

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

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

**Wednesday, April 10, 2024**

**8:15 AM**

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

**Members Present:**

Samantha Jackson, Chair  
Dr. Rowland Russell, Vice Chair  
Jan Manwaring  
Michael Davern  
Councilor Edward Haas  
Autumn DelaCroix  
Charles Redfern, Alternate  
Diana Duffy, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

William Schoefmann, GIS Technician

**Members Not Present:**

Jeanelle Sartorio, Alternate

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

Chair Jackson called the meeting to order at 8:25 AM.

**2) March 13, 2024, Minutes**

Chair Jackson welcomed comments and corrections for the March 13, 2024, minutes. Councilor Haas noted his name was spelled incorrectly on line 88. Ms. Jan Manwaring moved to accept the minutes with the adjustment with a second from Ms. Autumn DelaCroix. With all in favor, the minutes from March 13, 2024, were accepted.

**3) Downtown Bike Racks**

Chair Jackson opted to table the item for the time being and move on to the next agenda item. In a later discussion, Chair Jackson asked if anyone had looked at the presentation. It had been sent to members as a hyperlink in the email. A few members had not viewed it so Mr. Schoefmann brought it up for view. Mr. Schoefmann shared that he thought it was a “pretty stellar” inventory. Chair Jackson thanked both Ms. DelaCroix and Ms. Duffy for their assistance with the inventory.

Chair Jackson thought it would be nice to look in detail at the map and reevaluate where they have false spots. She noted that she did not get to that point and had only analyzed the kind of

bike racks. She explained that the slide was demonstrating the different categories of preference for the kind of bike racks there are. She went on to explain that a bike rack must support the bicycle frame in at least two places, which is why the staples are nice. It can lean on two spots which allows the frame and wheel to be locked using a U lock or a cable lock that prevents people from stealing or stealing just a tire thereby ruining the use of the bike. It also prevents the wheel of the bicycle from tipping over, does not damage the bicycle, and allows for secure anchoring as well as front-in or back-up parking.

She demonstrated via the PowerPoint that some racks can damage the wheel and the bike simply by parking there. Others may allow for use like a staple but result in the bike taking up too much room and end up not being space-effective and less safe due to only having one point of contact with the bike. She discussed and showed the various locations. Mr. Davern asked if the Department of Public Works (DPW) had already put the racks out for the season. Chair Jackson was unsure and Ms. Manwaring said she believed it was set to occur in late April. Mr. Davern was hopeful they could drive where they wanted them placed.

Chair Jackson went through the slides explaining the pros and cons of the different styles in the various locations. She stopped there to allow Mr. Andy Bohannon to have time to speak. Mr. Schoefmann asked Chair Jackson if she used any of the bike parking guidance research out there to analyze this material or if she analyzed it as a rider. She responded that the very first slide had the guidelines. Mr. Schoefmann offered to send that to DPW for them to use in consideration of putting the bike racks out this spring.

Mr. Andy Bohannon mentioned that PlayCore has a webinar related to bike parking standards as well as one for installation. He encouraged the group to watch it. Mr. Schoefmann asked him to share it with him.

#### **4) Safety and Outreach**

##### **A) Downtown Bike Lane Rules**

In the second packet sent out by Mr. Schoefmann, there was summary information and some bullet points previously provided by Ms. DelaCroix as well as the more in-depth research provided by Councilor Haas.

Ms. DelaCroix discussed the listed bicycle regulations that she believed to be the main ones on people's minds. She thought the list would be the least transgressive to the public. Dr. Russell stated he would like number two but recognized the challenge of implementing it. He asked Ms. DelaCroix how she saw it being administrated. She responded that she left it vague on purpose because at this time, no matter what the group does regarding e-bikes, it will require enforcement. She wanted to leave the interpretation of the enforcement up to those enforcing. She added that there is no standard in New Hampshire requiring a class to have a sticker and she did not want to invent something that did not exist.

Dr. Russell asked if that would be up to the owners. Ms. DelaCroix confirmed that it would be unless something else passes. She suggested this as a guideline. Dr. Russell stated he could see working with the bike shops themselves. Ms. DelaCroix added that stickers would be inexpensive to produce and bike shops could brand the stickers.

Mr. Mike Davern reminded the group that people buy online and from all over and believed it would be hard to tap all the businesses providing bicycles. Dr. Russell proposed downloadable stickers for those buying online. Ms. DelaCroix wondered whether it would be possible for the bike cop to be given say one hundred stickers to pass out during the first few weeks of the lanes going live. Ms. Manwaring complimented Ms. DelaCroix on her idea.

