russell said it may be optional if they can find a nonprofit fiscal sponsor. Mr. Schoefmann cautioned that when the talk includes property and rents, it becomes a slightly different discussion point. Dr. Russell agreed but said it would start there and noted that Arts Alive has supported groups that are not necessarily arts groups to do things exactly like this. He added that Cheshire County Conservation District also has and is a model to look at.

Councilor Haas said identifying a potential nonprofit that could adopt the existing green bike project is a priority task. Dr. Russell suggested identifying the steps but waiting to prioritize. Mr. Schoefmann cautioned calling it Green Bikes as that was a Keene State program, and Mr. McCarrel is no longer with Keene State and is doing this program independently. Chair Jackson recognized Mr. Redfern, who believed that looking at models made sense but urged bringing in the expertise of those doing the work. As such, he proposed inviting Mr. Jackson and Mr. McCarrel to attend a meeting, listen in, and offer them an opportunity to share their expertise. Dr. Russell liked Mr. Redfern's suggestion and suggested adding whoever is managing the Green Bikes Program at Keene State and Gayle Summers to the invite list. Councilor Haas offered to reach out to people at the Bellows Falls program. Ms. Fisk Hennessey said she knows that Pedals 4 People is a registered nonprofit.

Dr. Russell asked if there were intentions to discuss this at the next meeting. Mr. Schoefmann said if any discussions occur outside of the meeting, individuals must avoid a quorum, and before making any decisions, a report-out to the group must occur. Dr. Russell said it made the most sense to discuss this at the next meeting. The topic is to be added to the agenda for the August meeting. Mr. Schoefmann said anyone can invite the guests but asked the members to confirm with him if they plan to attend. Councilor Haas suggested dedicating the entire meeting

to this discussion. Chair Jackson and Mr. Schoefmann said there may be other businesses, but they can undoubtedly set aside 45 minutes for the discussion. Chair Jackson also suggested putting the discussion first on the agenda so the guests can skip the remaining meeting or any inapplicable agenda items.

4) **Safety and Outreach**

A) **Public Art and the Trails Update**

Dr. Russell did not have anything new. A new wrinkle to be discussed at the next Friends of Public Art is that he did a section of the Mass Central Rail Trail on his last long hike and hit a tunnel that he thought had graffiti. It turned out to be a large mural of wildlife, native species, and historic land uses throughout the four seasons spanning both sides. They had previously discussed the Appel Way underpass as a potential project, and he wants to suggest a similar mural.

B) **Other Bicycle Pedestrian Promotion**

Councilor Haas did not have anything to add.

Chair Jackson shared that there will be a community bike party/bike ride next Friday. It will start at Fire Dogs, will travel down Winchester Street to the Rotary, up Main Street to the Square, down West Street, and then pick up the Jonathan Daniels trail to Appel way and then back road next to the high school until the Cheshire Rail Trail and comes back. The ride will be about an hour long, starting at 5:30 pm, and there will be pizza by donation afterward. Last time, donations went to repainting the bike rack at Firedogs. Anyone with questions can contact Chair Jackson. They are aiming for 100 attendees.

Ms. Fisk Hennessey was thanked before she needed to leave.

5) **Regular Project Updates**

Mr. Schoefmann did not go into the order of the agenda, but he updated us that he received an email from Brett at Public Works. It was reported that the Transportation Heritage Trail is proceeding well in the preliminary design stage. They are looking at a submission to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) by the end of August and approval, hopefully, by the end of October. Mr. Schoefmann explained that those are standard timelines, especially with how backed up the NHDOT is with project review and related tasks and how understaffed they are. He clarified that the preliminary design packet review is expected to be approved by the end of October. The expected bidding and construction will be by the spring of next year.

Mr. Schoefmann explained that he is on the Advisory Committee for the Safe Streets for All Grant and shared that the consultant is developing an action plan. They are going to present a database of recommendations to the Steering Committee. He asked Ms. DelaCroix if that took

place last month. She responded that she has missed multiple meetings and, unfortunately, has not been receiving minutes.

The expected roadway safety plan recommendation will be at the end of September after the steering committee has gone through the safety action plan. Councilor Haas asked if it was known what city staff was bird-dogging that. Mr. Schoefmann said it was Mr. Rusnock and Mr. Don Lussier. Plan adoption will allow for applying and implementing some grants, possibly in 2025 and 2026, based on the recommendations. He explained that there is additional funding. The government sets up the program to implement what is mapped out in the plan, so they must wait and see what happens there. It will depend on the staffing bandwidth to manage additional projects.

The final bid documents are being provided to NHDOT by the end of the week for review and approval for the Marlboro Street project. They expect to advertise in August, and potential work is scheduled to start this fall, but most of it will likely be in the spring of 2025. Those improvements will include the connection to the rail trail, past DPW, down Bartholomew. They will also include improving the ramp and the connection and doing the complete street work to Marlboro Street, and he believed it also included enhancing a couple of crossings.

The Lower Winchester Street Engineering study was approved, and they are currently negotiating the scope and fee with the design consultant and permanent preliminary and final design. The expected design will be through mid-2025. NHDOT is managing the right-away process through the end of 2026, and construction is scheduled for 2027.

