

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

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

**Wednesday, April 9, 2025**

**8:15 AM**

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

**Members Present:**

Samantha Jackson, Chair  
Rowland Russell, Vice Chair  
Dwight Fisher  
Michael Davern  
Councilor Edward Haas  
Autumn DelaCroix  
Diana Duffy, Alternate  
Charles Redfern, Alternate  
Andy Holte, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

William Schoefmann, GIS Coordinator  
Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, Parks &  
Recreation Director  
Don Lussier, Public Works Director

**Members Not Present:**

Jan Manwaring

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

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

A member of the public was present: Craig Fulton.

**2) March 12, 2025 Minutes**

Councilor Ed Haas motioned to approve the minutes of March 12, 2025, with no corrections. Chair Jackson seconded, and with unanimous approval, the minutes were adopted.

**3) Safety and Outreach**

**a) Councilor Haas- Brochure/Banner for Earth Fest on April 26<sup>th</sup>**

Councilor Haas provided several updates about the upcoming Earth Day events. The BPPAC has secured a City permit to display its Earth Day banner at the Downtown kiosks during three separate weeks between late April and the end of May. The banner will rotate among locations, and he plans to aim for the most visible spots each time. He also shared that BPPAC has been squeezed into the Earth Day event with a table location in Zone A, which he described as a prime spot. While the setup may be tight, he emphasized that it will be cozy and efficient. Several

people have volunteered tents in case of bad weather, including Ms. Jan Manwaring, Mr. Charles Redfern, and the Monadnock Rail Trails Collaborative. Councilor Haas mentioned that materials such as maps and location details would be circulated.

Dr. Rowland Russell asked if the table would be in the same zone as the other City tables, to which Councilor Haas said they were and explained that the tables are first-come, first-served, and they can sort that out later. Dr. Rowland Russell noted that the idea was that since BPPAC will not have its banner, the Community Development Department will have a banner and table, which can serve as shared identification for related efforts. The set up will include the City and Energy & Climate Committee on one side and BPPAC on the other. He suggested that it makes sense for all three related tables (BPPAC, ECC, & the Community Development Department) to be located close together for cohesion and visibility.

Councilor Haas shared the proposed setup for BPPAC's Earth Day table. He explained that Ms. Rebecca Landry confirmed they can use a vertical City banner that says "City of Keene" to help identify their space. Additionally, he plans to display the bike banner and find a way to set it up, weather permitting. Rather than distributing many materials, Councilor Haas suggested a minimalist, eco-conscious approach aligned with Earth Day values. The table will feature conversation starters using word tents that highlight BPPAC's three core mission areas to engage visitors without generating waste. The setup will help identify their presence, even if their table isn't directly next to other City groups. Zone A placement at Railroad Square offers high visibility, and Councilor Haas is confident the plan will create a welcoming and efficient presence.

Dr. Russell expressed concern that having only word tents on the table may lack sufficient context for the public. He strongly recommended including a visual element—specifically a large-scale map highlighting BPPAC's work, especially related to the Rotary-funded project (even if it's not finalized). He emphasized that such a map would serve as a more effective conversation starter and better showcase the group's impact and initiatives. Dr. Russell suggested using an existing map related to Andy's project for the Earth Day table, noting it needs to be plotted, printed, and mounted.

Councilor Haas supported including it as a visual centerpiece if it can be ready in time. He emphasized a fun and minimalist display, proposing that participants wear bike or pedestrian helmets and possibly add walking shoes to the table as visual cues for BPPAC's mission. To maintain a zero-waste approach, Councilor Haas suggested using clear document holders to display QR codes linking to relevant websites. He had already selected four appropriate sites but welcomed additional suggestions from the group. Councilor Haas summarized his vision as an interactive, low-waste, and creative setup that reflects BPPAC's values while engaging the public.

Mr. Mike Davern offered to help with printing. So long as he can get a digital file, he could print it on coroplast (corrugated plastic), which would be more durable and reusable. He proposed

mounting it on an easel for better visibility, noting that laying it flat on a table wouldn't be as effective. Mr. Davern added that he could likely get it printed for free or at a very low cost and would be willing to cover the expenses himself. Dr. Russell offered to email the latest version he had to both Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Davern. Mr. Schoefmann noted he had the most updated copy, which others agreed was the best to use.