Mr. Redfern shared that he liked the simplicity of it but said that he did see something about bike lane guidelines in a brochure format with roughly eleven points. Councilor Haas responded that those were to come and asked Ms. DelaCroix what the next step was for this. He believed this would be great for overall regulations and wondered if this would now need to go to Roadway Safety with the group's blessing. Ms. DelaCroix explained that in her opinion, this would be the set of regulations they would put forward to the group working on that to help protect downtown and Keene as a whole. Dr. Russell clarified that it would be the Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure Committee and Mr. Schoefmann also suggested the policy committee.

Mr. Schoefmann asked Councilor Haas if this was along the lines of his. Councilor Haas explained that they went in different directions as he focused just on the protected things that were on the sidewalks. The regulations proposed by Ms. DelaCroix are looking at overall regulations and he stated that he fully supported them except for the speed limit as it would require defining bike lanes. Ms. DelaCroix recognized his concern but did not see any reason why any of the proposed regulations would be a problem for protected bike lanes downtown at the sidewalk grade. Councilor Haas reiterated that this would require further definition. explained that he goes faster than fifteen miles per hour and mentioned the sharrows that the BPPAC hopes to grow. Ms. DelaCroix responded that sharrows are not bike lanes, the markings are there to remind road users that they are not allowed to topple the bicyclist to which others agreed and stated she thought striped bike lanes were a reasonable place to have a limit of fifteen miles per hour. Dr. Russell clarified that this recommendation did not include the rail trails.

Mr. Schoefmann reiterated the question of enforcement, stating it is not likely that there will be a police officer shooting radar at bicyclists in a bike lane on Main Street. Ms. DelaCroix added that it is likely not going to become an issue until somebody has an accident. The analysis of the crash would highlight the fact that the bicyclist was going faster than fifteen miles per hour when they had their accident. Mr. Redfern believed that if the citizens were unhappy with the speed or if an accident were to occur, the police would be forced to react.

Mr. Schoefmann noted to the group how the City Manager stressed to the Policy Committee that it is not necessarily set in stone and that as issues come up, things can be changed. Ms.

DelaCroix added that she believed this was a good starting point to get guidelines in without punishing anybody in advance of any issue.

Dr. Russell added that there is also room for negotiation. He did share that he could see there being resistance to the fifteen miles per hour on the Main Street corridor. He suggested a clause that said, “unless otherwise designated”. Ms. DelaCroix argued that it was not necessary as all other areas would fit under regulation number five requiring that bicycles and personal vehicles must obey traffic control measures. Chair Jackson took issue with the speed limit because most bikes do not have a speedometer resulting in the cyclists having no good way to know how fast they are going at any one instance. She noted that there are apps that can be downloaded to track distance and based on that will then calculate how fast the cyclist is traveling, but not in live time.

Mr. Schoefmann noted that the design of downtown is not a straight shot. There are adjustments in the path that would make it difficult to peak at fifteen miles per hour. Ms. Jackson added that the path is small, only five feet wide. With kids and parents also bicycling on that path, it provides a narrow space to pass anybody and likely would result in being out of control at those speeds. Councilor Haas hoped the planters and trees would not grow into the bike lane given the limited width.

Mr. Schoefmann asked Chair Jackson if she wanted to put a pin in the discussion and move on to the next agenda item. Councilor Haas asked if the plan was to take this to the Roadway Safety Committee and the Policy Committee and present it as their idea of regulations going forward. Ms. Diana Duffy asked if the group was comfortable saying regulations versus guidelines. Councilor Haas stated there would be two different things in a moment and complimented Ms. DelaCroix on the job well done to which others agreed and expressed their compliments.

Councilor Haas presented his list stating he believed they need to find ways to make other constituencies comfortable with how they will fit in with everything and how to positively promote it with businesses. He expected people to rebel and in response proposed that the BPPAC keep back and put out guidelines, not regulations or rules. He suggested something that will make people more comfortable with the presence of bikes. This would be something that could be placed on a tourist rack as informational with suggestions/expectations for biking in Keene. It is not meant to be regulations nor go down the enforcement path.

Ms. DelaCroix wanted to draw attention to number eleven explaining that in the past ten years, there is a particular section at the head of the square where blood has been drawn by a business owner defending what she believed to be the sidewalk that she owned. Ms. DelaCroix believed that empowering them to decide what they do with other people’s property was a bad idea. Councilor Haas responded that these were only guidelines and not empowerment. Ms. DelaCroix believed it to be linguistic empowerment.

