

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 10, 2026

8:15 AM

**2nd Floor Conference Room,
City Hall**

Members Present:

Dwight Fischer, Chair
Councilor Edward Haas, Vice Chair
Brian Phillips
Rowland Russell
Charles Redfern
Jacob Robertson
Michael Davern, Alternate
Andy Holte, Alternate

Staff Present:

William Schoefmann, Mapping Coordinator
Jason Nadueau, Parks & Rec Program Manager
(Remote)

Members Not Present:

Samantha Jackson
Diana Duffy, Alternate

1. Call to Order

Chair Fischer called the meeting to order at 8:17 AM.

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Update consultants, Phil Goff and Ashley Domogala, joined remotely.

2. Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan – Draft Gap Analysis

[The Chair heard this agenda item third.]

The Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan Update consultants explained that they submitted their first technical memorandum to City staff, and it included an assessment of existing conditions and a look at pedestrian and bicycle gaps throughout the City. They thought it would be a good opportunity to get input specifically from this Committee about the initial gap analysis that they developed to help inform their additional work moving forward. Mr. Goff said that in addition to the policy and program related things, getting past this key step of understanding the connections and linkages needed, through the knowledge and experience of the community, was important to help tie together the sidewalk and bicycle network. He noted that a memorandum was sent to the Committee in advance and included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Goff reviewed some things that might not have been explicitly in the memorandum. He explained that one thing to keep in mind in laying out this gap analysis map is that not all gaps are the same; there are different kinds of gaps to lay out on the map simultaneously. He mentioned corridor gaps (e.g., Court Street, from downtown to the Medical Center, and the Route 12 gap), segment gaps (i.e., shorter ones that connect facilities; e.g., Arch Street connecting the High School to the bike lanes on Park Avenue) and treatment gaps (e.g., the quasi gap on the Cheshire Rail Trail at Gilbo/School/Emerald Streets) where something like signage or other improvements could help. In laying out this gap analysis map, the consultants were taking input from the City, this Committee, and the other stakeholder meetings (e.g., Keene State College, Keene High School).

Mr. Goff began by showing a Citywide map and stating the intent to understand not just where existing facilities are but to identify these gaps. He reminded the Committee that the consultants' scope of work is not to identify every single small treatment gap in the City, for example, but to identify those most critical to the community at this City-wide scale. He listed some of the gaps already identified on the map. Corridor gaps: Court Street, Maple Avenue, the connection on Summit Road to Park Avenue, a connection from the Washington Street bike lanes to the Goose Pond / Drummer Hill recreation area (e.g., Elm Street), Lower Winchester Street (more of a sidewalk gap, potentially).

The Committee provided additional gaps outside the Downtown Core, focusing on the most critical gaps.

- Dr. Russell pointed out that there were key things on the map that were not highlighted in the narrative, such as Lower Winchester Street and the Rt-101 crossing at the Cheshire Rail Trail. Mr. Goff agreed.
- Mr. Holte suggested a third high-level color for where the map needs both the bike and trail network, not just them each individually, such as Lower Winchester Street.
- Mr. Holte suggested adding a connection from Court Street to Goose Pond up East Surrey Road.
- Mr. Holte noted that where Park Avenue becomes Summit Road going towards the YMCA, there are existing bike lanes that need improvement. It is not necessarily a gap in infrastructure, but it should be improved. Chair Fischer agreed that is a very busy area and anywhere in that area could use some attention (i.e., Hastings Avenue out of Summit Road).
- Vice Chair Haas emphasized the Emerald Street and Gilbo Avenue treatment gap, calling it the biggest of all for non-residents.
- Vice Chair Haas added that on the north side of the High School between Arch Street and Park Avenue there is a real issue with traffic and pedestrians, where cars park to pick up kids after school. He called it a pedestrian issue to take heed of. He noted there is an emergency access road many kids use to exit northward. Discussion ensued about how to keep cars from overloading the area and how that is a question for this group, but it is not a gap issue, it is a thoroughfare issue. It is a challenge if signage is ignored.
- Chair Fischer wondered about encouraging bicycle use on West Street from downtown to the overpass by putting bike lanes there. Mr. Schoefmann noted it is a suggested potential treatment in the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DOT) 10-Year Plan that could impact the City; there had not been any sort of chatter about it. Chair Fischer said

he would never ride on West Street because there is a parallel alternative, but he posed the rhetorical question as to whether it should be encouraged or diverted. Mr. Schoefmann said it is a major right-of-way so people will continue to bike and ride West Street, and he said many view conveniences over safety.