Chair Jackson shared that the Community Bike Ride group will also have a table at the Earth Day event, likely positioned near BPPAC's table. While the Keene City Green Bikes program doesn't have a table, there have been conversations about their participation. Chair Jackson offered to display their materials on BPPAC's table if they could pull something together. For the newer members in attendance, she explained that Keene City Green Bikes is a collective focused on community bike access and education. Their goal is to create a space where people can learn to care for their bikes, donate or repair used bikes, and promote cycling as a form of transportation and recreation. While there has been discussion about developing a small fleet, the current focus is on repairing the bikes they already have, many of which need basic components like tires and chains.

Councilor Haas discussed who would be available to staff the BPPAC Earth Day table, noting it was the one unplanned detail. Chair Jackson intends to be present intermittently throughout the event. Mr. Andy Holte mentioned he will likely be out of town, but will attend if his plans change. Mr. Redfern will manage his table, but is open to helping during breaks. Mr. Fischer would be out of town. Mr. Davern has a soccer conflict but may be available briefly early in the event. Ms. Diana Duffy confirmed she could help with the setup, while Councilor Haas offered to fill in wherever needed.

Ms. Duffy confirmed the Earth Day event runs from 12:00 to 4:00 PM. Dr. Russell shared that the Friends of Public Art group would likely not have a table this year (a final decision was expected at their meeting scheduled for that evening). If that's the case, he would be available to help staff the BPPAC table for part of the event. Ms. Autumn DelaCroix said she'll likely be around during the Earth Day event and plans to support the table.

Councilor Haas confirmed he would take care of the tent setup and mentioned reaching out if any issues arise. Mr. Redfern offered a large 10 x10 tent with a yellow roof from the New Hampshire Rail Trails Coalition, noting it's available for use and that BPPAC can hang their banner on it. Chair Jackson added that placing the banner at the back of the tent would still make it very visible. They agreed that the size of the banner's text makes it more readable from a distance, making this setup effective.

#### **b) Councilor Haas- Recommended Committee Name Change**

Councilor Haas reflected on BPPAC's evolving identity, noting that while the group has a strong history rooted in path development and cycling advocacy, its scope has expanded. He emphasized that BPPAC is not just about bikes or pedestrian access—it encompasses a broader

mission related to all forms of personal transportation. Councilor Haas suggested it's time to start thinking about how the group might rebrand to reflect this inclusive focus better and the full range of its work.

Ms. Duffy expressed support for rethinking the Committee's identity, noting discomfort with being referred to as "bike people," and raised the idea of changing the Committee's name to reflect a broader mission. Mr. Schoefmann explained that because the official name, Bicycle Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee (BPPAC), is codified in City ordinance, any name change would require formal approval from the full City Council. He clarified that they don't need permission to explore name options, but emphasized the importance of submitting a clear recommendation with supporting rationale when proposing the change.

Councilor Haas reflected on the limitations of the Committee's current identity and name, noting that referring to the group simply in terms of "paths" or even "bikes" no longer fully captures its scope. He emphasized that BPPAC's work now includes bike lanes, bike and pedestrian safety, and planning related to the Downtown infrastructure project, which goes beyond bike path development. While not explicitly focused on e-bikes or other mobility devices, he acknowledged the growing importance of broader transportation modes, both human-powered and electronic. Councilor Haas questioned whether "path" still accurately reflects the Committee's purpose and suggested it may be time to rethink how they define and present themselves moving forward.

Mr. Davern pointed out that the current Committee name is cumbersome when spoken, and the abbreviation lacks clarity or meaning. The group acknowledged this and reviewed the Committee's official charge, which is available on the City website.

A suggestion was made to simplify the name by removing the word "Path," which would better reflect the group's broader focus while preserving the core emphasis on bicycles and pedestrians. This change would allow the abbreviation "BPAC" to still work, albeit slightly adjusted.

Dr. Russell noted that while terms like "multimodal" could reflect a broader mission, the word often doesn't adequately convey pedestrian-related work, so they should be cautious about adopting terminology that might obscure that core part of their mission. The group agreed that clarity and inclusivity should guide any potential renaming.

Ms. DelaCroix highlighted a common issue where bike trails are often viewed primarily as recreational rather than being recognized as legitimate transportation infrastructure. She suggested this perception shift could be a valuable focus for the Committee. She also raised the idea that the term "micromobility" might offer a broader way to describe the diverse modes of transportation the Committee supports. While the term "pedestrian" technically includes people using wheelchairs and other non-foot-based mobility devices, she noted that in everyday understanding, it often excludes those forms of mobility. More precise or inclusive language could help reflect the Committee's evolving mission.

Speaking from her experience living car-free, Ms. Duffy expressed discomfort with terms like “alternative transportation,” noting they can feel marginalizing or secondary. She advocated for language that elevates non-car transportation as equal, referencing how New York State uses inclusive terms like “access for all,” which she feels better levels the playing field.

