

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

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

**Wednesday, February 11, 2026**

**8:15 AM**

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

**Members Present:**

Dwight Fischer, Chair  
Councilor Edward Haas, Vice Chair  
Rowland Russell  
Charles Redfern (left at 9:03 AM)  
Jacob Robertson  
Michael Davern, Alternate (voting at 9:03 AM)  
Diana Duffy, Alternate (remote)  
Andy Holte, Alternate

**Staff Present:**

William Schoefmann, GIS Coordinator  
Bryan Ruoff, City Engineer  
Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, Parks & Recreation  
Director (left at approximately 9:01 AM)  
Jason Nadeau, Parks & Recreation Program  
Manager

**Members Not Present:**

Samantha Jackson  
Brian Phillips

**1) Call to Order & Reading of Committee Charge**

Acting Vice Chair Russell called the meeting to order at 8:18 AM. Ms. Duffy called alone from Columbus, Ohio. Dave Mast of Keene said he was applying to be a Committee member.

Mr. Schoefmann introduced the Parks and Recreation Program Manager, Jason Nadeau, who would become the Committee's new staff liaison in the near future.

**2) Election of Chair & Vice Chair**

Discussion ensued about who was interested in and willing to serve as Chair and Vice Chair for the current calendar year. Dr. Russell noted that he was stepping down as Vice Chair, Mr. Fischer said he was willing to serve as Chair, and Councilor Haas volunteered to be Vice Chair if there was nobody else. Mr. Holte was ineligible as an Alternate member and Mr. Robertson did not think it was wise to step into one of these roles at his first meeting as a new committee member.

A motion by Councilor Haas to nominate Mr. Fischer as the 2026 BPPAC Chair was duly seconded by Dr. Russell and the motion carried on a vote of 4-0. Chair Fischer abstained.

A motion by Dr. Russell to nominate Councilor Haas as the 2026 BPPAC Vice Chair was duly seconded by Mr. Redfern and the motion carried on a vote of 4-0. Vice Chair Haas abstained.

**3) Adoption of Minutes – January 14, 2026**

A motion by Vice Chair Haas to adopt the January 14, 2026 minutes as presented was duly seconded by Dr. Russell and the motion carried unanimously.

Chair Fischer asked as a point of order whether the minutes are meant to be verbatim, given there is a meeting video and an accompanying AI transcript. Committee Staff Liaison, Will Schoefmann, replied that he would confirm with the City Clerk's Office, but he believes the minutes are not meant to be verbatim, but rather true summaries of what the Committee discussed during the meetings. Dr. Russell agreed. Chair Fischer felt the minutes were not completely accurate, but not enough to stop them from being adopted.

**4) Safety & Outreach**

**A) T-Mobile Hometown Grant**

Chair Fischer welcomed City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, to explain this staff-driven item, the T-Mobile Hometown Grant. This grant program will fund up to \$50,000 to communities with shovel-ready projects that aim to foster local connections through improvements such as technology upgrades, outdoor spaces, the arts, and community centers. This is separate from the AARP Capacity-Building Microgrant application submitted by the Community Development Department as part of the 2026 AARP Community Challenge. If awarded, the City could be given up to \$2,500 from this grant project to use to perform walk and bike audits around the community as part of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan update project.

**B) Annual Mayoral Bike Ride**

Mr. Holte reported speaking with Kristen Sykes of the Holyoke, Massachusetts, BPPAC shortly after this Committee's January 2026 meeting. Ms. Sykes had led the Holyoke Mayoral Bike Ride. Mr. Holte said the Holyoke BPPAC is smaller than Keene's and there seemed to have been a lot of staff turnover in their city. His takeaway from the conversation with Ms. Sykes was that Keene would be in a stronger position than Holyoke when it comes to some of this. Mr. Holte said Ms. Sykes had also been with the Northampton, Massachusetts Mayoral Bike Ride for one year and then Holyoke had events three years in a row. Mr. Holte said that in Holyoke, the Mayor and City Councilors are invited to join, and they focus on riding through relevant areas with murals that highlight city history and important features people want to see. Ms. Sykes told Mr. Holte that the Holyoke Mayor is not a normal bike rider, so they were able to get a bike donated to him from a local nonprofit. That made Mr. Holte think about Keene City Green Bikes.