Ms. Diana Duffy said she was thinking about her folding bike that she had just placed in the corner of the room and how she had never really thought about someone picking up one of her cherished items in her fleet and kicking it out to the curb. She said she would be upset and voiced agreement with Ms. DelaCroix.

Mr. Schoefmann shared that he has been doing research on other towns and found that some have regulations about bike removal, but they were in Somerville and Cambridge and referenced derelict bikes. Essentially, if the bike was on a public rack or attached to a light pole and was rusting to pieces, it is considered a public nuisance. He suggested doing a more thorough review of state laws to ensure. Most towns and municipalities give reference to a state law that exists and then build upon it.

Mr. Redfern stated he was aware that there was a business owner downtown who had politely but forcefully asked the city to remove a back rack in front of her establishment because it was loaded with abandoned bikes that were not used.

Chair Jackson understood the rule for abandoned bikes but thought it was important to make sure that the bikes are truly abandoned and not simply racked overwinter by apartment renters who do not feel safe riding during the winter weather. Mr. Schoefmann explained that many of the public racks are brought in over winter and any bikes attached to them will likely be cut free and disposed of when the DPW picks them up.

Councilor Haas suggested the BPPAC needs to get involved in the whole issue of bike racks in terms of design, location, etc. Mr. Schoefmann responded that Chair Jackson had put together a pretty comprehensive review and they planned to discuss it next.

Ms. Jackson clarified that she did not think it was an issue with the city having the right to move bikes that have become a nuisance but rather the implication that business owners can toy with things potentially setting a dangerous precedent.

Chair Jackson recognized Dr. Russell believed these were all relevant and good points but wanted to be thoughtful in terms of how they would be consumed by the public. He noted that the list was a mix of “shoulds” and “musts”, where “should” comes across as a guideline and “must” as a policy or regulation. He suggested being mindful of things that are taken from the state and regulations that people need to follow and said those require clear delineation. He pointed out the need for clarity for the reader's sake so as not to interpret a should or recommendation as a regulation or vice versa.

Ms. Duffy responded that she was not sure the committees’ task right now was to edit, but what Dr. Russell brings up is a good point about what their task is, which is to know the difference between recommendations versus regulations. These committees are going to look to the BPPAC for what they know, have come across or what is already in state law. The second thing she wanted to point out was the language and how it said: “bicycle should yield”. She suggested it

should read as “the pedestrian has the right of way” to eliminate the possibility of reader interpretation.

Councilor Haas stated he intended to come at this from a marketing perspective with an eye for trying to make people comfortable. He noted that most, if not all his list, has a state law reference that was in the largest document sent out as part of the agenda packet. Since he desired to create these as friendly guidelines for tourists, he did not include the references for the state law to prevent them from getting hung up on the wording. It was not his desire to write a regulation, rather he wanted to write something to bring the community on board and to get them comfortable with the idea. He acknowledged that Ms. Duffy did not want to edit, but pushed the group to do just that so that it would be taken upstairs to the Stantec meeting set to occur later that day as well as the Roadway Safety and MSFI meeting.

Mr. Schoefmann asked the group what their plan for the list was, noting that this potentially is going to another meeting in an hour and a half. He outlined that they have essentially two documents highlighting the direction they believe the city should be moving in and they include some examples of what this could entail. He did not want to spin the wheels especially given it was already ten of nine.

Councilor Haas moved that the brochure be adopted for the committee members to carry around and invite input from other groups with the plan to edit throughout the next couple of months. Ms. Manwaring seconded the motion. Dr. Russell stated he was comfortable with that as long as the point that he raised and Ms. Duffy underscored is addressed by separating regulations from recommendations. He believed it would just get too confusing for people looking at it if they were intermingled and could be divisive. Dr. Russell suggested putting the state-cited regulations on the back of the page and the friendly worded recommendations on the front page.

Mr. Schoefmann noted that outreach has already started. The communications department and director will likely have purview over the look and feel of this document before it even gets a snippet of hitting the public view and requested the group to keep that in mind. A good and reasonable expectation is to send the policy group what they have.

After listening to everyone, Mr. Redfern believed the best route was to not make a recommendation for one document over the other. He suggested providing both documents explaining that beliefs differed and suggested asking the policy group for their input, feedback, and thoughts to better inform the BPPAC to make changes.