She shared a more playful idea, “asphalt for all,” to push the point further. Reflecting on inclusivity, she referenced the Federal Highway Administration’s STEP program (Safe Transportation for Every Pedestrian). She emphasized the importance of embracing all modes of mobility, including temporary or permanent needs like using a walker. Ms. Duffy also noted that cyclists are often seen as a separate, “othered” group within public discourse and infrastructure projects. She urged the Committee to consider how to reframe its language and identity to promote broader accessibility and inclusion.

Chair Jackson noted that one topic the Committee doesn’t discuss often, but that tends to come up, is the importance of ADA compliance. She emphasized the need to ensure public areas are accessible for people using wheelchairs or anyone who has difficulty getting around, highlighting this as a crucial part of the Committee’s mission that deserves more attention.

Mr. Redfern suggested forming a small group, preferably three people, to further explore renaming the Committee and bring back recommendations, noting this would help avoid extended discussions during full meetings. He proposed that members like Ms. Duffy and Councilor Haas would be well suited to participate. Dr. Russell expressed support and asked if a motion was necessary. Mr. Schoefmann responded that it should be referred to as a “working group” rather than a formal subcommittee, and that no official motion was needed to proceed.

Before the group moved on, Ms. DelaCroix suggested a possible new name: “Roadway Equity Committee.” She liked that it shortens to “REC,” which has a nice, friendly feel, and joked that it also subtly hints at how car-centered systems aren’t always great.

Councilor Haas urged that the name discussion be kept as an ongoing agenda item. Committee members all agreed.

### **c) Plan Discussion and Budget Requests**

Councilor Haas mentioned his safety outreach matrix and noted he hasn’t received any feedback yet, joking that he might start assigning tasks if no one responds. Mr. Schoefmann agreed to resend the matrix and encouraged updates if needed. They discussed the broader goal of the safety outreach effort: to start using existing materials in creative ways, like videos, presentations, and personal engagement, to better connect with the community and spread awareness.

**d) Map Project Update**

Mr. Redfern shared an update on the new bike map project. While the group reviewed the printed maps (one focused on Keene and the other on the broader region), he explained the current and planned distribution. Maps will be available at the two bike shops that sponsored the project, the Keene Chamber of Commerce (which frequently receives bike map requests), Earth Day through Pathways for Keene, the Rail Trail Collaborative, and potentially other outlets. He noted there is leftover funding for a second print run, which would happen once the current batch is fully distributed. Depending on new projects, future editions may include updates, such as the Heritage Transportation Trail.

Mr. Redfern also mentioned the upcoming Rotary-funded kiosks that could display the maps and emphasized how quickly the map project was funded, raising \$2,100 in just one day. He requested that the Keene map be added to the City's website (under the bicycle/pedestrian section, whatever the Committee is named in the future) and the regional map be posted on the Southwest Region Planning Commission's site. Mrs. Fisk-Hennessey requested some for the Keene Rec Center, to which Mr. Redfern gave her some.

**e) Good Fortune Vacant Tenant Space**

Dr. Russell brought up the previously vacant Good Fortune space Downtown, but a Committee member noted that it may have been filled, based on a recent news article. Dr. Russell explained that the original concept for the space was to explore potential uses that would support regional transportation, such as a bike rental hub, especially after 365 Cycles moved out. This idea aligned with past discussions about supporting efforts like Marcus' to increase Downtown mobility options.

While that location might be unavailable, Dr. Russell suggested keeping the concept alive, especially considering the Downtown reconstruction efforts. He proposed alternatives, like a pop-up bike rental option on weekends or something as flexible as a hot dog cart-style set-up. He emphasized that studies have shown the economic benefits of trails and bike accessibility, and offering rentals could attract more visitors and provide more transportation choices in the Downtown area.

Chair Jackson discussed the possibility of Keene City Green Bikes using an old, decommissioned truck from People's Linen for mobile pop-up bike events. The idea was to repurpose the truck to create a mobile bike hub that could be moved around for outreach and rentals. However, progress on the project has stalled due to delays and a lack of priority.

Mr. Redfern noted that Mr. Dillon Benick, a partner at People's Linen and a former active Committee member, may still be a helpful contact if someone wanted to follow up about the truck. The group agreed that, while not currently in motion, the mobile concept is still a good idea worth revisiting in the future.

**4) Regular Project Updates**

Mr. Redfern shared exciting news that the Southwest Region Planning Commission's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) recently ranked the Transportation Heritage Trail, including the Prouse Bridge and Stone Arch Bridge, as the top project in the region for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). These rankings are now being forwarded to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, which will review a total of approximately 30 applications statewide.