Mr. Holte explained that Holyoke is a pretty hilly area, so they focused on finding a flat, family-friendly route, so that anyone could participate. He thought about highlighting areas in Keene where it is easy to ride, such as the rail trails, as well as areas where it is a little bit more difficult, such as navigating traffic, so that people could experience both. Especially with the Mayor and City Council participating, Mr. Holte thought this could help them consider ways to improve navigation. Ms. Sykes also told him that during the second year of Holyoke's Mayoral Bike Ride, they realized it would be good to have participants sign safety waivers and to require

helmets, which they have on hand to lend out. Some years they had Police presence to block areas for them and other times participants blocked intersections as riders approached so they could pass through, which Mr. Holte said the Keene community has done successfully in the past as well.

Mr. Holte mentioned that one advantage in Massachusetts is a program called “Mass in Motion,” which provided some funding for the Holyoke Mayoral Bike Ride to have food trucks and raffles. Mr. Holte recalled Dr. Russell discussing fundraising as a part of this and Mr. Holte said Holyoke had not done any because of this available funding. Ms. Sykes explained that because it is about encouraging ridership and getting people to try bike riding, the Holyoke BPPAC did not think fundraising was the best idea, and that it might turn people off. Dr. Russell noted that the Committee talked about fundraising for other events as well and Mr. Holte agreed. Mr. Holte reported that Holyoke targets a 30- to 45-minute ride, so it is not too long, and anyone can participate. Holyoke is trying to find a route through their City that is efficient for commuting and featuring points of interest, so there are dual purposes served. Mr. Holte thought those were considerations for the Committee to think about when designing a route.

Dr. Russell really liked the point of highlighting work in progress that needs to be done. He could imagine a route encompassing not just local and nearby rail trails, but also the Marlboro Street connection by the Public Works building, the extension past Eastern Avenue, and the Downtown Infrastructure Project itself with the protected bike lanes. Dr. Russell said there would be a lot going on in the next year or two within the City that could be highlighted for a ride/route, with some reasonable flat surfaces for a novice rider.

Mr. Schoefmann asked if the intent would be for this to occur during Bike Month in May and Mr. Holte said that was the idea.

Mr. Mast asked about the purpose of the Mayoral Bike Ride: to bring general awareness to this Committee, and more? Dr. Russell replied that there is a Bike Month and a Bike Week, so this event highlights the use of bicycles and Keene’s bike infrastructure. Mr. Holte added that Holyoke also had the idea of getting the Mayor and City Council to participate and experience what it is like to move around their city on a bike. To Dr. Russell’s point, Mr. Holte said local Holyoke news interviewed their Mayor, who talked about how he realized more about what the city needed to do as a part of the event. Mr. Holte said Ms. Sykes agreed about involving local journalism and how that can draw politicians in to participate as well.

Chair Fischer asked whether safety education is a part of the Mayoral Bike Ride as well, or more so a part of Bike Week. Mr. Schoefmann noted that the Keene Kiwanis Club has a safety event at the Recreation Center focused on young riders during Bike Week: Kiwanis Kool Wheels Family Fun and Safety Day. Mr. Schoefmann said it includes Police Department bike helmet fittings and someone else explaining bike maintenance; Parks & Recreation Director, Carrah Fisk-Hennessey, noted that BPPAC member, Sam Jackson, and former member, Autumn DelaCroix, led maintenance efforts in 2025.

Ms. Duffy responded to Mr. Mast about the purpose of the Mayoral Bike Ride. As a someone who has been a bike commuter in Keene the whole time she has lived here, Ms. Duffy thought

this event would be just another reminder about sharing the road. She did not think this was only her perspective, citing the Community Bike Rides, when other recreational riders mentioned using the roads to get where they need to go because they do not use cars.

Mr. Schoefmann asked if the Committee had identified who would approach Mayor Kahn about this idea. Mr. Holte recalled a discussion. Vice Chair Haas noted that the Mayor owns and rides a bike occasionally, so he would not need one, and the Vice Chair did not think that Mayor Kahn would have any problem with this concept. Vice Chair Haas said the BPPAC just needed to formally approach the Mayor with a letter. Mr. Redfern asked the date proposed for the Mayoral Bike Ride. Mr. Schoefmann suggested working with the Mayor to determine the date. The letter to the Mayor could show that the Committee is interested in helping to plan this event and looks forward to discussing it either in a one-on-one format or at a BPPAC meeting.