- Dr. Russell highlighted a long stretch with no sidewalk on North Lincoln Street, where it borders Robin Hood Park and the cemetery. The salamander crossings often also take place there, so it would be an extra measure of safety. Mr. Goff identified a curving section of Roxbury Street that was identified and asked if it should extend further past Robin Hood Park. Dr. Russell said all the way to George Street there is no sidewalk. Discussion continued as the consultants reviewed the map.
- Mr. Holte discouraged the connection to the vicinity of Maple Avenue from being along Rt-12. Mr. Schoefmann thought that would require a lot of treatment in terms of separating them. He thought the concept would be similar to the one coming out of Robin Hood Park along Appel Way. He did not think DOT would agree with suggesting people ride along the highway there. Mr. Goff said there would be separation for any facility along Rt-12, probably at least 10 to 15 feet from the roadway as required by DOT. He commented on the great connection to the middle school, downtown, and views of Mount Monadnock. Discussion ensued briefly on where linkages would be. Mr. Goff thought about the opportunities for the entire neighborhood east of Court Street (e.g., Appel Way to the Middle School).
- Dr. Russell cautioned about the Rt-12 intersection with Maple Avenue and the turn into the Middle School. He mentioned a bluff that connects parallel to Rt-12 and is on school land (connects to the back end of the track) and suggested considering it as an option for the interchange off as a safer way into the Middle School vs. dealing with the intersection traffic.
- Mr. Holte suggested another alternative to reach the Middle School from the Appel Way area but he is concerned about that being along the highway. He said if it were along the river instead, it would be a better alternative if workable. So, he suggested exploring it.
- Mr. Phillips mentioned looking for a trail system from Appel Way to the Middle School / Tanglewood area while avoiding the Rt-12 highway and Court Street. People are seeking more of a multi-use path. Mr. Schoefmann noted exploring that area and there are major gaps in the single-track informal trail that currently exists. It was in the list of projects the BPPAC developed in the past 10 years known as Jonathan Daniels II, which never advanced due to costs, etc. He said if the BPPAC is interested, they might want to earmark it as a feasibility study in the future to develop associated costs.
- Mr. Robertson suggested connecting Goose Pond on East Surrey Road back to Court Street / Maple Avenue near the Stone Arch Bridge. Mr. Goff asked about a connection further south that uses Elm Street, Gilsum Road, and the south end of the Goose Pond Trail network. Mr. Robertson said both are good. He said connecting from the Timberlane Drive side there is a lot of elevation gain to go up over Gilsum Road and come down into Goose Pond. A lot of people come to park along East Surrey Road and hike into Goose Pond. There would be less elevation gain with a connection to East Surrey Road. Dr. Russell said there are no sidewalks there. Mr. Holte agreed and reiterated all the parking for people accessing Goose Pond there with two parking lots.

- Mr. Goff mentioned an oversight that they left off: a gap of the footbridge that is closed off under route 101 at the end of Martell Court that connects to the Keene State College fields.
- Mr. Robertson mentioned that past the North Bridge and behind Kohl's and Aldi during the wintertime become snowmobile trails, so the bike traffic is funneled out onto West Street and Park Avenue. He said during snowmobile season it is impassable on a bike (including Blossom and Pitcher Streets). It is fine for foot traffic.
- Mr. Holte said the map made part of Emerald Street look like paved trail, but it is really just the road, so there really is no connection. He thought that would be a huge area to focus on.
- Mr. Holte mentioned a gap at Roxbury and Beaver streets on the east side getting into the neighborhood and into the park. He said it seems like an area for improved access. The sidewalk seems filled but could use improvements. Vice Chair Haas added there are no bike lanes running north-south in that neighborhood. Mr. Goff said there is a modest three- to four-foot quasi bikeable shoulder, but it could use some improvements.
- Mr. Robertson suggested connecting the Roxbury/Beaver Streets park area to the Robin Hood Park area properly with trail access. He said some of the sidewalks look better than others. Mr. Goff demonstrated the connection the consultants had already identified that did not show up on this map. Mr. Schoefmann said there is an at grade bituminous sidewalk area until Reservoir Street. He showed where the sidewalk just sort of ends and cars sometimes park at Robin Hood. Mr. Robertson was concerned about making it as accessible as possible to get into the park. Mr. Schoefmann thinks a better entry may be at the tennis courts.
- Dr. Russell said the trails in Ashuelot River Park toward the Hannaford plaza are not well defined after crossing the footbridge. It looks like you are going somewhere but there is no real wayfinding. Discussion ensued about how you may have to cross through private property to access Hannaford from that location. Chair Fischer thought the message was that better wayfinding is needed in general because the City has minimal signage/arrows. Mr. Redfern noted that Deputy City Manager, Andy Bohannon, was in the process of reviewing wayfinding signs to ensure they meet State of New Hampshire criteria and Keene branding. He was meeting with Mr. Redfern and Mr. Davern about it.

