

ADOPTED

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, December 14, 2016

8:00 AM

2nd floor Conference Room

Members Present:

Linda Rubin, Chair
Christopher Brehme, Vice Chair
Charles (Chuck) Redfern
Thom Little
Don Hayes (arrived at 8:38 AM)
Sam Hawkes, Alternate

Staff Present:

Tara Kessler, Planner

Members Not Present:

Ed Guyot
Emily Coey
Don Hayes
Will Schoefmann, Planner

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Rubin called the meeting to order at 8:25 AM. Roll call was conducted.

2) Minutes of Previous Meeting-November 9, 2016

Mr. Little made a motion to approve the minutes of November 9, 2016. Mr. Redfern seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

3) BPPAC Master Plan – Top Five Projects

Chair Rubin said the meeting today will determine the top five projects together as a group. She asked members of the Committee to present their top five projects. A copy of the Project Priority Assessment Tool was given to the Committee and Chair Rubin explained the Project Priority Assessment Tool plotted all the projects the Committee determined and listed the projects in accordance with the rated level of organizational support (X axis on the diagram) and the level of importance of each project (Y axis on the diagram). Chair Rubin said Priority Assessment Tool also listed all of the projects the Committee defined to be of high importance in the areas of safety, sustainability, accessibility, availability and connectivity. She noted these “high” rated projects are located in the top three quadrants on the Priority Assessment Tool. Chair Rubin noted this project was about what the Committee saw as the most important

projects. She said Mr. Schoefmann did an impressive job in categorizing them in various ways but did not list the Committee's top 15 projects that were given a "high" rating.

Chair Rubin continued she would add all of the Committee's top five projects to the list and see if that narrows the field of 15. Mr. Little noted the description in BE5 still requires a correction referencing the Swanzey Factory Road. He continued that should be deleted from the description in BE5, since this was made a separate project. Mr. Little said three meetings ago this was split out to be a separate project and the separate project is BE6. He said he was in support of what Chair Rubin said but he found it was difficult to track the projects so he created a spreadsheet that listed all of the projects separated by meeting the criteria for staff and BPPAC, meeting criteria for BPPAC but not staff, BPPAC "highly" rated projects, and his top five projects. He continued explaining page one of his spreadsheet lists the results of the Committee's top projects and page two lists the combination of staff and the BPPAC. Mr. Little explained how he understood the focus of this meeting would be on page one of his spreadsheet and he identified what he thought were the 9 projects of importance. On page four of Mr. Little's spreadsheet he listed the final top five projects of high importance for the coming year which was listed as BE7, BE12, BE16, BE17 and BE21. Chair Rubin said Mr. Little did an excellent job and validated his processed. She continued her thinking around it may have been different and they should determine the top five based on the Committee's assessment and not include the staff's assessment. She noted this as a basic guiding principal to move forward in determining the top five projects

Chair Rubin referenced her process for selecting the top five and asked the members to look at BE15 and BE16. She explained by looking at BE16 Development of Wayfinding Plan and BE15 Implementation of the Wayfinding Plan, she saw these two as a combination. Chair Rubin noted she did not want to see a plan developed and not implemented. Mr. Little said there was a reason these were listed separately because the plan this year would probably not be implemented in the same year. Chair Rubin responded most of these projects are not one year projects. She continued the three guiding principles for the BPACC is 1) not considering the staff's assessment 2) the BPACC has a desire with any plan that implantation is the follow-up 3) come to an understanding of the timeframe for these plans.

