

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 12, 2017

8:00 AM

2nd floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair
Christopher Brehme, Vice Chair
Thom Little
Don Hayes
Charles Redfern
Dillon Benik, Alternate

Staff Present:

Guest:
Drew Bryenton

Members Not Present:

Emily Coey
Ed Guyot
Sam Hawkes, Alternate

1) Roll Call

Chair Rubin called the meeting to order at 8:03 AM. Roll Call was conducted. Thom and Chris

2) Accept March 8, 2017 Minutes

Mr. Little made a motion to accept the minutes as submitted. It was seconded by Dr. Brehme, and approved by unanimous vote of the committee.

3) Project Updates

South Bridge: Mr. Little reported that there had been no change since the last meeting. Chair Rubin said there is not yet a projected date of completion for the project.

Cheshire Rail Trail Project – Park Ave. Loop Project:

Chair Rubin said it looks like that project may be finished in the fall.

Mr. Little said that in the public hearing two possibilities were presented: painted lanes and the other was a separate bicycle trail parallel to the street. He said there was a second issue with the underpass on West Street under 9, 10, 12, which people thought was very important. He said his question is: What is the next step for this project?

Chair Rubin said that according to the website for this project, the presentation is going to be revised and new options going to be presented at the May meeting of the Finance, Operations and Personnel Committee (FOP).

Mr. Little said he believed the underpass is going to be one of the most important issues that needing to be dealt with in the near future. He said that if this problem is not addressed in this project, then it should be defined as a separate project: develop what the approximate costs are and go forward with it.

Chair Rubin said that the committee can pass on that feedback on when it comes time to do that.

Mr. Little said that the committee had been advised by the Planning Department that improvements to the underpass could not be accommodated in the budget for this project. He said the issue with the underpass is the only one associated with danger.

Chair Rubin said any option that would “break the budget” most likely would not be options approved, adding that improvements to the underpass should be considered as part of the West Street project.

New Hampshire Pass Signage: Chair Rubin said city staff visited three sites for noncompliant signage to be installed. There is still a goal of May 2107 for one large and two smaller signs to be installed. The city had procured three of the compliant signs and is getting a quote for the remaining nine signs. She said her understanding was that even if the signs are noncompliant with the federal law, they still can be put up.

Lighting: Chair Rubin said that mapping had been completed by Keene State College geography student, with recommendations/siting options to follow, along with a possible presentation. Pathways for Keene is donating funds and reviewing locations and the mapping completed by the KSC Student.

Dr. Brehme said that project was presented at the Academic Excellence Conference on the previous Saturday. He said he would circulate any digital materials from the presentation to BPPAC members.

Regarding the handling of the Update information in the Table submitted to the committee with the monthly agenda, Mr. Little questioned the need to include the list of Updates from the previous month (the March Updates) at the current (April) meeting.

Chair Rubin said the question could be brought up with Will Schoefmann, of the Planning Department.

4) Old Business

Public Outreach and Workshops

South Bridge: According to the table of Updates, the city is awaiting response from the New Hampshire Department of Transportation regarding opening date. Mr. Little suggested that in the event marking the opening be called a celebration rather than a dedication.

Mr. Redfern said even though there is no date set yet for a celebration, there are things that should be done now to organize for it. Mr. Hayes pointed out that there is a committee for the event, but that members haven't heard from the Mayor yet. In response to a request by Mr. Redfern, Chair Rubin said she could contact the Mayor with a request that a meeting of the committee organizing the event be called.

Mr. Little said that the list of the potential invitees to the celebration event still contains a number of items in yellow indicating the need for additional information. He asked members to help him fill in the missing information.

New Business

Bike-to-Work Day:

Chair Rubin said that Mr. Schoefmann sent an email with information that Monadnock Alliance for Sustainable Transportation (MAST) has scheduled a commuter breakfast on Bike-to-Work Day, Monday, May 15th, in Railroad Square. She said she would email Mr. Schoefmann to ask him to send the time of that to the committee.

Master Plan: Draft Introduction

Mr. Little said that the reference in the first paragraph to the Bicycle/Pedestrian Pathway Advisory Committee be changed to Bicycle/Pedestrian Path Advisory Committee.

Dr. Brehme suggested that the word "updated" be deleted from the first sentence of the Statement of Intent ("This updated plan will serve as a guide for the future development. . .") to avoid confusion in the event of future updates.

Chair Rubin said she could send Mr. Schoefmann the edits.

Mr. Little suggested that the numbers assigned to projects be made permanent, to facilitate comparisons between documents that were completed at different times. Chair Rubin said the idea would be that the numbers now established would be kept that way. Committee members all agreed that Mr. Little's suggestion made a lot of sense.

Mr. Little asked if there were any way we can get a copy of minutes on the Wednesday before the meeting. Chair Rubin said that it would be helpful to the committee to have those minutes a week before the meeting. The committee agreed to request that for subsequent meetings.

Chair Rubin asked the committee if it made sense to start taking the start moving toward the implementation of its priority projects while work on the Master Plan is underway. She pointed out that the Plan is scheduled to be finalized in December, and that it could be up to another year before it is approved.

Dr. Brehme cited an item from the April Updates Table titled Sidewalk/Pedestrian Connectivity ("The Engineering Division, Department of Public Works has an app available to them to begin a condition assessment and inventory check of all City Owned sidewalks for Spring 2017.") that suggests the city is moving forward with that priority.

In addition, Dr. Brehme said there are discussions underway between KSC and the Planning Dept. about a wayfinding project for geography students in the fall, a project connected to another of the Master Plan item.

Chair Rubin said that work seems to be moving forward informally. She suggested the committee start talking about how to build awareness about its priority projects beyond the BPPAC, particularly for the costly and large-scale West Street project. She advocated putting this topic on the agenda for the next meeting.

Mr. Redfern agreed, saying that nothing should stop the committee from engaging in efforts informally. He noted work planned by Pathways for Keene for the installation of solar lighting this year.

Chair Rubin said the outreach should be to the public, to the Council, to Pathways. Mr. Redfern said he would inform Pathways about BPPAC's priorities and be an advocate for them.

Dr. Brehme said that it would be important to figure out how to reach out to departments within the city about BPPAC's priorities. Chair Rubin agreed, saying that the question will be: How do we educate all the stakeholders on the direction that this committee would like to take with these projects?"

Mr. Redfern suggested that the committee invite Kürt Blomquist, Keene Public Work Director, for a discussion of plans for West Street. Chair Rubin agreed that was a good idea and should be added to the agenda.

In response to a question from Mr. Little about why Cheshire Rail Trail and South Bridge aren't included in the Master Plan list of future projects, Chair Rubin said those projects are already underway and are expected to continue moving forward. Mr. Redfern pointed out that those two projects are included in the status reports, so it is not as if they are being ignored. Mr. Little said he would like to see a list of all the projects in one place instead of the fragmented listing of projects in different places.

Chair Rubin said the committee could look at a way to integrate or align both documents (status report as well as the Master Plan list of priorities).

When the guest was asked about his interest in the meeting, Mr. Byenton said he was a member of MAST working on the Bike- to-Work Day events and was also interested in seeing how the Master Plan was being developed.

6) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:38 AM. Next meeting date –May 10, 2017

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Fleming, Minute-taker