Mr. Holte said the consultants mentioned things like beacons, bump outs, and median islands, which all seem like great ideas to him for improving the safety of crosswalks. Mr. Holte had read about raised table crosswalks as a safer option for pedestrians and asked about the evidence and opinion of contractors regarding them. Mr. Goff replied that raised crosswalks can be extremely effective in slowing traffic and making safer pedestrian crossings. He thinks that they need to be considered judiciously on major emergency routes or four-lane roadways like West Street. However, he thinks they are one of the most effective ways to improve safety on two-lane roads, minor collectors, and local streets. Mr. Goff said it was an oversight not to have included them.

Mr. Goff appreciated these general comments. He welcomed any follow-up comments over the next week via email through Mr. Schoefmann in as much detail as Committee members see necessary. He called taking this input an important part of fleshing out the initial draft table of recommendations throughout the City.

Vice Chair Haas asked the consultants to circulate a list stakeholder focus groups held to date and upcoming. Mr. Schoefmann would coordinate with Senior Planner, Mari Brunner. Mr. Goff said there had been four or five in total so far and a couple more upcoming.

Chair Fischer thanked the consultants, who said they would return in a few months, and they departed the meeting.

3. Adoption of Minutes – May 13, 2026

[The Chair heard this agenda item second.]

Revisions: Line 92, replace New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition with New Hampshire Bike/Walk Alliance. Line 152, Vice Chair Haas is not the member contact for A Week Without Driving.

A motion by Vice Chair Haas to adopt the May 13, 2026 meeting minutes, as amended, was duly seconded by Mr. Redfern. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Safety & Outreach

a. Mayoral Bike Ride – Debrief

Chair Fischer said several Committee members were present for a nice ride through the route that Mr. Holte and Mr. Phillips created. The Chair said Mayor Kahn had a good ride and discussion. He saw the extension of the rail trails past Eastern Avenue. Vice Chair Haas said there was support from Dr. Russell, Sam Jackson, and Autumn DelaCroix, who went on an extended ride afterward. If doing it again, Mr. Redfern suggested more outreach to the public. Chair Fischer agreed with more available lead time. Chair Fischer thanked everyone who participated.

Mr. Robertson said a discussion came out of this event about rules, sending something out to the community block-by-block about rules for riding, and thoughts on using the school to send that notification. He mentioned a “welcome to summer, don’t ride your bike on the sidewalk,” type of communications. Chair Fischer asked if the City had ever done anything like that. Mr. Schoefmann said not to that extent. He thought the City had utilized the New Hampshire DOT trifold with rules of the road. Vice Chair Haas did not think the Committee could produce something formally at this point but could do something informally such as members going on the radio for interviews about bike safety. Chair Fischer also mentioned the Keene Community Facebook page.

b. Review Upcoming Schedule of Events

After the 4 on the 4th Road Race by Pathways for Keene on the 4th of July, Vice Chair Haas mentioned the Monadnock 250th Parade with a kids bike ride and stroller participation. He said it would start being publicized on Monday, June 15. They were seeking volunteers to help decorate kids’ bikes at the Spalding Gym parking lot. Mr. Schoefmann would communicate the details to the group to sign up.

The Committee decided to discuss later dates next month.

c. Cheshire Rail Trail – Trail Walk in Commemoration of the 30th Anniversary

Dr. Russell had not heard back from the Public Works or Parks and Recreation Departments, who were asked to go back through their notes/archives to determine exactly when the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase One was finished. He said it is more likely to be 25 than 30 years. It was started 30 years ago, but it took a long time to get done. He would keep the Committee posted if he hears back. Dr. Russell said the BPPAC might just have to pick a date and go with it themselves.

d. Maple Ave – Creation of New Trail

Mr. Schoefmann recalled that the pine trees were removed from Maple Avenue and Mr. Phillips talked about the small, narrow trail on the east side. There is a paved path on the west side, and the east side could use some multi-use path. The Chair asked if there was a plan for the east side path and everyone agreed there was no plan. Mr. Davern said the path is accessible again and the plan is to let the forest grow naturally, so an idea is to possibly lay packed crushed stone along the trail to make it a safer and well-defined riding surface. Dr. Russell was aware of at least two groups working on plans for native landscaping. He added that he also raised to the Historical Society that it is land donated by Mary Dinsmoor as Dinsmoor Woods but was never signage for that, so he suggested a historic plaque. He said the idea is to collaborate on a larger plan to reclaim the area as a City park, collaborate on funding, beautify it, and make it safer for travel. Given there are nice, paved trails on the north and west sides of the road, Mr. Davern thinks this is an opportunity to have a fun trail on the east side; it could be a bike park type of trail. Dr. Russell agreed with making it more fun but added that it is an important travel corridor with the nearby roundabout where kids have to cross.