Mr. Holte and Dr. Russell agreed to draft the letter to the Mayor. Dr. Russell offered to help Mr. Holte with other logistics. Dr. Russell noted he liked the idea of incorporating the City Council. Discussion ensued briefly about how it would help to have Vice Chair Haas, as a City Councilor, review the letter before it goes to the Mayor. Vice Chair Haas agreed to do the “soft touches.” The Committee agreed that the draft letter to the Mayor proposing the Mayoral Bike Ride should be agendaized for approval at the March 2026 BPPAC meeting. Mr. Schoefmann said that would provide a couple of months for the Mayor to get on board and the planning to occur.

### **C) Bike Week**

The Committee discussed how in the past, Bike Week had aligned with “Bike to Work Week,” which is May 11–17 this year. Mr. Schoefmann said Bike Week does not have to be strictly about biking to work. Dr. Russell confirmed that Bike Week is separate from “A Week Without Driving: September 28 to October 4, 2026” (later on the Agenda). Ms. Duffy agreed that The League of American Bicyclists showed the same dates for their “Bike to Work Week” and May 15, 2026 as their designated “Bike to Work” Day.

Dr. Russell explained his idea for “Bike to Work Week,” not necessarily as a fundraiser, but as a potential incentive: to have people track the miles they ride that week and the BPPAC could find some simple incentives, such as getting donations from businesses, for completing a certain number of miles. He recalled that there are tracking tools that have been used as fundraisers or incentives for people to reach distances. Mr. Schoefmann agreed, citing a New Hampshire tracking tool. He recommended contacting Henry Underwood at Southwest Region Planning Commission about it. Dr. Russell recollected mentioning at the January 2026 meeting that the Clarence DeMar Marathon (both Super Senior and Kids) uses a tracking tool for people who complete distances up to the day of the Marathon and then do the last mile or two on the day of the Marathon. Dr. Russell said he would look for the tool the DeMar Marathon uses. Mr. Schoefmann agreed to look into the New Hampshire tracking tool, so the Committee could determine what might work best. Mr. Schoefmann said to consider that trying to put on a Mayoral Bike Ride would probably take a lot of the Committee’s bandwidth too.

Chair Fischer said it seems to him that if the Committee is going to be promoting Bike Week, it should be extolling the virtues of why you would want to do this. He said it is not just for health;

you can save money on parking and gas, and he said those types of things help encourage people to change their behaviors. Chair Fischer said that is what the Committee is talking about with Bike Week: encouraging people to ride more. So, he said that means encouraging them to change behaviors and you have to give them an incentive to do it. Chair Fischer said that it may be more lasting as well.

Mr. Schoefmann noted that in the past, “Bike to Work Week” was typically promoted by the Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST), which had recently scaled back from supporting bigger events. During previous events, the group had offered a commuter breakfast for a couple of days that week, usually around Railroad Square, and things like a movie about cargo bikes at the Colonial Theatre as a part of the event. He said it was all to raise awareness and show people what it is like to cycle more than drive.

Dr. Russell mentioned that the monthly Community Bike Rides had been the third Friday of the month, and he thought they would probably start in April, so there was a chance that it could coincide with the Mayoral Bike Ride, since a lot of other people would be going on the ride. Dr. Russell added that the Committee should look at all the things that have been done in the past, noting that BPPAC does not have to be the only organization sponsoring this. He suggested that the Committee talk to MAST, who may be interested in taking on some aspect of it. He recalled that Kiwanis Kool Wheels at the Parks and Recreation Center would already be happening during Bike Week, and Mr. Schoefmann suggested that it could maybe kick off the week. Dr. Russell said he would coordinate with the Director of Parks and Recreation to see if the Department could sponsor something. Dr. Russell said to keep in mind that it is a great opportunity, and the Committee would not have to be the only ones doing the heavy lifting. He and Mr. Redfern agreed that Pathways for Keene could also be involved. Dr. Russell suggested that perhaps BPPAC could help coordinate to ensure everything is not scheduled for the same day.

Chair Fischer asked about next steps for Bike Week before the March 2026 meeting. If the Committee was passionate about trying to launch something as a part of Bike Week, Mr. Schoefmann suggested developing the event ideas and what those might require (i.e., who to ask, what they would require, how much/what to ask for). For example, a commuter breakfast would take coordination, like working with the Monadnock Food Co-Op. Chair Fischer said Committee members should bring specific event recommendations for Bike Week to the March 2026 meeting. Mr. Schoefmann agreed and said the group could set up a Bike Week agenda.

