

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

**BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, June 10, 2015**

**8:30 am**

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

**Members Present:**

Linda Rubin, Vice Chair  
James Duffy, Councilor  
Thom Little  
Charles (Chuck) Redfern  
Andrew McCarron  
Christopher Brehme

**Staff Present:**

William Shoefmann, Planning  
Andrew Bohannon, Parks & Recreation

**Others Present:**

Mari Brunner, Southwest Regional  
Planning Commission

**Members Not Present:**

Greg Pregent, Chair  
Don Hayes

**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Vice Chair Rubin called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM. Roll call was conducted.

**2. Approval of Minutes – May 13, 2015**

Mr. Little made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2015, which was seconded by Councilor Duffy.

Mr. Little asked for the minutes to include page numbers. He continued that positive comments he made about City staff did not make it into the minutes – he was saying that the reason Keene keeps receiving funding is because staff has a great reputation for getting things in on time/completing projects.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**3. Education and Outreach**

**4. Project Updates**

**a) Roundhouse T Phase II**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that last time they had no bids. He continued that they re-advertised it and received two bids. He needs to get more information from City Engineer Jim Donison. Mr. Redfern stated that Public Works Director Kurt Blomquist told him the lowest bid is within budget. Mr. Little replied that \$450,000 was the low bid and the other was a little over \$500,000. He asked when/if it will be awarded. Mr. Schoefmann replied that Mr. Donison has a

review team, and he will find out the status. Mr. Little stated that the meeting minutes say that Mr. Blomquist will give the information to him about the drop dead date for changes. He continued that Mr. Blomquist is not present today. Mr. Redfern asked Mr. Schoefmann to get that information from Mr. Blomquist. Mr. Little stated that the information will not be as necessary as they thought, if the project is within budget.

**b) Cheshire Rail Trail Phase II**

Mr. Bohannon reported that it should be completed by the end of the month, and they are doing a great job.

**c) Jonathan Daniels Trail**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that there is no change in the status - the study is not in the CIP. Mr. Redfern asked for the status of meeting with the Conservation Commission. Mr. Schoefmann replied that that group had their annual retreat and now that Karen Purinton has left the City the other staff members in the Planning Department are divvying up staff time to see who will be working with the Conservation Commission. As soon as they figure that out, they will work on it.

**d) Cheshire Rail Trail – Park Ave Loop**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that he emailed Tom Jameson at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NH DOT). He continued that they should be getting notice. Governor and Council had to approve all projects and the funding for them. He expects that letter at any time.

**e) South Bridge**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that there is no change in the status of this project.

**f) Bike Racks**

Mari Brunner, of Southwest Regional Planning Commission (SWRPC), reported that Rack It Up concluded on Friday. She continued that eight organizations received bike racks in the first round then eleven in the second round. All were in Keene except a few in Swanzey. There were 31 racks (for 62 bikes total) in round one, and the second round was similar but she does not have the exact number. Monadnock Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) provided extra funding to make it go a little further.

Mr. Redfern congratulated Ms. Brunner. Vice Chair Rubin asked about installation. Ms. Brunner replied that Rack It Up does not include installation. She continued that some ordered racks that are free-standing and do not require installation. HEAL will cover the cost of the installation for Markem Imaj's bike rack.

**g) Planning Projects**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that that the Complete Streets meetings are going well. Vice Chair Rubin asked if there is a draft policy yet. Mr. Schoefmann replied that Mr. Blomquist would have that information.

Mr. Schoefmann reported that the attempt to meet for the master plan was unsuccessful. He continued that he and Chair Pregent are talking about next steps. Mr. Redfern suggested

dedicating a regular meeting for the master plan, since they have good attendance at these meetings. He continued that he thinks staff would prefer that; it is just an idea. Councilor Duffy replied that he would be okay with that. He asked when the last scheduled meeting was, because only he and Mr. Little were there. Mr. Little replied that he was at the second meeting and Councilor Duffy was not.