The goal for the downtown infrastructure project is for the City Council to adopt the luminary design plan on July 18. After that, detailed utility coordination and design will begin.

Mr. Redfern shared that he and a small group seeking private funding met with Mr. Don Lussier yesterday. This group includes Monadnock Conservancy and Pathways for Keene, and they are looking to come up with half of the local share or as much as possible, which is a \$400,000 ask. He explained that the city submitted four or five applications to Representative Annie Kuster for the congressionally directed spending. One of them was chosen: the Transportation Heritage Trail phases two, three, and four combined. Mr. Lussier attempted to follow up on whether it was in the package but has not received any follow-up. Should there be no follow-up, Mr. Redfern will be urging people to reach out to Annie Kuster's office to inquire about the status and express its importance. The information for reaching out will be provided to Mr. Schoefmann, along with a script for folks interested in contacting and inquiring about the project status.

Mr. Schoefmann explained that he and Chair Jackson are working on updating the document that she had given to the BPPAC for presentation to the Council Committee at some point after the August break. They are trying to focus on the municipally managed racks. He believes the private rack analysis is good for this group to have as a baseline; he does not believe the city council will want to look at it.

Dr. Russell asked whether and if the private bike rack analysis could be shared with the downtown business group. He said doing so would not only introduce private businesses to what the BPPAC is doing but might also encourage them to become potential supporters of other initiatives and help them understand the rationale behind certain types of racks.

Ms. DelaCroix noted last month's guest and his explicit mention of money available to incentivize downtown businesses to install bike racks. She wondered if the list could be sent to him to push this forward. Mr. Schoefmann said they are looking more at an educational program similar to what Dr. Russell is suggesting, with a double-pronged approach, such as having a cycling club partner with the BPPAC to give a presentation somewhere. Dr. Russell indicated that the Chamber is another good audience for a presentation and would forward it to the Southwest Regional Planning Commission.

Councilor Haas thought it would be great to have the BPPAC send an advisory with the slideshow attachment to get on the City Council agenda. They can take it just for information only. The downtown business group is anxious about stuff like this, and there was even an ask at their last meeting about bike racks and information.

Dr. Russell added that another meeting to attend with this would be The Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) because it's another angle regionally, particularly given the way they have been looking at multimodal transportation for work commutes and travel. Their next meeting is next Wednesday at 3 pm.

Councilor Haas said he was happy to pen a script to go to the council. Mr. Schoefmann offered to talk Chair Jackson through the process.

Mr. Redfern shared that they have moved along nicely, thanks to Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Hendry Underwood. One side will have the Keene Trail system. The other side will be an overview of the regional map. Yesterday, he talked with the Monadnock Collaborative, and they said they would be willing to sponsor the regional side. He will request Pathways for Keene to fund the City of Keene side. He explained that the challenge is that the regional side wants to expand some areas. Mr. Schoefmann clarified that the integration was the other town centers having pockets on the Keene side because of how small the scale is on the regional side.

Mr. Redfern complimented Mr. Schoefmann on the time and effort he put into the map and shared that he did find a vendor for it. FourMax has reasonable prices, and his goal is to get 1000 for \$745, which would adequately supply the bike shops. To keep the program going, he plans to have the bike shops collect \$1/map to cover the \$0.60 production cost.

Dr. Russell asked Mr. Redfern if there would be an online map version. Mr. Redfern complimented the idea and noted that it could be a solution to the scale issue as an online version could contain more detail on the regional side. Dr. Russell strongly encouraged having an online

version that could be shared on various organizational websites and promoted through social media.

6) **Volunteer Opportunities**

Mr. Redfern and Dr. Russell will be in touch regarding a fall trail cleanup. Mr. Schoefamn said that, sometime between this month and next, he will be looking to coordinate some bike census. As an agenda item for the future, they plan to do a pedestrian yield count and trail count.

7) **Old Business**

A) **Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan**

Mr. Schoefmann shared that they are submitting a project request form to purchasing for the Master Plan CIP, which is standard practice to get that ball rolling. He will meet with other planning staff out of Community Development to ensure the scope goes where it needs to be. This is the CIP item with a budget of \$50,000 leading to the bicycle-pedestrian master plan. He thinks the concept is that the BPPAC, or at least a portion of it, would be the steering committee. As the scope rolls out, they will have a better idea of what the advertising timeline and interviews will be, and they will let everyone know.

B) **Kiosk Maps and Wayfinding Updates**

Mr. Schoefmann shared that Mr. Andy Bohannon is working on the next steps. He is still in the timeline window that he discussed. They are hoping to meet later this week. Mr. Bohannon is trying to bring Ms. Fisk Hennessey up to date, and that meeting will be part of that task.

8) **New Business**

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

- i) *Bike counts, ped counts, trail counts*
- ii) *Extension of bike rack season*

9) **More Time**

- A) **Downtown Bike Lane Rules**
- B) **Old Stone Arch Bridge Safety Improvements**
- C) **BPPAC Website**

10) **Adjournment**

With no further business, Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 9:16 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

Edits submitted by, William Schoefmann, GIS Technician  
Additional edits by, Katryna Kibler, Clerk's Office