Mr. Redfern noted that TAP grants typically max out at \$1 million. Still, this year, the cap was raised to \$2 million, significantly increasing the potential impact of funding safety improvements at both bridges. Mr. Redfern emphasized the importance of these upgrades, stating they should be completed even if the City had to cover the cost due to public safety concerns and the heavy use of the bridges. He added a hopeful note that if extra funding is available, it could also be applied toward the Bailey Bridge over Swanzy Factory Road.

Mr. Lussier provided updates on two key transportation safety projects. First, he discussed the Safe Streets for All grant, reminding the group that the City previously received planning funds to identify ways to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries across Keene. With the recent announcement that the program is now accepting implementation grant applications, the City plans to apply. It is open to project recommendations from the Committee, either now or in the near future.

Mr. Lussier also gave an update on the Marlboro Street TAP (Transportation Alternatives Program) project, which recently went out to bid. The two bids received were approximately \$1 million over budget, but after discussions with NHDOT, the state has agreed to add funding. The project will be rebid in hopes of securing a better price, but it looks likely that the state will cover the cost difference.

Mr. Schoefmann shared several updates. The Appel Way Trail paving project is now scheduled for 2028, a delay from previous projections of 2025 or 2026. Updates were provided on the Safe Streets for All programs and the Marlboro Street TAP project. He reminded the group that someone should contact the Mayor's office soon, if they want to request a Bike Month proclamation. Ms. Nicole Howe can help retrieve and update the previous proclamation, and the Mayor usually presents it at a City Council meeting in early May.

Mr. Schoefmann noted that the sidewalk rehabilitation project listings were included in the March 6 packet, with materials provided by the City Engineer. He also confirmed that the Lower Winchester Street project is anticipated for 2027. Additional updates included minor changes to the Jonathan Daniels School area, though nothing significant was highlighted.

Dr. Russell asked Mr. Lussier for clarification on the parameters of the Safe Streets for All program, specifically regarding what types of projects are eligible. Mr. Lussier responded that

eligible projects should be included in the City's Roadway Safety Action Plan and must aim to reduce or eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Dr. Russell suggested adding a link to the Roadway Safety Action Plan in the next meeting agenda and proposed that members review it in advance to come prepared with project recommendations. The group agreed, and the discussion concluded with no further project updates.

**5) Volunteer Opportunities**

**a) Earth Day Festival - April 26 from 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

Dr. Russell provided an update on volunteer opportunities related to Earth Day. While tabling was already discussed, he confirmed that BPPAC and Pathways for Keene will co-sponsor a cleanup event the following Sunday. He has spoken with Scott and Mr. Redfern, and they'll coordinate promotion as in past years. Ms. Mari Bruner previously shared the event, which will likely be listed as a City event by Ms. Rebecca Landry.

The cleanup will be promoted as a volunteer opportunity, ensuring it doesn't overlap with Earth Day Festival activities and aligning with the City's usual Monday trash pickup, making things easier for Public Works. The targeted cleanup area will be from North Bridge to Winchester Street, where Keene State College housing tends to lead to a high volume of litter, especially cigarette waste. Dr. Russell mentioned reserving this route early and coordinating supplies like bags, with plans to reach out to Public Works.

The group typically meets at the pocket park on Emerald Street and adjusts its coverage area based on turnout. Ms. Duffy briefly mentioned potentially being involved in identifying priority areas for the grant program that Mr. Don Lussier referenced earlier, and members noted that it was being added to the next agenda.

**b) Yield Counts for West Street Reconstruction Project**

The group briefly revisited the topic of conducting yield counts, particularly for the West Street corridor and possibly Main Street, including the area from Gilbo Avenue to Railroad Street. They highlighted specific problem spots, such as the awkward chicane near the Co-op and Emerald Street, which has long been a concern.

Consensus was that collecting data this summer would be valuable, especially ahead of planned work on West Street. The group discussed the need to organize sign-ups and gather materials. Mr. Schoefmann confirmed he had received relevant paperwork from Mr. Henry Underwood. He mentioned the need to format it using a transparent methodology, similar to previous bicycle and pedestrian counts. This would include clear instructions, timing (like two-hour blocks), and standard practices for consistent data collection. The team agreed to move forward with planning the yield counts.