e. New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition Legislation for E-Bikes

Mr. Redfern said this heading should actually read as the “New Hampshire Bike Walk Alliance Legislation for E-Bikes,” not the New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition. The legislation was written by former member Dave Topham and the New Hampshire Bike Walk Alliance has chosen Keene to roll out the education program with the Keene Police, various City officials, and the public. Chair Fischer asked for a little more detail about what the legislation entails. Mr. Redfern said this would legislate where e-bikes would and would not be permitted, allowed speeds, and those types of things. Mr. Redfern recommended involving New Hampshire Fish and Game in the program because they regulate the trail rules with the State, he recommended inviting a New Hampshire Police representative, which he could arrange through Councilor Phil Jones, and he also recommended the Monadnock Rail Trail Collaborative. He asked if anyone could think of who else should be there for this program; he would pass the information to the program organizer. There was no date for the event as of yet that Mr. Redfern knew. Dr. Russell suggested the Southwest Region Planning Commission (SWRPC) because they had done forums on this too. Vice Chair Haas suggested that anyone available could attend the SWRPC Zoom Transportation Technical Advisory Meeting at noon on this meeting date.

f. Annual Report to City Council

Chair Fischer thanked everyone who submitted feedback for this second draft of the annual report. He asked if there was a deadline. Vice Chair Haas said the first Council meeting in September, ideally. Chair Fischer asked if the Committee had the last year's report. The group looked for it on the website and could not find it as they expected to. Chair Fischer said he would distribute this latest draft to the group for final feedback and add summer events. Mr. Robertson asked if there is a common format for the Committees to follow. Vice Chair Haas said no, it is intended for the Committee to advertise, promote, and justify itself. He said silence speaks for itself. Mr. Robertson looked at the website, and it was eye catching and wondered if there would be a way to collaborate on some template. Vice Chair Haas liked the idea of a template and said he would add a request like that and see where it goes. Mr. Schoefmann said he could add Committee letterhead and branding. Chair Fischer had not been focused on presentation to date and would be happy to work with someone interested in that. Discussion ensued about including photos, like of the Mayoral Bike Ride (photos of kids would require permission). Mr. Phillips asked who the report goes to after the City Council. Mr. Schoefmann said it would be public and it should be posted on the BPPAC webpage. The 2025 Annual Report was included in the June meeting packet.

5. Regular Project Updates

a. Updates to Project Tracking Table

The Project Tracking Table did not go out to the Committee, so Mr. Schoefmann said he would send a copy to everyone. In terms of main things, he said the Transportation Heritage Trail Phase One is underway and the downtown project is slated to begin with Central Square in July 2026. Vice Chair Haas added the Marlboro Street resurfacing and the addition of bump outs at intersections for traffic calming. Mr. Holte added that repainting was ongoing on Court Street, with a lot of crosswalks repainted. He thought Upper Court Street and Maple Avenue were still missing. Mr. Schoefmann said they get to that in phases through a contractor not through Public Works. Public Works does the smaller, detailed work. Mr. Holte called the completed ones huge improvements.

Chair Fischer talked about a crossing at lower West Street and the Cheshire Rail Trail continuing to grow more dangerous, stating that it must be cut back or someone will get hurt. Mr. Schoefmann asked if he meant mid-block near Bradford Road. Chair Fischer said yes, someone just needs to do a little trimming on the side of the fence. Mr. Schoefmann recommended using the SeeClickFix app, which is the City's major digital intake for issues across the City (e.g., potholes). Mr. Schoefmann said he would also forward the note to the Highway Division and Parks and Recreation Department. Discussion continued about how everyone could submit reports or the Chair could mention in his SeeClickFix report that the BPPAC discussed this issue.

b. Mobility Management

No comments.

6. New Business (Suggested items for next meeting)

No comments.

7. Next Meeting Date – July 8, 2026

8. More Time Items

a. A Week Without Driving: September 28, 2026 - October 4, 2026

9. Adjournment

There being no further business, Chair Fischer adjourned the meeting at 9:24 AM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Katrnya Kibler, Minute Taker

Reviewed and edited by,
Will Schoefmann, GIS Coordinator
Jason Nadeau, Parks & Recreation Program Manager