Chair Rubin continued there was an agreement the Committee would not consider the staff assessments. An observation she noticed when she was doing her process was that there were a lot of projects with planning and also some projects with specific implementation. Chair Rubin asked if the BPACC thought about prioritizing things based on plans and implementation. Mr. Redfern replied yes. Mr. Brehme said he thinks the BPACC has distinguished the plans from implementation on these various projects. Mr. Little said he thought the starting point was to define the length of time for each project. He continued the length of time is 2-3 years and the need to be prepared when magic money shows up should be taken into consideration. Mr. Little said if the BPPAC is not prepared and ready when magic money appears means the BPPAC will not be getting any money. Chair Rubin said another guiding principal is the BPPAC will not lose any of these projects. She continued 15 projects is too many to focus on but these projects will still be there. Focusing on the top five with the highest priority would be the best scenario.

Chair Rubin asked the Committee if they considered having a maximum timeframe cap on the projects such as 3 years. Ms. Kessler asked if the BPACC is on planning on identifying timeframes for these projects once the top five are selected. Chair Rubin replied that was an option. Mr. Brehme said he liked that idea. Chair Rubin said Ms. Kessler's question has turned into a suggestion as a way to prioritize each project and then attach a timeframe. Mr. Brehme said the first step as Chair Rubin suggested is to have a maximum timeframe but also allow for 3 year projects to be completed in a year. He continued he was leaning toward a 5 year timeframe. Mr. Redfern and Chair Rubin said they would also agree on 5 years. Mr. Little said if it is 5 years then page one of his spreadsheet identified the top 15 projects. Chair Rubin said everyone needed to have their vote and suggested he BPACC moved forward with voting.

Prior to the Committee voting, Mr. Hawkes asked if the projects listed as construction are ready to go and if the plans are all done. Chair Rubin replied whatever the top five projects are then the BPPAC will work with City staff throughout the process of identifying where the funds will come from and who will develop the project. She continued saying the BPACC guides the staff. Mr. Hawkes asked who does the planning. Chair Rubin said that depends on the project. Mr. Little said the overall approach is the Planning Department working with the BPACC. Mr. Hawkes asked who comes up criteria for plan. Chair Rubin said the City has developed Complete Streets Guidelines that helps them consider what kinds of improvements are needed to make a street complete.

Ms. Kessler began tracking the BPPAC's votes on the whiteboard while Chair Rubin facilitated. The BPACC had a consensus of a 5 year timeframe cap on projects.

Mr. Little asked what document the City is working on outside the BPPAC. Ms. Kessler asked Mr. Little if he was referring to the CIP (Capital Improvement Program). Mr. Little said the CIP refers to the planning of the next year. Mr. Redfern said the CIP is multi years and with a CIP they vote every year on the projects for that year. He continued the CIP is five years out. Ms. Kessler said right now the CIP is for the fiscal year, they vote every year and also multiple years out. Ms. Kessler said the fiscal year is 2017 to the fiscal year of 2022 and every year the City looks at the CIP to update. She noted the CIP activity is periodic. Ms. Kessler said the CIP is the guide for how the City's money is spent and in terms of the City's budget it allocates how money is spent on the different projects. She continued the City has a master plan which follows state statute that could be a 5-10 year plan and is a guide for the different focus areas, goals and objectives the community has citywide. Ms. Kessler said the City has a number of different committees and commissions that have their own action plans they are working on and to some extent independent of each other. For example, Ms. Kessler said the BPACC is creating a master plan for bike and pedestrian pathways for the whole City and the Committee is spearheading those efforts now.

Mr. Little said in response to Chair Rubin's question BE1 would be associated with a master plan and all the rest would be associated with a CIP. He continued BE1 would be more than 5 years and all the rest would be 5 years such that it would be in sync with the CIP. Mr. Little said that should be the overall mission of the Committee. Chair Rubin noted she did not select BE1 because she felt it was a strategic direction.

Ms. Kessler asked about BE2, CRT Eastern Avenue to NH 101 being identified as a construction project. She asked if there was a plan attached and one project that would be shovel ready. Mr. Little said many of these are a combination of plans that would lead into later construction. He continued the Committee evaluated the individual with a rating and did not rank the projects. Mr. Little said it was impossible to rate a project that would eventually be a construction if there was not yet a plan for what was going to be constructed. He used the example of BE7, Victoria Street Extension and said it seems that project is a “higher” priority project. He noted this project was one that did not make it through the staff rating.