**c) Safe Cycling Class (LAB Instructor-Led)**

The group also discussed the upcoming Safe Cycling course being hosted in Keene. Ms. Paula Bedard and another instructor will teach the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) course, which is scheduled to take place at the Keene Public Library. Parking is reserved in the Commercial Street lot. This is the first LAB course held in Keene since Ms. Tiffany Manion's session, which was run through the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Schoefmann emphasized the importance of promoting and attending the course, noting that hosting such events helps Keene's standing with bike-friendly community rankings. He added that the organizers are covering some costs out of pocket and welcomed ideas to support them. The course fee is around \$30, though some recalled it might be higher. There was also a brief mention of bike helmet giveaways in past events, but it was unclear whether that would be part of this.

**d) Old Business**

Mr. Schoefmann provided an update on the wayfinding project, explaining that while it was initially expected to go through a formal Request for Proposal (RFP) process, the total cost fell below the threshold. As a result, the City is now collecting quotes from at least three different sign shops to move forward. The project is in progress.

Councilor Haas then brought up a long-standing request for a wayfinding sign at the end of Emerald Street indicating the location of the bike path. He noted that Mr. Bohannon had promised the sign a year ago, and while Councilor Haas had offered to put one up himself, he held off in deference to the City.

Mr. Schoefmann clarified that if the sign is within the City right-of-way, it likely falls under Public Works' responsibility. He said he'd follow up with Mr. Lussier.

Councilor Haas suggested adding simple wayfinding signage, such as an arrow or pavement markings, near the intersection of the Ashuelot Rail Trail and Emerald or Ralston Streets. Mr. Holte noted that people unfamiliar with the area often get confused trying to find the trail, especially where current signage is lacking or unclear.

**e) New Business**

Mr. Schoefmann shared that although Mr. Lussier wasn't present to confirm, Mr. Lussier had recently contacted him regarding a joint project between the City and Keene State College. They plan to submit a Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant application to address safety issues on the Trestle Bridge, which is located just before the South Bridge along the trail near campus.

NHDOT has flagged the bridge as a safety concern due to deteriorating conditions, particularly the plywood decking, and has stated that it must be addressed within the next five years or risk closure. This prompted the effort to pursue grant funding for the necessary repairs.

Mr. Redfern explained that the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant application for the Trestle Bridge involves a three-way partnership. He noted that Pathways for Keene, Keene State College, and the City of Keene would each have to contribute \$5,000 to meet the local match required for the grant. The group acknowledged that the bridge's current condition is a genuine concern, and they noted that they hope the grant funding will cover most of the repair costs.

Dr. Russell announced a potential upcoming event connected to Antioch University's 60th anniversary exhibit at the Historical Society, which he curated and is on display through the first weekend of May. The event would feature the Mr. Redfern and Jim Gruber involvement in the planning and implementation the first phase of the Cheshire Rail Trail alongside Pathways for Keene. The idea is to schedule a date for a walking tour or discussion starting at Railroad Square to reflect on and celebrate the trail's development. The Historical Society will officially sponsor it, though additional support may be sought.

Mr. Schoefmann added that the Committee should plan to approve a letter of support for the Trestle Bridge RTP grant at the next meeting. He offered to obtain draft language from Mr. Bohannon and emphasized details reflecting the three-way partnership between the City, Keene State, and Pathways. He noted that the Trails Bureau values language highlighting cooperation and community initiative.

The group discussed whether to keep the map project update on future agendas. They agreed it could be removed as a standalone item since the remaining step is just posting it online. Chair Jackson suggested it could now fall under general "website updates" instead. Mr. Schoefmann confirmed that no new content has been added to the site yet, but noted that staff just received training on updating the City's new website platform.

Chair Jackson announced that the first community bike ride will occur on Earth Day around 4:30 p.m., starting at Railroad Square. The group will ride down the Cheshire Rail Trail to the Ashuelot Rail Trail, stop for gelato, and return. It will be a short, fun ride to kick off the season.

The group discussed inviting the Mayor and City Councilors to join the ride. Suggestions included emailing or speaking with the Mayor's Executive Assistant to schedule a brief meeting. There was consensus that including City officials could help build visibility and support for future proclamations and events.

Members agreed it would be helpful to create a simple flyer with a strong image and precise details about the ride, possibly including a photo from last year's event. Chair Jackson and others volunteered to help create and circulate the flyer. The ride is scheduled for Saturday, April 26.

6) **More Time**

- a) Website
- b) Continued Bike Racks Discussion
- c) Yield Counts, Bike Rack Census, and Bicycle/Pedestrian Counts
- d) Community Bike Share
- e) Public Art & Trails Updates

7) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Jackson adjourned the meeting at 9:23 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amanda Trask, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Megan Fortson, Planner  
Will Schoefmann, GIS Coordinator