

FINAL

**PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 10, 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; John Kelleher (Vice-Chair)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Crysl Akhtar; Clifton Below (Alt);

STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Owens (Associate Planner)

1) CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:04 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.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: October 6, 2020

***Mr. Kelleher MOVED to approve the minutes as presented.
Seconded by Mr. Heistad.***

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

****The vote on the MOTION was approved (5-0-1).***

Minutes approved with as presented.

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 developments, including a new site plan review application for Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center to expand its emergency department on 1 Medical Center Drive, conceptual review of 20 Spencer St. multifamily housing and roadway reconstruction, a Dunkin Donuts at 388 Miracle Mile, 1 Mechanic St., Oak Ridge PUD, which addressed prior Committee feedback about sidewalks, 8-10-14 Bank St., and 343 Mt. Support Road, among others. Chair Smith asked if DHMC would be doing new traffic studies and for staff to share the conditions of approval for the DHMC Patient Towers plan related to ped-bike improvements. Ms. Owens also noted that the final City Council Budget Work Session on November 17th would include consideration of the proposal for a multimodal plan.

- Safe Routes to School - Planning Staff/Police Staff

Members discussed the current City project to connect Lebanon Middle School to the Northern Rail Trail. Mr. Heisted conveyed that City Councilors have received some public comment about the project including one, a VNews letter, about the cost. Members recalled that the project was originally identified as a priority in SAU88's SRTS Plan for Travel Routes. Ms. Owens noted that the connection was proposed as a part of a City road infrastructure project and that as with similar City projects, like CSO updates, the reconstruction is intended to adhere to Lebanon's Complete Streets policy; as a result, part of the connector cost is not just for the trail but for new sidewalk on Moulton Avenue. She also indicated that the joint School and City Task Force had identified this project as a priority. Mr. Heisted mentioned that there are many households in Hillcrest Acres and nearby that would benefit from a safer connection to the rail trail, in addition to student access. Mr. Schnur commented that children in the neighborhood in addition to LMS students would probably use the connection. Ms. McCormick acknowledged general resident concerns about the City budget but that this project would be beneficial to the community.

There was a Motion by Mr. Belenzs to authorize the Pedestrian & Bicyclist Advisory Committee members to prepare and submit a letter to City Council to support the Northern Rail Trail to Lebanon Middle School connection.

Seconded by Mr. Kelleher.

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

****The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (6-0).***

- City Council – Erling Heistad

Mr. Heistad reported that City Council has had many recent meetings about the budget and to hear citizen concerns about Police Department funding, as well as about the proposed Welcoming Ordinance. Other matters on the docket include drinking water source/supply needs, the conceptual for 20 Spencer Street redevelopment, and zoning amendments. Mr. Schnur inquired about the police funding and if reductions would impact traffic enforcement. Mr. Kelleher also asked about the amount of Lebanon Police time spent on traffic enforcement. Mr. Belenzs suggested that some infrastructure design solutions can also address traffic enforcement but may not be equivalent. Mr. Kelleher provided more information about the Care Not Cops proposal and Mr. Schnur said that he may look at related data.

- Planning Board/CIP - VACANT

- Police Reports - Alan Schnur

Mr. Schnur reported that the September 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. He stated that greater safety awareness is warranted with darker days at this time of year,

- Mascoma River Greenway Coalition - Colin Smith

Chair Smith did not have any updates. Ms. Owens shared that the Cemetery Board of Trustees heard a proposal from the Recreation and Parks Department to formalize a trail access between the Sacred Heart Cemetery on Old Pine Tree Cemetery Road and the Greenway. An alternative path previously proposed to the state to use I89 right-of-way may be submitted again. Mr. Belenzs said that there could be two meetings to present Greenway user survey results, one as a joint meeting with the Committee and another as a key stakeholder meeting. Mr. Schnur offered to help with the analysis.

- State of NH Updates - Alex Belenzs

Mr. Belenz reported that the UVLSRPC has submitted comments on the draft statewide ped-bike plan.

- Class VI Roads – Colin Smith

Chair Smith informed members that one road section is left for review. Mr. Heisted said that some sections have been renamed as trails. Much of the work to date has focused on roads on the Patch Farm properties. The committee will recommend usage limits to maintain some of the rights-of-way as Class A trails that limits motor vehicle access to just the property owners while providing legal protection to others who maintain and access the trails.

- Rails to Trails - VACANT

Chair Smith related that redecking of two bridges is almost done. Mr. Belenz added that he and Ms. Owens met with a representative of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) about RTC's vision for a New England Spine Network and that the Lebanon area presents one of the biggest gaps. As a result, RTC is looking at the potential for using an on-road route via the Connecticut River Scenic Byway and may focus on what improvements would be necessary to that corridor on the NH side. Ms. Owens indicated that RTC has reached out to Dartmouth students, who may assess and map out options. In addition, RTC may provide fundraising support for projects in the region, including as could be applied to TAP project match needs. A possible beneficiary would be Lebanon if funding goes toward extension of the Greenway.

- Communications - Ms. McCormick

Ms. McCormick reported that recommendations for website amendments have not been completed. She asked if an upcoming LebNews alert could be published to remind citizens of safety during the darker hours of this season. Mr. Owens mentioned that there is an opportunity to celebrate the new Miracle Mile pedestrian crossing facility as well. Mr. Kelleher revisited a prior suggestion to promote winter safety for biking and Ms. Owens responded that she would connect him to Bike Walk Alliance of New Hampshire and Vital Communities about their existing programs on this topic. Mr. Schnur observed that the bicycle supply is becoming scarce due to their growing popularity, as people increased riding in response to COVID-19.

B. Shared Lane Markings

Ms. Owens provided a brief presentation about shared lane markings also known as sharrows. She explained the definition, related federal standards and acceptance by NHDOT, appropriate placement, benefits, associated signage needs, recommended public outreach/awareness for cyclists and drivers, and the role of sharrows as part of the design toolbox but not to be considered in lieu of safe dedicated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists where there is space and funding to do so. She will post the presentation to the Committee's webpages. She noted that Thetford's community leaders expressed admiration of Lebanon's example and asked staff for assistance to learn more about the approach. Mr. Schnur said he noticed some of the new sharrow striping on School Street and asked if, based on staff's presentation, cyclist safety could be further improved by specifying bike-friendly storm drain grates in the road shoulder/lane/sharrow areas. Mr. Belenz cautioned to research options for grates in order to not create unintended consequences. Mr. Heisted added that he thinks the shared lane markings are nice to see and provide a simple solution. Ms. McCormick appreciated the installation of the new sharrow markings and said that they are a good reminder to share the road; she particularly noticed the new placement closer to the middle of vehicle lanes.

There was a Motion by Mr. Schnur to thank the City and state that the Lebanon Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee wishes to note its appreciation for the sharrow markings recently placed in the middle of streets in Lebanon, and finds them notable and useful for locations where dedicated bike facilities are not currently practical.

Seconded by Ms. McCormick.

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

***The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (6-0).**

C. Development Regulations Review

Ms. Owens provided a check on time remaining for the meeting and suggested that the committee review proposed amendments related to mobility at a future date, as the Planning Board Sub-Committee for Development Regulation Review is still considering proposed amendments. She will share the draft to anyone who requests it.

5) OTHER BUSINESS:

6) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & FOLLOW-UP NEEDS:

- Review with Public Works messaging and signage for sharrows (Ms. Owens)
- 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 Ms. McCormick.

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

***The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (6-0).**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Prepared by Rebecca Owens, Planning Staff