Discussion ensued about where the previous motion stood and whether it was possible to amend it or if they would need to withdraw the previous motion. Chair Jackson moved to amend Councilor Haas’s motion that the brochure be adopted for the committee members to use for inviting input from other groups with the plan to edit throughout the next couple of months to include both documents and present as suggestions that the BPPAC is working on. Dr. Russell

seconded the motion. Chair Jackson welcomed further discussion. With no further discussion, she asked for a vote. The vote passed 4-2 (amending the motion).

Councilor Haas clarified that this was just to start pushing material out and commented that the whole package of material was great. This establishes the BPPAC as writing regulations, which he loved. He clarified that the brochure was an advert and served as a marketing tool.

Chair Jackson believed that it was important for whatever material was being sent out, that they do not over-regulate or over-guide because she did not want to inhibit people's interest in becoming a cyclist or using a bicycle in those areas. She did not want it to become inconvenient. She also recognized that there were concerned individuals in the community and did not want to plant seeds of doubt or fear in the public where there may not have been any. She was firm that whatever is put out needed to be inclusive and comfortable from both a bicycle and a pedestrian perspective.

Ms. DelaCroix moved a vote on the motion "That the brochure be adopted for the committee members to use for inviting input from other groups with the plan to edit throughout the next couple of months and to include both documents presented as suggestions that the BPPAC is working on". Chair Jackson seconded the motion and asked for discussion. Not hearing any Chair Jackson asked for a vote. The motion passed 4-2.

Mr. Schoefmann explained that the next step is for the material to be sent to the policy committee for feedback. Councilor Haas will send Mr. Schoefmann the Word document the brochure is based on for dissemination.

## **B) Bicycle Promotion City Sign Boards- Banner**

Mr. Schoefmann shared that he has the poster. It was made and delivered. He retrieved the banner to show the group. They will likely need another one next year as the date will change. The poster will be on one of the kiosks based on Mr. Bohannon's discretion. He said the Kiwanis Club also had a promotional poster that was going up and the city's banner will rotate locations with the Kiwanis Club's promotional poster.

### **5) Volunteer Opportunities**

#### **A) April 20, 2024: Green Up Keene/ Earth Day Tent with PKF**

Dr. Russell shared that Mr. Redfern and he decided on April 21<sup>st</sup> for the trail cleanup. He will send Mr. Schoefmann the start times and will hopefully also develop a poster for Mr. Schoefmann to disseminate.

Mr. Schoefmann offered to do a sign-up genius with a couple of different time slots for volunteers to sign up.

6) **Regular Project Updates**

All following agenda items tabled for this meeting.

7) **Old Business**

A) **Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan**

Mr. Schoefmann shared that they have a community improvement plan (CIP) for that which will go out to bid as soon as the new year is out. They have reached out to Southwest and suggested they submit a bid when they go line because it is a CIP and they need to follow a formal request for proposals (RFP) process. Chair Jackson asked if there was a bid document to which Mr. Schoefmann said there was not at this time.

B) **Kiosk Map Updates**

Mr. Bohannon shared that he has been working with Guide Studios, who created the city of Keene brand and the branding initiative. They have done pieces throughout New England. They have pieces in Lowell, MA, Greenwich, CT, and another in New Haven, CT. They have done a lot of trail work in the Cleveland area. As a result, they started pursuing the branding effort and part of that was the trails and wayfinding with them. His department has kicked that off and they have a meeting today related to confidence markers, prospective locations of the kiosks, and the design and function of the map. Mr. Schoefmann had recently sent an e-mail to Mr. Bohannon related to the kiosk maps. Mr. Bohannon instructed Mr. Schoefmann to pause because he had a consulting firm working on it and agreed to come to the meeting to explain the status.

Mr. Bohannon explained that the map will have places of confidence identifying the current location, distance to downtown, etc. They are looking at Whitcomb Mill Road, Amy Brown Trailhead on Summit Road, Krif Road, essentially all the places that were identified in the University of New Hampshire study. They have a good amount of money from the Keene Rotary Club, but as it does not cover the full cost, it will likely go out to bid. The hope is that a local contractor will take on the project otherwise it will go out to bid. He knows of several places in the Keene and Vermont area that do projects like this. He is hoping to come back next month with the news that it is out to bid.

Mr. Redfern asked what the deadline for completion was. Mr. Bohannon said this summer is the goal for installation.

8) **New Business**

A) **Items to be included for the next meeting.**

9) **More Time**

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

B) **Old Stone Arch Bridge Safety Improvements**

C) **BPPAC Website**



**10) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 9:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff