

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, March 10, 2021

8:15-9:30 AM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Drew Bryenton, Vice Chair
Brad Dufresne
Michael Davern
Todd Horner
Dr. Rowland Russell
Dr. Chris Brehme, Alternate
Charles Redfern, Alternate

Staff Present:

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

Members Not Present:

Dillon Benik, Chair
Councilor Jan Manwaring

Vice Chair Bryenton called meeting to order at 8:15 AM.

1. Roll Call

Chair Bryenton read the Zoom platform meeting rules aloud and roll call was conducted.

2. February 10, 2021 Minutes

Dr. Russell moved to accept the February 10, 2021 meeting minutes, Mr. Redfern seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Old Business

a. Wayfinding: UNH Downtown Trails, MAST Grant, MRRTC

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Mr. Bohannon submitted a letter to City Council to move towards accepting the funds for the MAST grant. Mr. Bohannon said that the MAST grant was accepted, and City Council accepted the funds so they now have a fully executed contract and will begin work to be completed by December 2022. Mr.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that he worked on a few examples for wayfinding that he will hopefully be able to share at the next meeting. Mr. Redfern asked which MAST grant they are discussing; the one for signage in Keene or the MAST grant previous to this one. Mr. Schoefmann replied it is a Complete Streets grant which includes improvements at nodes along the rail trail, including lighting, and this grant is focused on the signage. Mr. Bohannon clarified that there is a funded grant in the MAST program for Complete Streets which has been accepted by City Council and was supported by BPPAC last year, and there is also a submission going before the FOP committee for a collaboration with Swanzey and Winchester for the Monadnock Regional Rail Trails grant. Mr. Redfern asked Mr. Bohannon if Pathways for Keene (PFK) was involved in that grant as it appears that they are not. Mr. Bohannon replied that this grant is minimal and only includes a few signs; he stated that when they approached Ms. Trisha Zahn she said she would support a more regional effort. They also reached out MAST and they made it clear they must go through them. Mr. Redfern asked if the signs would PFK in the labeling. Mr. Bohannon said they

can include PFK, but the purpose of the labeling is to have a QR code that can be scanned. He suggested they discuss the matter at another time.

b. Amenities: Public Survey

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the committee is reaching out to Mr. Brehme to see if they can use Keene State College's survey program which has a component that identifies areas of interest which is helpful when reaching out to the public to gather that data, particularly for amenities. He stated that a visual cue like a map is important, so they are aiming to follow up with Mr. Brehme to see what is possible. Mr. Schoefmann stated that members can send their survey question ideas to him. Mr. Brehme's audio was not working properly, so he messaged the group stating that he is happy to help with the development of the survey. Mr. Schoefmann said he can send out a link for a Google Doc to gather member feedback on the survey questions and they can discuss those ideas with Mr. Brehme at the next meeting.

c. Emerald Street Connectivity and Pocket Park: Parking

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the committee agenda'd the topic of parking in the vicinity of the Ashuelot and Cheshire Rail trail location at the last meeting. He said they had discussed the potential for adding parking on Mr. Brady Sullivan's property at the Center at Keene. Vice Chair Bryenton said that the committee discussed the availability of parking spaces at the Center of Keene and strategies for accessing those spaces for the trailhead. Mr. Schoefmann said there is parking available and it is not monitored well, however, they cannot advertise that parking. Mr. Blomquist noted that it depends on the relationship the City wants with the property owner; if they want to get formal access they will need to reach out to Mr. Sullivan, however, there is also the Commercial Street and Gilbo Street parking lots and options that people can be encouraged to use as well. Mr. Schoefmann agreed and said that people's ideas can be gleaned with the survey as well. Mr. Bryenton suggested that they table the idea for now until it becomes more of an issue. Dr. Russell agreed that liability issues are a concern as well. Mr. Blomquist added that liability laws are as such that if the City does not have prior notice of users gaining access to a particular point then they are not liable. Mr. Schoefmann stated that the parking spaces along Ashuelot Park are City spaces. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if anyone has comments, otherwise they can table this issue unless something comes up. Mr. Schoefmann agreed that they see what the survey responses are and encourage users to use available parking.