Chair Rubin asked if there were any other guiding principles or assumptions the Committee should think about before moving forward with voting. She reminded the Committee of the three guiding principles. Chair Rubin said Mr. Hayes sent his top five but did not provide any explanation. The voting for the top five projects is as follows:

Mr. Hayes: BE1, BE12, BE13, BE19, BE27

Chair Rubin: BE16, BE19, BE21, BE22, BE27

Mr. Little: BE7, BE12, BE16, BE17, B21

Mr. Brehme: BE13, BE16, BE21, BE27, BE30.

Mr. Redfern: BE2, BE14, BE16, BE21, BE22.

Chair Rubin noted BE16 and BE 21 both have 4 votes; BE27 has 3 votes and a bunch with two votes. She recommended removing the ones with one and two votes. Chair Rubin listed BE12, BE13, BE19 and BE22. Ms. Kessler asked if BE21 and BE22 could be linked and folded in together. Mr. Brehme said yes and asked if Complete Streets are just about street infrastructure. Ms. Kessler said it is up to the Committee to determine how this should be defined for the purpose of this plan. She continued it is the whole transportation network and infrastructure. Ms. Kessler said the City created the Complete Streets Design Guidelines specific to roadways because of the differences between the trails and street infrastructure. Chair Rubin said multiuse access would suggest talking about trails and was the BPPAC’s decision to keep separate.

Mr. Little said he was extremely confused because the Committee seemed to be talking about 5 years and were now were talking about one year. Chair Rubin said that was incorrect and they were still talking about 5 years. Mr. Little said the BPPAC would be doing more than five projects in the next 5 years. Chair Rubin said these five “high” priority projects should get started first. Ms. Kessler added that some may fall in year one and so on. Mr. Little said he listened about BE7 for a great length of time and how it was important it was to the BPPAC. He noted how the Committee discussed how they should be ready because the Committee was going to be looking for a grant. Mr. Little noted that BE17 was an odd choice because connecting to the South Bridge to the asphalt path. He continued everyone thought that was so critical because it was so heavily used by KSC. He was surprised he was the only one who voted for BE7 and BE17 because he was so focused on what the BPPAC should be doing this coming year.

Mr. Redfern said Mr. Little’s memory was correct and since that time he had spoken with the Mayor and some City Councilors. He continued that it is not the political will to address the Victoria Street Extension as this time. Mr. Redfern apologized to Mr. Little because he was correct and said the Committee did spend a lot of time talking about Victoria Street. He noted at

that time he did not have this new information. Mr. Redfern said regarding BE17 he thinks KSC should pave it and does not think the City needs to put this on their radar. Mr. Redfern explained that is why he did not vote for BE17 and agreed with Mr. Little that BE17 is a priority. Mr. Little said that he dropped off BE30 because some of the other things were more critical. He noted if the Committee was talking about more than one year he would have included BE30. Chair Rubin said the Committee agreed the selection would be based on five years and where in the five years they would fall is unknown at this time. She reiterated the top five priority ones are not going to lose but top five are the ones the BPPAC wants to move forward with in the next 5 years. Chair Rubin said the BPPAC will then talk to City staff about a timeline within the five years. Ms. Kessler confirmed with Chair Rubin on the top five priorities. Mr. Little disagreed and said there are too many variables out there for a five year timeframe. He said no one knew the TAP program would disappear and also that magical money would show up to allow the South Bridge to be completed this year. Mr. Little said no one has any idea what will happen when it comes to federal money.