Discussion ensued briefly to confirm whether Dr. Russell and Mr. Holte needed to wait until the March meeting to communicate with the Mayor about the Mayoral Bike Ride. Mr. Holte preferred not to delay. Vice Chair Haas and Mr. Schoefmann thought that if Vice Chair Haas received positive feedback from Mayor Kahn about the idea in the meantime, then Dr. Russell and Mr. Holte could go ahead communicating with the Mayor before the March meeting.

**D) A Week Without Driving: September 28, 2026–October 4, 2026**

The Committee agreed to wait to address “A Week Without Driving” until it has finished addressing Bike Week and Bike Month.

### **E) Downtown Bike Lanes**

Chair Fischer welcomed City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, who provided an overall update on the Downtown Infrastructure Project. City staff went to the City Council's Municipal Services, Facilities, and Infrastructure (MSFI) Committee meeting in January 2026 to discuss recommended scope updates to the plans to rebid the project within the budget that the City received bids for the first time. Mr. Ruoff said one positive take away of the [January 21, 2026 MSFI Committee presentation](#) was that Public Works Director, Don Lussier, did a very good job breaking down everything the City could save money on, and Mr. Ruoff said there were good cost savings.

First, Mr. Ruoff reported that the proposed textured, exposed aggregate bike lanes were ultimately a very good value to the City. He said the cost difference between a standard sidewalk was in the magnitude of about \$40,000; a lot better than what the City was expecting based on the bids and it was pretty consistent throughout the bids received. So, the City Engineer said it was a great value to the City, and the Downtown Infrastructure Project would go back out to bid with the bike lanes included. City staff were meeting with Stantec (project consultants) on February 11, 2026 to check in on their status of updating the contract documents for bidding. The City expects to be able to rebid the project in early March for a bid opening in approximately April following approval from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. This would push construction back from the originally planned start date of April 1, 2026 to sometime in May, depending on the contractor's mobilization abilities.

Vice Chair Haas hoped the City could settle on a name for these bike lanes. He asked if they were calling them "bike lanes," "protected bike lanes," or "curbed bike lanes"? He was not sure and had his own ideas. He wanted to hear from the Public Works Department, Engineering Division, and the Parks & Recreation Department about what they should be called. Discussion ensued as Mr. Schoefmann and Mr. Ruoff agreed that City Engineering Staff and the City's Media personnel had adopted standard nomenclature. Mr. Ruoff agreed that everyone should get into the habit of referring to them as that term because there was still a misconception about the bike lanes just being the shared travel lanes on the side of the road vs. the more protected, raised lanes that are a part of this project. The City Engineer said he would confirm the term and email the group. He said it would be a disservice to the project to not remember and use the official name.

Later in the meeting, Mr. Holte confirmed and reported that the official phrasing is "*Dedicated Protected Bike Lanes.*"

### **5) Regular Project Updates**

#### **A) BPPAC Master Plan Update & Steering Committee**

Mr. Ruoff reported that as a part of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), \$50,000 was allocated for a new Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan "reset" more than an "update." In conjunction with that, City staff put out a request for proposals and qualifications from engineers and opened the four that were received on February 6, 2026. The selection committee was

reviewing the finer details of the proposals and qualifications, and the City Engineer called all four good firms that the City would be happy to have working on this project. He thought one potential consultant had been eliminated at this point, then the selection committee was looking to eliminate potentially one more and decide between the final two by bringing them in for interviews. Mr. Ruoff recalled initially planning to recommend moving forward with the consultant at this meeting, but he thought staff would need a little time to review these candidates thoroughly, especially with Mr. Nadeau coming on board. Mr. Ruoff thought all three front runners were very good candidates and it was just a question about some of the specifics.

Mr. Robertson asked if the scope of this project is to update the actual 1999 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan document or actually planning what the Committee wants for things like bike lanes or pedestrian access. Mr. Schoefmann said it would be a little bit about both, but mostly to create a new guiding document for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programming, typically with a five-to-10-year outlook. Dr. Russell agreed, referring to the period covered in the 1999 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan and noting that it took several years to get it approved.