4. Regular Project Updates

Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop -Mr. Redfern asked if the Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop has gone out to bid yet. Mr. Blomquist stated that there were some slight modifications done as it was over budget, but they are hoping to have it out by April 8.

Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 4- Mr. Schoefmann said they are still looking to launch a collaboration with the Heritage Commission. He is reaching out to Ms. Kessler and they will be sending out a Doodle Poll. Mr. Blomquist stated that the City has received the draft Memorandum of Understanding for the bridge and a few key items are that the State Historical Office will have authority to review any designs specific to the bridge. He stated there is also a requirement for the length of the historic construction, they must produce an annual report. He said they are asking NH DOT to maintain the bridge in its current location until 2027. Mr. Blomquist stated that City Engineer, Mr. Lussier is preparing for the application for the section of trail from Eastern Avenue to Route 101. He said they now require a letter from the Mayor to sign off on

support of the applications. He stated there were 41 applications for 3 million dollars, which is very competitive.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Chair Benik drafted a letter of support from BPPAC after Mr. Lussier requested a letter a support from the body. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if members have questions or edits to the letter and heard none.

Walk our City signs- Mr. Schoefmann said he hopes the Walk your City website is back up and running soon.

Amenities- Mr. Schoefmann will send out a link for a Google Doc to collect member survey questions ideas.

5. New Business

Mr. Schoefmann stated that Dr. Russell is working on a few initiatives. Dr. Russell said that the grant writer at AUNE sent him a list of grant opportunities that may be germane to the committee. He said there are a few art options as well. Dr. Russell will forward that list to Mr. Schoefmann to make available to the committee.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked what the status is for the UNH Cooperative. Mr. Bohannon said he has not heard back yet about specific dates, however, the contact person said she would not be able to meet with him until the middle of March. He said he will update the committee once he has some scheduled dates.

Mr. Horner stated that he saw a UNH student doing intercept surveys on the rail trail a month ago.

Mr. Davern left the meeting.

Mr. Schoefmann said it is time to think about where to focus on bike counts this year on the Transportation Heritage trail. He said he can find a few locations to see where they can target their efforts best. Vice Chair Bryenton replied that it sounds like a good idea, particularly along a few nodes on Eastern Avenue. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will speak to Mr. Lussier and get his feedback and he will put together a packet for the committee. He said in person data is more robust as there is not a confined corridor for the trail project that is closest in the cue. He asked Mr. Horner if they have direct counters. Mr. Horner replied they do have direct counters, and they have some automatic data already, but he is not sure if that data has been processed yet. He said there may still be a role for manual counts as the location may prove difficult for automatic counts. Dr. Russell added that physical counts of presence would be useful in that location. Mr. Schoefmann said that people go up the Marlborough Street extension and Bradford Road, and those locations are wide for pneumatic tubes and laser counters so manual counts might be the best option for that location. Vice Chair Bryenton said he is interested in seeing how many people cross over 101 to the Stone Arch Bridge.

Dr. Russell asked if Mr. Horner has updates from Southwest Regional Planning Commission. Mr. Horner said the project is still underway and his colleague Mr. Underwood is taking a lead on that project. He said they are looking at goals and objectives for that planning initiative focusing on the Cheshire rail Trail down through Fitzwilliam and beyond into Winchendon, MA which is a long-term project. He referred members to the website for updates on that process. He said project working group meetings are also available to the public.

Mr. Redfern asked Mr. Horner for the status of the 101 Stone Arch Bridge project. Mr. Horner replied that Mr. JB Mack would have a lot more knowledge about that particular project.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked members to please jot down a few survey questions after today's meeting to populate Mr. Schoefmann's Google Sheet.

6. Adjournment – Next meeting date – April 14, 2021

Vice Chair Bryenton adjourned the meeting at 9:03 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,
Will Schoefmann, Community Development