

City of Keene
New Hampshire

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN PATH ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 9, 2020

8:15 AM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

Members Present:

Dillon Benik, Chair
Drew Bryenton, Vice Chair
Councilor Jan Manwaring
Todd Horner
Michael Davern
Brad Dufresne
Dr. Chris Brehme, Alternate
Charles Redfern, Alternate

Staff Present:

Will Schoefmann, GIS Technician
Andy Bohannon, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Director

Members Not Present:

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Benik called meeting to order at 8:16 am and read the remote meeting notice. Roll call was conducted.

2) August 12, 2020 Minutes

Mr. Redfern moved to accept the August 12, 2020 minutes with revisions, Councilor Manwaring seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Revisions as follows:

Page 3, beginning of the third paragraph, change “Vice Chair Hansel” to “Vice Chair Bryenton.”
Throughout the document change “Kourt Lundquist” to “Kurt Blomquist.”

3) Reprioritizing Projects

Mr. Schoefmann stated that at the last meeting they discussed the Transportation Heritage Trail project, which is the section leading out from Eastern Avenue, including a span of the old bridge over NH Route 101 and improvements to the Old Stone Arch Bridge. He said that combination of projects is a big focus now that it is in the CIP. He suggested they review the prioritization list of projects.

Mr. Redfern stated that some projects on the prioritization list are already completed. He suggested that they move those projects off of the list and place them into another sheet of completed projects as they do not need to be included in the ranking order. He suggested that as new projects come up, they be moved forward. Mr. Redfern said the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 4- Transportation Heritage Trail project ranked highly at a 7 and 8 based on the matrix they used to score projects (high, medium, low). He said that West Street-Complete Streets is in planning and is ranked 6 and maybe they can move that project to a 7 as it is not in the CIP and move one of the other items in the first 5 projects to a 5 or 6. He said they can then consider moving projects 7

and 8 to 5 or under so he can consider those projects as a priority when writing grants. He stated that the grant applications ask for how much support each project has in the community and he would like to point out that BPPAC has ranked the projects high in priority. He added that if members like this idea, they can aim to reorder the list next month for the first five projects.

Chair Benik stated that the number one priority is Park Avenue Loop, but it is in progress already, therefore, it does not need to remain their top priority. He agreed with Mr. Redfern's proposal to reevaluate the prioritization list. Mr. Brehme agreed as well, however, he said he does not necessarily think that projects should move down the list simply because they do not have CIP funding as that is counterproductive in garnering attention for those initiatives, for example, the West Street-Complete Street project. Chair Benik agreed with Mr. Brehme and noted that the West Street-Complete Streets project was ranked highly by the committee because it was not even on the City's radar. However, he does agree with reevaluating the project list and recommended that they revisit the ranking order next month.

Vice Chair Bryenton asked if it has already been two years since the last time they visited the prioritization list. Mr. Schoefmann stated that as soon as the Transportation Heritage Trail became a priority, members wanted it to be added to the list. He said the more that the concept of the project has been realized and planned, it is becoming more like three distinct projects so maybe that is a consideration for the committee. He said he could put out a Google form for members to submit rankings or another tool that they can distribute to the membership for ranking purposes for input during the meeting. Members agreed. Chair Benik suggested that they place that item on the list for the next agenda. Mr. Dufresne suggested a couple of tools and Mr. Schoefmann asked him to share his ideas with him via email. Mr. Brehme proposed that they make project prioritization an annual endeavor so that they can keep tabs on the rankings. Mr. Horner said that the prioritization exercise would benefit from more updated information about each of the projects. Mr. Schoefmann agreed and said he will review the list and provide up to date descriptions of each project.

4) Wayfinding

a. UNH Cooperative Initiative

Mr. Bohannon stated that they will follow up with this conversation in the spring as they are revisiting with UNH in January. More information will appear on the February agenda.

b. New Ashuelot Rail Trail Kiosk

Mr. Bohannon informed the committee that the kiosk is currently being installed.

c. Bike Repair Station

Vice Chair Bryenton said he emailed the Chair of the MCC board and is keeping the bike repair station on their radar. Mr. Russell asked Mr. Bohannon if he connected with Tony at Antioch University New England (AUNE) about the bike repair station near Hurricane Road. Mr. Bohannon replied that he did try to get a status update on that, however, he has not heard back about it. He said the pad is all poured out so they may be able to repurpose that kiosk. Mr. Russell said he can reach out to Tony about the uninstalled bike repair station.

d. MAST Grant 2020 /<https://walkyourcity.org/>

Mr. Schoefmann said that the MAST Grant was submitted. He said MAST has a ranking committee that is doing work outside of their regular quarterly meetings and they may notify applicants by the beginning of October, but he will confirm the timeline for announcement.

