

FINAL

**PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY OCTOBER 6, 2020
REMOTE MEETING – MICROSOFT TEAMS (CALL-IN ONLY)
7:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Colin Smith (Chair); Erling Heistad (City Council); Alan Schnur; Marie McCormick; Alex Belensz; Clifton Below (Alt); John Kelleher (Vice-Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Crysl Akhtar

STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Owens (Associate Planner); Brian Vincent (Engineer); Paul Coats (Director, Recreation & Parks)

1) CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A “Right-to-Know” requirements. Ms. Owens reviewed the executive order requiring public audio and video access and options for participation.

A Roll Call of Board Members who participated remotely is listed above. Clifton Below was appointed to serve as a regular member in place of Ms. Akhtar.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: September 1, 2020

Amendments: Mr. Kelleher noted that he was not present at the meeting, and the minutes are to be amended to indicate that he was absent. Mr. Schnur noted that on page 2, line 17, the month identified should be July, not June. Mr. Below noted that on page 1, Mr. Below should have been identified as having been appointed to serve “in place” of, not “representing” another member.

***Mr. Heistad MOVED to approve the minutes as amended.
Seconded by Ms. McCormick.***

Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included Chair Smith, Mr. Schnur, Mr. Belensz, Ms. McCormick, Mr. Below, Mr. Kelleher, and Mr. Heisted.

****The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (7-0).***

Minutes approved with amendment.

3) OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

4) STUDY ITEMS:

- A. Updates from Other Boards
 - Planning Office - Planning Staff

Ms. Owens identified several recently approved and in-progress development projects that the Planning & Development Department has been busy with, including 20 Spencer St., 1 Mechanic St., Oak Ridge, 10-14 Bank St., and 343 Mt. Support Road, among others. As follow-up from the meeting, she indicated that she will share a detailed summary of these projects.

- Safe Routes to School - Planning Staff/Police Staff

Ms. Owens has not heard of any recent updates regarding the crosswalk and path extension at the Public Works Building, for Lebanon Middle School. Mr. Coats shared that the Recreation Department will be working on upgrades to the existing Ruth Shepherd Trail to support the project's connection to the rail trail.

- City Council – Erling Heistad

Mr. Heistad reported that City staff will be moving back to City Hall at 51 North Park Street in mid-November. He also shared that Lebanon Police have installed new speed limit signage for 25MPH on local roads, per City Council resolution to adopt the change and that he is interested in seeing if this will lead to any changes in speed enforcement and actual speeds driven.

- Planning Board/CIP - VACANT

- Police Reports - Alan Schnur

Mr. Schnur reported that the August monthly City Manager's report showed zero new collisions for a total of five ped-bike related crashes year-to-date, based on police data. Mr. Coats added that one objective of the Colburn Park sidewalk replacement project this fall is to reduce the number of trips, slips and falls particularly during Farmers' Market days.

- Mascoma River Greenway Coalition - Colin Smith

Chair Smith asked if there are updates about extension of the Greenway and about the status of new signage. Mr. Coats responded that there has not been progress in pursuit of a discontinuation of the active rail between the Dudley Bridge on Route 4 and the skate park on Glen Road but that the same lawyer working on that effort is also helping with formalization of the access at the Miracle Mile. He noted that the Hypertherm signage is almost ready for installation on the Greenway. Mr. Vincent stated that the Mall tunnel grand opening will probably be at the end of May or early June. Mr. Coats also said that the MRG survey was shared with the original fundraising group for the Greenway, and that the Friends of the Northern Rail Trail (FNRT) has lapsed in new membership. As a result of the latter, Recreation has taken over with maintenance of the Northern Rail Trail bridges in Lebanon while Public Works will continue their responsibilities with mowing and vegetation management, with structural/project support as needed. They just redocked a bridge near the City pool and will do the same for a bridge near Mill Road; there are about six other bridges in need of repair after this year. Mr. Vincent said that the rail trail structures will be added to the City's new asset management system. Mr. Coats noted that there is potential for Recreation to take on some of the FNRT fundraising and volunteer coordination as well as programming, under the umbrella of the Friends of Lebanon Recreation. In response to Mr. Schnur's question, Mr. Coats said that there is no budget for NRT work at this time. Ms. Owens added that there may be some Mooseplate funding available for such projects, particularly as the NRT is designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

- State of NH Updates - Alex Belensz

Mr. Belensz reported that the UVLSRPC met with other regional planning commissions and the consultant, Alta, for the draft statewide ped-bike plan as that project is revitalized, and now, the commissions are taking on more of the mapping work.