Chair Fischer noted that the 1999 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan was written by the BPPAC and now a consultant would be hired for writing the update. The City Engineer agreed that a consultant would help with the leg work, such as producing the mapping and supporting information. He said the content of the Master Plan would ultimately be steered by this Committee. Mr. Schoefmann said it would be similar to the City's Master Planning process with a consultant who conducts the fact-finding process, organizes all the information, and liaises with the community; although, City staff would be conducting most of the community outreach with the consultant's assistance for this Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan to save on that significant dollar figure.

Mr. Schoefmann added that the City already has many materials that would be shared with the consultant, including GIS layers for existing information (e.g., asset tracking). He explained that the City's 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan includes goals related to walking and cycling. Mr. Schoefmann said all those materials would also play a role in this project and the consultant would synthesize them. Chair Fischer added that the consultant would know best practices from project completed in other cities.

Dr. Russell had forwarded the [Brattleboro, Vermont, Walk/Bike Master Plan](#) to Mr. Phillips. Dr. Russell thought it would be good for others on the Committee to read it as an example of the direction Keene's BPPAC was heading toward for its Master Plan instead of the text heavy 1999 document. He called Brattleboro's Master Plan very robust, visually impactful, and impressive, with a lot of data.

Mr. Redfern mentioned that Antioch University New England was involved with the 1999 Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan. Dr. Russell agreed that Dr. Jim Gruber helped, and Mr. Redfern said they did a good job.

## **B) Updates to Project Tracking Table**

Mr. Schoefmann explained that the Project Tracking Table is where City staff track updates to initiatives that are relevant to the Committee. The table is included in the BPPAC Agenda packets, and the City Engineer highlights any projects with updates. City Engineer, Bryan Ruoff, apologized for not presenting a more thorough update and said he would distribute one before the next meeting, stating that he was doing a disservice by missing some of these items.

Mr. Ruoff provided an update on the following projects from the Tracking Table:

- Master Plan: Mr. Ruoff said this item referred to the Keene 2025 Comprehensive Master Plan that was adopted and it would be ideal to create a second line item for the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan Update.
- Complete Streets: Not a specific project, more so tracking a City initiative. So, it will never be reflected as closed and the intent is to garner discussion as needed.
- Bike Racks: Not a specific project, more so tracking a City initiative. So, it will never be reflected as closed and the intent is to garner discussion as needed.
- Appel Way Trail Paving: Under contract for paving all of Appel Way Trail in April 2026, which is ahead of schedule and will be under budget with a contractor of record with the City based on exemplary work they did in 2025.
- Safe Streets for All Grant: The City was notified that it was unfortunately not awarded this Grant. The City Engineer recalled that the City completed the “Safe Streets for All Report” and there was a subsequent Grant opportunity that the City submitted for Citywide pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements. He said the City would look to resubmit during the next cycle with a new project. He welcomed recommendations from the Committee for projects to target, so City staff could do that leg work.
- NHDOT TAP Grant 2018 - Marlboro Street #42515: This grant for Cheshire Rail Trail improvements has a contractor and submittals are moving along for construction scheduled to start in April 2026.
- FY26 Sidewalk Rehab Project: Mr. Ruoff corrected the Tracking Table, so the Project would read “FY26,” and noted that it includes Fiscal Year 2025 and 2026 sidewalks. This Project was out to bid at the time of this meeting, and the City Engineer anticipated construction starting in April 2026.

Mr. Redfern asked if tree cutting for the Cheshire Rail Trail would begin before the April construction on the trail. Mr. Ruoff replied that there are two different projects: the Marlboro Street TAP Grant does not involve tree cutting and the Transportation Heritage Trail (THT) Project does. For the Marlboro Street TAP Grant / Cheshire Rail Trail improvements, Mr. Ruoff said the contractor would need to get the drainage in while the ground is still frozen, so the trail does not get sloppy during construction. He said the contractor anticipated groundbreaking on February 23, 2026 to do clearing and drainage installation, pending additional snow. Mr. Ruoff thought that would remain on target, but it could be pushed by a few weeks because of the extreme winter so far.

Mr. Holte asked if the City was pursuing the AARP Community Challenge. This project is being pursued by the Community Development Department to help perform a series of bike and walk

audits as part of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan Update Project. The grant application will need to be submitted by the deadline on March 4, 2026.

Ms. Fisk-Hennessey left the meeting.