5) Old Business

a. Downtown Bike Racks and Emerald Street

Mr. Schoefmann said he had a follow up conversation with Mr. Blomquist and he gave him the green light to collect the Racket Up racks in the Department of Public Works (DPW) garage. Mr. Schoefmann said he will be going to the garage to see what the inventory is. He said he also received an inquiry from a business owner on North Street for a bike rack, which is the third request from business owners apart from Terra Nova and Firedog Breads.

b. Bike Counts

Mr. Schoefmann said that the summer bike counts have wrapped up. They were able to perform counts for a week and a half of each month this summer. He thanked members for their participation and said he can collect counting sheets from members. Mr. Schoefmann asked what members want to do about fall bike counts. He said they can count on Marlborough Street and the Cheshire Rail Trail and they can discuss counts at the next meeting. Chair Benik proposed that they discuss fall bike counts at the next meeting. He said that he would like to get some extra fall counts on West Street to round out three full years of data collection. Vice Chair Bryenton agreed that they should aim to do one more round of counts and then segue into the UNH Extension project that Mr. Bohannon is spearheading. Mr. Schoefmann said that he will aim to conduct fall counts at the end of September and members agreed. Mr. Brehme added that he would reach out to Mr. Cusack at Keene State College (KSC) see if they can get KSC students to assist with that effort as well.

Vice Chair Bryenton left the meeting. Mr. Brehme assumed his role as alternate.

c. Downtown Sidewalks

Mr. Horner stated that he was supposed to follow up with this item to determine the best way to gather more information from downtown businesses about expanding their outdoor dining spaces. He said the Mayor and Chamber of Commerce were holding virtual Town Hall meetings; however, he is unsure if those meetings are still happening. He stated there was also a Downtown Coordinator he would like to reach out to determine how BPPAC can support gathering further information. Mr. Russell stated that from the perspective of BPPAC, it will be important to contextualize their effort in the pedestrian and cyclist realm. He proposed that they think more about the angle they approach this subject with. Chair Benik agreed and said that if they are reaching out to restaurants, they want to make sure that pedestrians are comfortable with the expanded outdoor seating. Mr. Schoefmann added that the City uses a Survey Monkey tool and perhaps they can gather input from pedestrians through that avenue. He said if there is a concern from pedestrians and cyclists downtown, they can then formulate a set of questions to address. Chair Benik stated that restaurants will likely agree to more tables in any case. Mr. Schoefmann stated that he can draft a public survey and if members have questions, he can incorporate them into a Survey Monkey. Chair Benik noted that he has a friend in North Carolina who just performed a similar survey so he will ask him for advice on how he approached his surveys.

Mr. Horner added that although BPPAC is invested in pedestrian and cyclist use, it might be advantageous to include the restaurants and downtown businesses in the survey as well. He noted that he does not want the effort to be viewed as an attack on outdoor dining. Chair Benik and Mr. Schoefmann agreed that they would like all entities to be included in the survey.

Mr. Davern left the meeting and Mr. Redfern assumed his role as alternate.

6) Other Project Updates

Bike racks- Mr. Schoefmann stated that he will be searching for the old Racket Up racks in the DPW garage.

Complete Streets grant- Mr. Schoefmann stated that the City resurfaced and repaved lower Main Street. The bike lanes and sharoes were restriped by two different contractors using different templates.

West Street-Complete Street- Mr. Schoefmann reiterated that bike and pedestrian counts are wrapped up for summer.

Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 3- Mr. Bohannon stated that the Cheshire Rail Trail Phase 3 update will be on the FOP agenda tomorrow night at 6:30 pm.

7) New Business

a. Items to be Included for Next Meeting

- Reprioritization of projects
- Pedestrian and bike counts for the end of September
- Draft survey for downtown sidewalks
- Membership

Mr. Bohannon stated that they are looking to enhance diversity on boards and committees so if members know of individuals with potential interest, they can send names to Mr. Bohannon and he will relay that information to the Mayor, as he is looking to broaden membership diversity. Councilor Manwaring stated that Mr. Russell has been nominated for membership and will be confirmed at the next meeting.

Mr. Horner stated that they should keep in mind, bridge decking over the winter as there is poor drainage on some of the decks that become an ice hazard in the winter. Mr. Bohannon said he will address that issue with his department.

8) Adjournment

Chair Benik adjourned the meeting at 9:11 AM. Next meeting date – October 14, 2020

Respectfully submitted by,
Ayshah Kassamali-Fox, Minute Taker

Additional Edits by,
Will Schoefmann, Community Development Staff