Chair Rubin said everyone had the opportunity to talk about the five year timeframe and this was agreed upon. She said it was time to move forward. Mr. Brehme explained to Mr. Little that it does not preclude any of these things from happening. He continued if money shows up maybe BE7 could be completed. Mr. Redfern added BE30 is an interest for Pathways. He continued Pathways was very interested in seeing that happen because of the solar lighting. Mr. Redfern said there was talk about lighting on the KSC Bridge and who can pay for the lighting. Again, Mr. Redfern said recommended looking at KSC to see if that could be a priority for them. He noted a million plus had already been spent on the bridge and that it was up to KSC to enhance safety for their students. He said that does not mean that if BE30 was done in the next two years the BPPAC would exclude the project from the 5 year plan. Chair Rubin said they are all a priority and that the BPPAC wants to build public will, staff and council alignment around the highest priority things.

Mr. Little said the problem he had were the top five projects for the next five years. He continued if the Committee looked at his list for the 9 projects it fed what everyone else said. He included project, BE1, BE20, BE30 and does not understand what his purpose is to identify the five projects. Chair Rubin said the timeframe was determined at the meeting today. Mr. Redfern said the process needs to be democratic and recommended taking votes on the remaining projects. Mr. Hawkes asked why a timeframe is important. Ms. Kessler replied that with a master plan or any plan it is important for the plan not be kept open without a timeframe determined. She continued a strategic plan for a period of time helps the thought process, readiness and to have a more organized way to approach projects. Mr. Redfern suggested the Committee move forward with voting.

The Committee moved forward with voting on BE12, BE13, BE19, BE22. The votes were as follows:

Mr. Redfern: BE13, BE22

Chair Rubin: BE19, BE22

Mr. Brehme BE13, BE19

Mr. Little said he was abstaining from voting due not being able to follow the process. Chair Rubin said she wanted Mr. Little to understand the process and wanted this to be a democratic process. Mr. Little said he did not understand the process. Chair Rubin proceeded to explain the process to Mr. Little again. After the explanation, Mr. Little voted for BE12 and BE22.

Chair Rubin said BE22 was added, BE12 was eliminated and voting would be for BE13 and BE19. The Committee proceeded with one more round of voting. The votes were as follows:

Mr. Redfern: BE13
Mr. Brehme: BE13
Mr. Little: BE13

Chair Rubin said BE13 was the choice. Mr. Redfern thanked Mr. Little for this spreadsheet and said he found the spreadsheet to be very helpful.

4) Project Updates

Mr. Little said the statement, “on hold until spring” should be deleted. He noted work was still being done on the South Bridge. Mr. Little presented the Committee with photos he had taken of the work two weeks ago and as recent as last Saturday. He said the Committee would see how these people have been working in such incredible conditions. Mr. Little said this statement was not correct and should be included in the minutes.

Mr. Little said the project manager of South Bridge did not respond to Mr. Little. He continued he thought Commissioner Christopher Clement’s comment was quite interesting. Mr. Little said what is left to be done is 340 feet of concrete, protective screening needs to be up inside similar to what has been installed in the North Bridge, the final surfacing on the approach ramps needs to be done and the screening at the top approach ramps needs to be installed for safety purposes. Mr. Little said he drove past the site a few times and said there has been definite progress made. In regards to an extension of schedule, Mr. Little said a reporter at The Keene Sentinel reported workers would build tents over the concrete to allow the concrete to cure so temperature would not be a problem. He continued no one from the Department of Transportation has said anything officially and no one should press them if everything is going the right way.

Mr. Little said the Committee should not be stating this information. Chair Rubin said this was an internal document. Mr. Little said the DOT could access the minutes online. Chair Rubin said she was not sure on how to respond. She said this information is already public and asked to move the discussion to next meeting.

5) Old Business-Public Outreach and Workshops

Chair Rubin said the Committee is planning a celebration for South Bridge.

5) Next Meeting-January 11, 2017

6) Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Chair Rubin adjourned the meeting at 9:32 AM.

BPPAC Meeting Minutes,
November 9, 2016

Respectfully submitted by,
Jennifer Clark, Minute-Taker

December 20, 2016