Dr. Russell added that in the past, early during each calendar year, the Committee ranked and prioritized projects. He wondered if there were still plans to do that and it struck him that it could still be a good exercise as a part of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan Update. Mr. Schoefmann thought that the past ranking process was typically in an effort to guide what the Committee wanted to direct most of its resources toward, so he was unsure that would inform the Bike-Path Master Plan project. Mr. Schoefmann showed how staff use a matrix to track some of these projects and evaluate what are high, medium, or low priority in terms of things like the allocated resources and the existing City plans that include the projects. Then, the Committee typically participates by ranking the projects as high, medium, or low so staff can plot them onto a diagram, which helps to visualize and helps the Committee to decide the projects it feels are important to focus resources on for the year (typically 4 to 5 projects total). Dr. Russell noted that as an experienced member, the ranking can be a very useful exercise for new Committee members.

Mr. Redfern left the meeting at 9:03 AM and Mr. Davern was appointed as a Voting Member.

Chair Fischer recalled that the City Engineer mentioned identifying any other issues. Chair Fischer said the one most dangerous route on a bike in the City—in terms of connecting—is the section of Court Street from the intersection turning off to East Surry Road pretty much all the way to the hospital, where there is very little shoulder. He said that a cyclist would look at it and think they are better off riding up on the sidewalk, which does not look like a regular sidewalk. Chair Fischer called it a scary, dangerous connecting route, in a City that wants to have a network so that people who live in the City can ride safely in and out. Mr. Holte added that this corridor leads to the school and the Keene Family YMCA.

Mr. Robertson asked whether there was a list of planned road improvements and connections under discussion (e.g., Court Street). He mentioned challenges with West Street too. Mr. Schoefmann explained the concept for the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan Update: the BPPAC will serve as the Master Plan Steering Committee and consultant will reach out to the Steering Committee for expertise as users, and that would be a good time to have a list ready of important connections to focus on. He explained that the consultant would be tasked with producing a Gap Analysis, which includes facility connections. Additionally, the Engineering Division led the Safe Streets for All Report, which identified dangerous areas in town, so the consultant would have that resource as well. Vice Chair Haas added that the [City's Roadway Safety Action Plan](#) was also completed in 2024 and includes details about street rankings and unsafe passageways. The City Engineer said that it was one of the existing documents identified as a part of the request for qualifications and proposals. He noted that the information included in this plan will not need to be collected by the consultant, so they will be able to focus on other aspects of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan Update Project.

Dr. Russell reminded the Committee that when thinking near-term or as a part of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan, the BPPAC also represents pedestrians. There are a lot of great bike ideas, but he suggested that Committee members also put their thinking caps on for pedestrian needs, especially safety aspects for those who are differently abled.

Mr. Ruoff concluded the Project Tracking Table updates:

- Parks & Recreation Bridge Rehabilitation: The City received a grant to rehabilitate the Ashuelot Rail Trail Bridge, or the Keene State College Bridge, as many people know it. The City received an \$80,000 commitment (not yet finalized). Mr. Ruoff said the City would be looking to bid for the project during the upcoming year; the project is “shovel ready.” Additionally, the North Bridge Cheshire Rail Trail over Beaver Brook and Cheshire Rail Trail over the Ashuelot River are both scheduled for redecking and replacing the handrails during this upcoming year, so Mr. Ruoff said the City would bid those projects in the coming weeks too.
- Transportation Heritage Trail (THT) Phase I - CRT Eastern Ave to NH 101: Scheduled for construction, including the clearing aspect, with the heavier trail work scheduled for April 2026.

Mr. Schoefmann explained that there are three phases of the THT Project to extend the Trail and complete the connection between improved sections of the trail in Keene and Swanzey. The connection spans from Eastern Ave to near Swanzey Factory Road or Depot Rd. Mr. Schoefmann continued explaining the proposal to improve up to the abutments where a bridge used to connect to the Old Stone Arch Bridge that goes over the Branch River and New Hampshire Route 101, and then to have another span of a bridge that connects to the rail trail over Swanzey Factory Road. Mr. Schoefmann said he would distribute a website to the Committee that talks about what the program entails. It is partially funded through state and federal funds, with the local match in part from Pathways for Keene and part taxpayer funds. Dr. Russell and Mr. Schoefmann agreed that it would be good to have the program website linked on the BPPAC’s webpage for context.

