

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

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

**Wednesday, May 12, 2021**

**8:15 AM**

**Remote Meeting via Zoom**

**Members Present:**

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

**Staff Present:**

Andy Bohannon, Director of Parks,  
Recreation & Facilities  
William Schoefmann, GIS technician  
Kürt Blomquist, Director of Public Works

**Members Not Present:**

Dillon Benik, Chair

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

**1) Roll Call**

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

**2) April 14, 2021 Minutes**

Dr. Russell moved to accept the April 14, 2021 meeting minutes, Mr. Redfern seconded, and the motion was passed by unanimous vote.

**3) Old Business**

Wayfinding/Amenities/Public Survey/ MAST Grant – Mr. Schoefmann stated that the working group including Dr. Brehme, Dr. Russell, Mr. Horner and himself met twice to discuss targeted wayfinding surveys for specific user groups. He said the map information needs to be reviewed and made into a more formalized tool. He stated that they developed anchor points in terms of where the wayfinding should be located, for example, they identified some midpoint intersections and destinations. Mr. Schoefmann noted that the information they discussed is included in the agenda packet. Mr. Kowalczyk asked if they are considering business wayfinding and Mr. Schoefmann said not specific businesses at the moment. Dr. Russell said that they discussed using symbols to point people in the direction of businesses but not using specific business names. Mr. Schoefmann added that they also considered the use of common icons in the

signage, for example, icons for bathroom facilities. He said the work group focused on what places need to be identified. Dr. Russell added that stating the names of specific businesses is more precarious as not every business can be included. Dr. Brehme noted that the survey is aimed at presenting a list to the general public rather than an open-ended survey; however, they want to make sure there is an opportunity for people to add items that they may have forgotten. He said they envision the survey in two parts: primary and secondary. Dr. Russell said the survey today could present the first pool. Mr. Schoefmann said that the locations they have identified are acting as trailheads or starting points. He encouraged members to give their feedback on the list for primary and secondary anchor points that the working group identified.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked about the distinction between the wayfinding survey and the amenities survey. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the targeted wayfinding survey is aimed at specific user groups who use the trails and possibly the public for information gathering which will help form the alternative to the Walk Your City concept. He said there are mapping and easy survey tools that he and Dr. Brehme will work on. Vice Chair Bryenton asked if the UNH survey is a different survey and Mr. Bohannon replied that the UNH survey is happening in the fall. Mr. Schoefmann said the design concept survey may be more tied into the UNH survey. Dr. Russell added that they are aiming to have the primary and secondary anchor points mapped out with existing amenities portrayed and then it will go out to a larger community for feedback. Dr. Brehme noted that there is a hierarchy as most people come on at a trailhead and be presented with a map and then at the secondary locations, they will be guided a bit more to keep people aware of where they are along the trails. Mr. Schoefmann added that the symbols will help people to navigate to key locations.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that next they will approach Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC) before the survey to discuss timing with the downtown trails survey through UNH. He said once they get more information about direction, they will make some decisions in June. Vice Chair Bryenton noted that the MAST grant is timebound and they will have to get it completed by next fall.

UNH Downtown Trails – Mr. Bohannon stated that he met with Ms. Shannon Rogers who coordinates the program for UNH, and they discussed the timeline and forming a steering committee that will remain with the program for the next six months. He said they discussed starting in late August-early September to begin working on the assessment. The surveys will be conducted through the end of September and October and the steering committee members will be responsible for checking in with various business owners and other connections to create a more robust understanding of the impacts. He said the steering committee will be comprised of 8-10 people who will identify which community members should be involved. Mr. Bohannon said they also discussed working together with Dr. Brehme's department at KSC on the assessment. Once the assessment is completed, they will put together a report to submit to the steering committee and that committee will carry it on to the action committee and that is where he believes BPPAC members will come in. Mr. Bohannon stated that communities that have done this sort of program include economic development programs so they will talk to the Mayor and the City Manager. He said the action committee is responsible for ensuring that the report recommendations actually happen. He said the Parks and Recreation department will be working with a consultant on City-wide branding and that will be instrumental on the trail piece.