Discussion ensued about the meetings that have been attempted, whether there is confusion about the scheduling methods, and when would be best to have the meetings. Vice Chair Rubin asked how the committee feels about using a regularly scheduled BPPAC meeting for master plan discussion. Discussion ensued. Mr. Little asked about quorum issues. Mr. Schoefmann replied that it is a regular meeting, not a subcommittee, so a quorum needs to be present. Mr. Brehme suggested a half hour extension on a regular BPPAC meeting. Discussion continued, and Mr. Schoefmann suggested starting at 8:00 AM. Mr. Bohannon stated that he thinks the BPPAC could devote 45 minutes of the agenda, every other meeting, for master plan discussions. Project updates do not need to take 30 minutes. They should focus more on initiatives like the Bike-Friendly Community. He thanks Councilor Duffy for asking the City Council to hear reports from all committees this year because it helps them stay connected. Dedicating BPPAC meeting time to topics other than project updates help.

Vice Chair Rubin stated that she agrees and suggests having project updates emailed to the committee ahead of time, so the project updates part of the meeting would just be people having questions about what was emailed. Discussion ensued about this idea. Mr. Little stated that having the project updates during the meeting is not a problem and usually goes quickly. Councilor Duffy expressed concerns about the emailed project updates being burdensome to staff/taking up too much time. Mr. Schoefmann replied that getting project updates emailed out along with the agenda is worth looking into, and worth trying. He continued that he does not mind coordinating that and seeing how it goes. Mr. Bohannon clarified that it still would allow for questions.

Mr. Redfern made a motion for the BPPAC to recommend that staff send out an email with brief project updates ahead of time of the BPPAC meetings, and for the BPPAC to dedicate no less than 30 minutes per meeting to master plan discussion, until the master plan is complete. Vice Chair Rubin seconded the motion.

Councilor Duffy stated that he honors the intent but cannot in good conscience support this motion. Mr. Little stated that he does not think the email ahead of time is necessary. Mr. McCarron stated that he likes the idea of the email. Mr. Brehme agreed that it might save a little time, but he, too, is concerned with it being burdensome to staff. He will vote in favor. Mr. Little stated that he is not in favor of the email part of the motion but he is in favor of the 30 minutes of master plan part of it.

Mr. Little made a motion to amend Mr. Redfern's motion to state: "Recommend that staff send out an email with brief project updates ahead of time of the BPPAC meetings." Councilor Duffy seconded the motion.

Councilor Duffy stated that he honors the intent of the motion but in good conscience cannot support it. He continued that he does not think they need a motion, because they seem to have consensus about the 30 minutes.

Mr. Little withdrew his motion to amend, and Councilor Duffy withdrew his second. Mr. Redfern withdrew his motion. Vice Chair Rubin withdrew her second.

Vice Chair Rubin stated that there is consensus to spend 30 minutes per BPPAC meeting discussing the master plan. She continued that staff can try the email update if they want, although the BPPAC did not pass a motion about that. Councilor Duffy agreed.

##### **5. Mayor's Challenge Exercise**

Mr. Schoefmann stated that the Mayors' Challenge For Safer People and Safer Streets self-assessment document is in the agenda packet. He continued that this is something Vice Chair Rubin had brought to their attention. It is a program coming out of the Federal Highway Division. It is about getting mayors and municipalities involved in creating more bike and pedestrian-friendly infrastructure. There are a number of questions he and Planner Michele Chalice are looking to address. They are looking for feedback from the BPPAC. Vice Chair Rubin stated that they will go through the document section by section. She continued that the first section is about Complete Streets. She went through the discussion points and asked for BPPAC members' feedback on where the City is at.

For the first bullet point in the Complete Streets section, "We have publicly announced the importance of bicycle and pedestrian safety," Councilor Duffy chose the answer "Done well" and explained why – the Complete Streets resolution should be done before the end of the calendar year, the Keene Police Department (KPD) has a bike safety program, this committee does what it can, signage has increased, the City is partnering with others and has Safe Routes To School (SRTS), and they have taken positive steps as evidenced by the Bike-Friendly Community award.

Mr. Redfern chose the answer "Needs minor action" because there are minor tweaks to be done, such as putting things on the website, but otherwise he agrees with Councilor Duffy. Councilor Duffy agreed with Mr. Redfern, as did Mr. Little. Mr. Schoefmann replied that the Mayor did give the proclamation for Bike To Work Week, and the City has this group as a leadership team, along with Monadnock Region Transportation Management Association (MRTMA) and SRTS and an internal trails committee, but staff interpreted the word "announcement" as literal. Mr. Bohannon stated that Keene High School students are talking about different projects to do, and bike safety would be a perfect topic. He continued that he will follow up and see about next year – it would be a commercial for Channel 8 and the website.