### **C) Sidewalk Rehab Project – Replacement Overlay & Plans**

Mr. Schoefmann said he did not bring any plans, but could always distribute them if needed. Mr. Ruoff said he owed the Committee a list of planned sidewalk replacements and rehabilitations. He noted that there are two different aspects of the project: (1) replacing existing asphalt sidewalks with concrete and granite curbing, which the Engineering Division bids out; and (2) the City’s Highway Department overlaying or paving existing City asphalt sidewalks instead of replacing them with concrete. Mr. Ruoff called the latter a “game changer,” as the City can now overlay/pave about 2.5 miles of asphalt sidewalk for the same cost as replace 2,000-ft of existing asphalt sidewalk with updated concrete and granite curbing.

He said the Highway Division has a list of existing asphalt sidewalks that will be overlaid in 2026 as a part of the City’s Ward Optimization Weeks (WOW) in addition to some concrete sidewalks that will be replaced as well. During WOW, City departments like Public Works complete projects (e.g., drain clearing) for one week in a specific Ward. Mr. Ruoff said he would provide the list of sidewalks for the Committee and City staff are always looking for

recommended sidewalks that could use an asphalt overlay based on hazards (e.g., tripping), which can be fixed easily by the Highway Division with the sidewalk paver. He noted that sidewalks replaced with concrete are built into the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and fixed based on a scoring system.

6) **Old Business**

A) **Walk/Bike Master Plan – Brattleboro, VT**

Dr. Russell said this was already discussed: [Walk/Bike Master Plan of Brattleboro, VT](#).

7) **New Business**

Mr. Schoefmann explained that the "New Business" section of the agenda is for Committee members to help set the agenda for the next meeting. He said that for the March 2026 BPPAC meeting, City staff would have the Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Master Plan consultant selection to share with the Committee. Dr. Russell said Committee members would have Bike Week and Mayoral Bike Ride action steps to report on from this meeting. Additionally, Mr. Schoefmann recalled that Committee members should bring to the March meeting any other ideas they want to spearhead for "Bike to Work Week," so the Committee could start setting a schedule of events; members should also consider whether the event should be branded/marketed like the League of American Bicyclists' "Bike to Work Week," or just as "Bike Week."

Vice Chair Haas reported that the first meetings about the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) would have occurred by the date of the BPPAC's March 2026 meeting. He suggested an Agenda item to ensure the Committee is reviewing things that are of interest to it in the CIP. Mr. Schoefmann agreed, noting that the CIP would not be a formal document by the March meeting but the presentations to the City Council and its Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee will have started.

8) **More Time Items**

A) **Website**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that the BPPAC's webpage was updated to a certain degree with the documents former Committee member Jan Manwaring wanted added. The Committee agreed that the website remains an ongoing project. Mr. Schoefmann said he had assignments, trying to integrate some more plans into the website, and he would address other things as they pop up.

B) **Community Bike Share**

Mr. Schoefmann thought the Community Bike Share project was on the back burner. He recalled the Committee had heard a decent presentation on what a community bike share might entail. He was unsure whether any Committee members really had the bandwidth to spearhead anything along those lines at this time. Mr. Schoefmann said that if there were any interested community members or someone who wondered why the City does not have a program, the BPPAC could encourage them.

Vice Chair Haas suggested removing Community Bike Share from More Time to clean up the Agenda. There were no objections.

**C) Public Art & Trails Updates**

Mr. Schoefmann explained that Dr. Russell provides public art and trails updates as needed, and that there are several ongoing initiatives, especially in conjunction with the Transportation Heritage Trail project. Dr. Russell noted that community member, Peter Poanessa, rescued an old, almost fully intact signal fixture. Dr. Russell explained the hope of restoring the signal and making it the portal to the THT in a sense, probably closer to downtown and with accompanying information about the THT. He added that after the clearing is finished on the Trail from Eastern Ave to Rt. 101, they were also looking at working with Mr. Poanessa and other local muralists to create a stylized map of the train routes that connected in the area on the concrete face of the old bridge abutment. Dr. Russell said that this is the crossing point of the Marlborough and Cheshire Lines, so it is a good place to show the history of all the rail trails that entered and exited Keene. This effort would also be in partnership with the Historical Society of Cheshire County and the Friends of Public Art.

**9) Next Meeting Date – March 11, 2026**

**10) Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Fischer adjourned the meeting at 9:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,  
Katie Kibler, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,  
Megan A. Fortson, AICP - Planner