Mr. Bohannon stated that the data collection during September and October will include a spatial assessment, an intercept survey and interviews from the steering committee. After the data collection is done, UNH will turn it into a 12–15-page report. Dr. Russell stated that there is also an opportunity to work with AUNE students as well. Mr. Bohannon agreed that students from KSC and AUNE are welcome to work on the data collection and assessment. Mr. Schoefmann asked Mr. Bohannon how the UNH Downtown trails survey fits into the wayfinding and the amenities public surveys. Mr. Bohannon replied that they are receiving a service from UNH, they will train volunteers to do intercept surveys for the future. He said they can knock off the MAST initiative through this program as well. Mr. Schoefmann said they will have an opportunity through the steering committee to gather data about amenities and wayfinding. Dr. Russell added that UNH focuses a lot on the usage of paths, which is different than the amenities and the wayfinding points. He asked Mr. Bohannon if those are two facets of the UNH survey. Mr. Bohannon replied that he is concerned that they collect feedback in June and July and then when they go back out in September and October people will think they already completed the survey. However, he believes there is a way to combine the surveys. Dr. Brehme suggested that the steering committee collect information around resources that would be helpful before UNH begins the project. Mr. Bohannon agreed that having information readily available before UNH comes to town in the fall would allow them to hit the ground running. Mr. Brehme said that way they can build the wayfinding information into the intercept survey. Mr. Schoefmann agreed that if UNH informs them of what they need, BPPAC members can begin that process of gathering information. Mr. Bohannon said that Ms. Rogers did mention that Keene is ahead of other communities in terms of bicycle infrastructure and connectivity to the town, so providing her with information in the beginning could be very useful. Dr. Russell stated that the first phase could be building baseline materials and then the second part would be focused on the public surveys. Vice Chair Bryenton asked for clarification that the intercept surveys could be customized for BPPAC's needs and Mr. Bohannon replied that is correct. Mr. Schoefmann added that Mr. Bohannon and himself also have to make sure that they meet the objectives of the MAST grant and what they had intended with Walk Your City. Mr. Bohannon proposed that he send the conversation over to Mr. Schoefmann before he speaks with Ms. Rogers to make sure they are all moving in the same direction.

Mr. Horner stated that the survey audience is targeted at specific groups and one way they can roll that into the UNH project is to compile a list of groups they identify as important to reach out to. He said that can be helpful information for UNH as they build the steering committee for the project and consider other modes of outreach. Mr. Bohannon added that the steering committee will have to be formed before UNH comes to town and they will be responsible for conducting the interviews.

Bike/Pedestrian Counts--EcoCounter Grant – Mr. Davern stated that the New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA) is partnering with Eco-Counter to provide grants to NEMBA chapters to get eco-counters for the summer. EcoCounter will help set up an account program and analyze the data afterwards. He said the chapter is interested in applying for Drummer Hill specifically. He is interested in getting trailhead counts in the Drummer Hill-Goose Pond area. He said they need letters of support from members of the community and BPPAC comes to mind, as well as Pathways for Keene and other organizations. The grant is for the counters for

this summer and data would be available at the end of the summer. Mr. Schoefmann clarified that the counters are people counters and ping when human beings are close by, he said a bit of observation may be necessary. Mr. Davern stated that the application is due on May 17.

Dr. Russell moved that BPPAC provide a letter of support for Mr. Davern's Eco Counter grant application, Mr. Dufresne seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Big E Expo Presence – Mr. Redfern stated that this event will take place in Springfield, MA beginning on September 17 until October 3. He said they have an enthusiastic group called the New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition which has an arrangement with the Granite State ambassadors who are the volunteers for the State Travel and Tourism Department. He stated there may be gaps in the scheduling and he is anticipating that his group of 10 people may fall short of 100% coverage. He stated that is BPPAC members are interested they can arrange for them to promote rack cards being designed for Keene's trails and pathways that is being financed by a private group. Mr. Redfern said there will be 4,000 rack cards that will take them through the event. He hopes they will offer free parking for volunteers. He said he will be sending out scheduling for NH Rail Trail Coalition by June to assess the gaps and as the time approaches, they will develop a hard schedule to ensure coverage. Mr. Schoefmann encouraged Mr. Redfern to keep the committee posted. Mr. Redfern stated that Mr. Bohannon is helping with a QR code that will show the trail system and destination points as well as the skate park. Mr. Bohannon clarified that he is promoting the bike park and not the skate park.