- Class VI Roads – Colin Smith

Mr. Heisted named a few of the roads for which reviews have been completed. There are some that need further action by City Council, such as to designate them as Class A trails that restrict motorized uses. He lauded the process for proceeding amicably with landowners.

- Rails to Trails - VACANT

Refer to the Greenway discussion above.

B. Spencer Street Reconstruction

Mr. Vincent presented highlights in the conceptual design of the Spencer Street Reconstruction project. Members shared several questions. It was noted that the City Manager has asked the Economic Development Commission to consider an addition to the project to pave the rail trail between Spencer St. and Bank St. Extension. Committee members discussed that the overall vision for that area is to provide a continuous connection from the existing rail trail terminus at Spencer Street to the Mascoma River Greenway, via the soon-to-be-opened Mall tunnel. Mr. Below presented his findings related to right-of-way, based on deed research, for the rail trail bed between Spencer St. and the stretch that goes past the Senior Center. His research suggested that there is room to widen the existing sidewalk to be more consistent with the needs of rail trail users with two-way traffic. Key discussion points about the Spencer St. project overall included concern expressed by Ms. McCormick that without a stop sign for southbound traffic on Spencer St., it will be hard for northbound traffic by car or bike to safely turn left into CCBA or Taylor St. There is also a need to continue coordination with the Senior Center.

Based on the discussion, Ms. Owens summarized potential recommendations heard from Committee members, as follows.

Lebanon Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee has reviewed the preliminary design for the Spencer Street Reconstruction Project and supports the overall scope, with the following amendments:

1. *Update the project bounds to include the segment of rail trail immediately west of the Northern Rail Trail's terminus on Spencer Street, herein called the "Greenway-Rail Trail Connector", extending the project bounds west to the access between the upper and lower parking lots of City Hall, and south to the portion of the Grafton County Senior Center (GCSC) property that is adjacent to the rail trail right-of-way.*
2. *In conjunction with the above, to conduct survey and/or official deed work that solidifies the City's understanding of right-of-way along the Greenway-Rail Trail Connector.*
3. *In further conjunction with the above, to work with the GCSC and other abutters as necessary to modify GCSC's existing curb cut on Taylor St. and parking lot configuration and enable right-of-way for the widening of the existing Greenway-Rail Trail Connector corridor.*
4. *Design and construct a widening of the Greenway-Rail Trail Connector, from the path's existing 5-8 foot width to 10 feet total width, with associated widening of the crosswalks and tipdowns on each end of the Connector, at Spencer Street and Taylor Street.*
5. *Update the project bounds to include consideration of a formal ped-bike access to the Northern Rail Trail via Suzor Court.*
6. *Provide traffic calming for public safety at the intersection of Taylor and Spencer Street, such as speed tables and a crosswalk with a flashing beacon.*

The Committee understands that the above is contingent upon project funding being finalized and believes that the above modifications are long-standing recommendations that could also

benefit the future location of an EV charging station in the vicinity. Mr. Below's research suggests that the above items, particularly 1-3, could confirm that the City has more workable space than anticipated, which would be valuable to ascertain.

There was a Motion by Mr. Below to approve the recommendations as presented above.

Seconded by Ms. Heisted.

Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included Chair Smith, Ms. McCormick, Mr. Heisted, Mr. Below, Mr. Schnur, Mr. Belensz, and Mr. Kelleher

****The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (7-0).***

Mr. Vincent stated that next steps will include strategies for how to consider such recommendations as additions to the project scope, which is contingent on CIP funding review.

5) OTHER BUSINESS:

6) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & FOLLOW-UP NEEDS:

- Review of Route 10 draft letter to NHDOT (Ms. Owens)
- Winter road and sidewalk maintenance (all)
- Compare bike storage provisions in Planning Board applications to draft regulations
- Review of Bike Friendly Community criteria for renewal of Lebanon's designation, due Spring 2021 (working group)
- Get clarifications on EMS data (Mr. Schnur)
- Review the Committee's webpages for updates (working group)
- Explore a central document repository for the Committee (Ms. Owens)

7) ADJOURNMENT:

A Motion by Mr. Heisted to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Kelleher.

Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included Chair Smith, Mr. Kelleher, Ms. McCormick, Mr. Belensz, Mr. Heisted, Mr. Below, and Mr. Schnur

****The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (7-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Prepared by Rebecca Owens, Planning Staff