Vice Chair Rubin stated that she chooses "Needs action" because more actual announcements are needed so people understand the importance of bike and pedestrian safety. She continued that she likes Mr. Bohannon's idea. Mr. Little replied that he agrees with "Needs action," and as an example of why, stated that he notices lots of people on Main Street jaywalking and ignoring clearly marked crosswalks. Mr. Bohannon replied that he can tell the KPD that the BPPAC is noticing more jaywalking and they may have conversations with people. He continued that he

will follow up. Mr. Brehme stated that if “announcement” is taken literally in this sentence he agrees with “Needs action.”

Vice Chair Rubin moved on to the second bullet point, “We have adopted Complete Streets policy.” She stated that the City Manager says it should be done by September. Ms. Brunner replied that the group working on this met on Thursday and drafted guidelines and checklist considerations for each street type. She continued that the policy is well on its way. Their goal is to get it before City Council for their July meeting so they see it before their summer vacation. Discussion ensued and group agreed with “Needs action.”

Regarding the next bullet point, “We have formed pedestrian and bicyclist safety leadership teams,” Councilor Duffy stated that leadership teams are the BPPAC, the Monadnock Cycling Club, Pathways for Keene, MRTMA, and Healthy Monadnock. He continued that he thinks it is sufficient. Mr. Redfern chose “Needs minor action” and stated that he agrees with Councilor Duffy; various groups do pieces of the work and collectively get it done. Vice Chair Rubin replied that there is no one, overall group providing leadership. Councilor Duffy replied that that would be a linear, top down model, but having a number of groups working for a common cause provides leadership, too, in a way that is less mono-culturalistic and maybe more effective. Vice Chair Rubin asked if safety is called out in the Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP). Mr. Schoefmann replied yes, and it is a category in the Parks & Recreation Department’s Master Plan, too. Vice Chair Rubin stated that she chooses “Done well.”

Discussion ensued about the bullet point “We have developed/initiated a Pedestrian and Bicyclist Safety Action Plan,” and committee members agreed on the answer choice “Needs to begin.” Mr. Schoefmann replied that for this whole section, staff agrees with “Needs action” as an overall ranking. Others agreed.

The BPPAC moved on to section 2, “Fix Barriers.” The first bullet point is “We have a multi-disciplinary team of representatives to help ensure the needs of all road users.” Vice Chair Rubin asked if it is true that SWRPC does some assessment but it is not qualitative. Ms. Brunner replied that MRTMA has an action plan to address each group of users but it is limited by what the people who attend the meetings are willing to do. Vice Chair Rubin replied that in her view no one is doing this and it would be valuable, especially for people who use wheelchairs and other aids to move around. It would be a great student project. She chooses “Needs to begin.” She asked for others’ thoughts. Hearing none, she moved on to the other bullets.

Mr. Little stated that “Needs minor action” applies to the last bullet, “New or altered pedestrian ways are ADA-compliant.” He continued that this used to be part of all projects, but the Cheshire Rail Trail is not ADA-compliant. Vice Chair Rubin replied that it sounds like “Needs to begin.” Mr. Little spoke of people in wheelchairs’ need to get downtown from the YMCA. Mr. Redfern replied that if they were to try and make all trails ADA-compliant “they are backing themselves up to a pretty big wall.” He spoke of the ways in which many areas would not be accessible to wheelchairs or scooters due to the natural environment, and continued that it would be a nearly impossible task. Councilor Duffy stated that federal funding is not dependent on ADA compliance.

Ms. Brunner suggested that this bullet point is referring to sidewalks, not paths. She continued that for example, a person in a wheelchair cannot easily get down West Street, and that would be tied to federal funding. Mr. Redfern replied that if this is more about sidewalks they should have that caveat and write that into the document, and make ADA compliance the intent but not mandatory. Mr. Brehme suggested the BPPAC prioritize trails in what they allow access to. He continued that for example, it is great to have North Bridge accessible because it leads to Monadnock Marketplace. Councilor Duffy spoke of the variety of people who use a variety of wheelchairs. Vice Chair Rubin chose “Needs to begin” for this bullet. Councilor Duffy replied that the question form assumes it has to be done, and “Needs action” is fine with him.