#### **4) Regular Project Updates**

Cheshire Rail Trail-Park Avenue Loop – Mr. Blomquist stated that the total project is over budget by about \$45 and they are looking to reallocate 20K in funding from Cheshire Rail Trail Phase Two and they are also recommending that the Council consider withdrawing from the Transportation Capital Reserve, the remaining \$20K balance to provide funds for that match. Mr. Blomquist said they are also recommending that the Federal Highway regulation concerning design be changed from a separate entity. They have attained a separate contract for design services for construction. He stated that they now have to maintain both the designer and a separate entity through the construction phase so they will have to start budgeting accordingly due to this change. They are requesting authority from NH DOT to award the project and they have indicated that they have funds for their portion of their project, however, they have not received formal notice for awarding the project. Vice Chair Bryenton asked what side of the project includes paving and Mr. Blomquist replied both and that nothing will be completed early.

Old Stone Arch Bridge – Mr. Schoefmann stated that a letter of intent was sent for funding a planning phase study for historical preservation of the bridge and bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements in preparation for increased usage for the other portions of the Transportation Heritage Trail project. He said he is working with Ms. Kessler and there will be opportunity for BPPAC members to work collaboratively on the LCHIP grant. He said he will keep members posted on the progress of that grant.

Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 4 – Mr. Schoefmann stated that a letter of intent was submitted to NH DOT for the TAP round, and they probably will not hear back about that application until the

fall. Mr. Bohannon said they received a letter regarding the Stone Arch Bridge and submitted a Northern Borders application and are currently working with SLR which is the same design group working with Russell Park on a design concept for PFK's fundraising efforts. He said things are moving and coming together and they are ahead of schedule. They are also reaching out to Senator Shaheen and Rep. Custer's office to get funding to move the project along. Mr. Schoefmann stated that Mr. Lucier submitted the TAP grant. Mr. Redfern asked Mr. Bohannon is the Northern Borders grant is tied to Senator Shaheen's office or Rep. Custer's office. Mr. Bohannon replied that it is separate, and they have to be careful about what funding they receive as they cannot be duplicated. He said they are having ongoing conversations with both. Mr. Blomquist stated that they are discussing congressionally directed projects and that is part of what Senator Shaheen and Rep. Custer have been asking for to build their list of projects. He stated that the federal grant source that they use provides the most amount of money so that is why they are applying broadly to maximize the amount of funding they receive.

#### **5) New Business – Items to be included for next meeting**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that old business will take up the agenda along with regular project updates for the next meeting. Vice Chair Bryenton asked how they will discuss the surveys and Mr. Schoefmann replied that he will keep old business active as they are juggling various items. He said he will figure out a way to make it more fluid. Dr. Russell suggested that once they get input back from Mr. Bohannon, they can begin to prepare for the survey baseline work. Mr. Horner added that it could be helpful for UNH to provide an example or past project, including a survey that was used to inform the committee's efforts. Vice Chair Bryenton said that Mr. Bohannon sent out a template from Bristol.

Mr. Redfern announced that PFK will be holding their Four on the Fourth footrace and are already raising money from sponsors for the Cheshire Rail Trail section (Eastern Avenue – NH Route 101) component of the Transportation Heritage Trail.

#### **6) Adjournment**

Vice Chair Bryenton adjourned the meeting at 9:22 AM.

Next meeting date – June 9, 2021

Respectfully submitted by,  
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Additional edits by,  
Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff

Additional edits by,  
Katie Kibler, Clerk's Office