Councilor Duffy stated that he has trouble imagining how the first bullet would work. He continued that there needs to be action to ensure the needs of all users are being considered, but he is not sure it requires a multi-disciplinary team. Vice Chair Rubin replied that it means getting input from users. For example, if the City holds a listening session and it is not attended by people who use wheelchairs, they would want to go the extra mile to specifically seek out feedback from them.

Mr. Little replied that ADA compliance is a requirement for using funds from NHDOT. He continued that he suggests “Needs minor action.” He spoke about how North Bridge is ADA-compliant, as that was the long-term plan. He thinks the City should have a long-range plan for the whole trail system to be ADA-compliant, recognizing that it might take 10, 20, or more years. Mr. Redfern stated that his understanding was that recreational trails are not required to be ADA-compliant. Mr. Little replied that that is correct. Mr. Schoefmann stated that depending on the funding source there are certain ADA-compliance measures that need to be met. Mr. Bohannon stated that this is an overarching/master plan discussion. He continued that they should include an ADA section in the BPPAC’s Master Plan. This Mayors’ Challenge document will help them move the master plan discussion faster.

Vice Chair Rubin stated that she thinks “Needs action” applies to the first and last bullets. Mr. Schoefmann replied that he and Ms. Chalice were talking about how work has begun in these areas, but yes, more action is needed. Mr. Redfern replied that it needs a section in the master plan and then they can hash it out.

Regarding the second bullet, “Transit stops are easily and conveniently accessible for people on foot, bike, or using mobility devices,” Mr. Schoefmann stated that he has a rough map of the stops but they need some GIS analysis. Vice Chair Rubin added that they need to seek feedback from wheelchair users, too. She suggests “Needs action.” Seeking out the people who are trying to get the access, and really engaging them in some kind of assessment, is important. Mr. Brehme replied that that would be a great student project.

Mr. Bohannon asked if “Needs minor action” is appropriate. Councilor Duffy agreed. Discussion continued. Councilor Duffy spoke of data that is already scattered around and suggested Susan Ashworth as a resource. Mr. Schoefmann added that counters from SWRPC have been helpful in the past. Mr. Redfern stated that for a city this size, they are doing well, and he chooses “Needs minor action” – which would be the assessment. Vice Chair Rubin agreed and added, plus the action plan for assessing people’s needs. Mr. Redfern stated that he will

contact Ms. Ashworth. Mr. Brehme replied that he will think about student project ideas. Councilor Duffy stated that the information Mr. Redfern is looking for is on record in meeting minutes. Mr. Brehme asked Mr. Redfern to forward him the information.

Mr. Schoefmann stated that they will discuss the rest of the document next time.

#### **6. Old Business**

None.

#### **7. New Business**

Mr. Schoefmann reported that the City of Keene again received recognition from the League of American Bicyclists, as a bronze Bike-Friendly Community. He continued that they received signs and an award for the lobby. He will send out the information. Vice Chair Rubin replied that she send the BPPAC the “report card” the League of American Bicyclists gave the City. Mr. Redfern suggested they present this award to the Mayor at a City Council meeting. Councilor Duffy agreed and suggested Mr. Schoefmann/staff draft a letter from the BPPAC. Mr. Bohannon replied that they are working on a press release.

Vice Chair Rubin stated that both the Mayors’ Challenge self-assessment and the report card are part of the master plan process, and they will continue at the next meeting. Councilor Duffy replied yes, and there are other aspects of the master plan that they do not want to fall by the wayside.

Ms. Brunner distributed copies of a flyer about the Complete Streets demonstration project she and Tara Germond/SWRPC will be doing. She continued that the proposed date for Keene is September 5. They are requesting partners, and would like volunteers, such as BPPAC members, to help paint the roadway the day of, and help implement Complete Streets elements temporarily. Groups are adopting parking spaces and doing something creative with them.

Ms. Brunner stated that they still have to confirm with the City that the date and time are okay. She continued that they will know by the July BPPAC meeting.

#### **8. Adjournment - Next Meeting is July 8, 2015**

Vice Chair Rubin adjourned the meeting at 9:39 AM.

Respectfully submitted by  
Britta Reida, Minute-taker

Additional Edits by  
Will Schoefmann, Planning Staff