

FINAL

**PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY MARCH 2, 2021
REMOTE MEETING – MICROSOFT TEAMS (CALL-IN ONLY)
4:00 PM**

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah Crysl Akhtar; Gregorio Amaro (Planning Board)

STAFF PRESENT: Rebecca Owens (Associate Planner); James Donison (Director,
Department of Public Works)

1) CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM.

A. 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, noting that Mr. Below joined the meeting at a later time.

One member of the public, Amy (no last name provided) joined the meeting to listen in.

2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: February 2, 2021

Amendments: Ms. McCormick noted a correction on page 1, that Alex Belenz was not present at the meeting. Mr. Schnur recommended a correction on page 1, to change "Mr." to "Ms." In reference to Ms. McCormick.

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

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

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

Minutes approved with amendment.

3) OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

4) STUDY ITEMS:

A. Updates from Other Boards

- Planning Office - Planning Staff

No updates on new projects. Ms. Owens noted that staff is reviewing an inquiry from the owner of the currently closed Element Hotel property for feasibility of converting the building to housing. Ms. McCormick asked what the status of review is for the proposed Dunkins and Ms. Owens confirmed that Planning Board review was continued to its next meeting in March.

- Safe Routes to School - Planning Staff/Police Staff

The Lebanon Middle School crosswalk project design was submitted by Public Works for NHDOT review.

- City Council – Erling Heistad

Mr. Heistad reported that City Council had approved conversion of four Class VI Roads to Class A trails, to retain their accessibility for walking and similar activities.

- Planning Board/CIP – Gregorio Amaro

No updates.

- Police Reports - Alan Schnur

Mr. Schnur reported that the City Manager's accident report for January shows zero collisions. There is still a discrepancy between the City Manager's Report of 6 collisions total for 2020 and the Police database, which indicates 7 collisions. He has not received updated data or clarifications from Lebanon Fire Department. He noted that it is interesting that the NHDOT Rt.120/I89 Exit 18 public meeting slides included details on accident data that he had requested from Lebanon Police but has not been able to obtain to date. Ms. Owens indicated that she would follow up with NHDOT to see if it can share its data source.

- Mascoma River Greenway Coalition - Colin Smith

Chair Smith did not have any updates. Ms. Owens reported that Chet Clem, of the West Lebanon Revitalization Advisory Committee and River Park development, has submitted a grant application, with support from the Recreation Department and Upper Valley Trails Alliance, to the National Park Service. Funding would go toward trail development along the Connecticut River, south of the Wilder Dam. She also noted that some state and national experts held an informative meeting on Monday that shed light on examples of rail with trail that could support renewed efforts to achieve such on the Mascoma River Greenway.

- State of NH Updates - VACANT

Ms. Owens shared that the State of NH has a new Active Transportation Coordinator, Nick Sanders, who is filling the position that Larry Kenniston vacated, and that this change hopefully means that the State's draft ped-bike and rail trail planning efforts will be resumed soon. She also reminded members of the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission's public meeting on the Route 10 corridor on March 3rd.

- Class VI Roads – Colin Smith

No updates [see Council report above].

- Rails to Trails - VACANT

No updates.

- Communications - Ms. McCormick

Ms. McCormick indicated that the February winter safety feature was recently published. She also applauded recent City of Lebanon announcements through the Public Works department that remind property owners to keep sidewalks unobstructed for snow removal equipment, as that also benefits safe passage for pedestrians to be able to stay on sidewalks and not have to use the roads. Upcoming communications will likely include bike rodeo promotion and tunnel opening information.

Other discussion ensued. Mr. Kelleher asks if the Committee has a member vacancy with Mr. Belensz's departure, and if so, how that role can be filled. Ms. McCormick said that it could be useful to solicit participation from someone in West Lebanon. Mr. Heistad agreed that it is appropriate to reach out to potential new members. Ms. Owens indicated that she would ask the

Clerk's Office if there have been any recent inquiries but that often, recruitment is achieved through current member outreach.

B. Department of Public Works Coordination for 2021

Mr. Donison introduced himself as the director of the Department of Public Works ("DPW") and provided a variety of updates based on customary topics reviewed with the Committee each year, in addition to other topics. First, Mr. Donison said that street sweeping will be done differently in 2021, with the City renting equipment to do the work internally rather than through contractors. This will save money, allow sweeping to be conducted earlier in the spring in April or so (a past suggestion of the Committee), and allow sidewalk and roadway clearing to be simultaneous so that one does not negate the other.

DPW is going to complete roadway line painting maintenance in 2021 and has extra quantities ordered. This will be done after sweeping, in May or so, and will re-paint fog lines, crosswalks, and bike symbols. Ms. Owens asked if there will be an opportunity to re-paint and relocate some of the shared lane markings around Colburn Park and Mr. Donison said yes, so staff will coordinate on recommended placement. Mr. Schnur asked if DPW has received any feedback about the shared lane markings (sharrows) from those installed in 2020. Mr. Donison recalled one letter that asked why they were on 12A instead of separate bike lanes, and noted that there was not room on 12A for separate lanes unless the center turn lane were to be removed.

DPW has published bid notices for road maintenance projects in 2021. Most involve rural locations, and one in-town, including fog sealing on side roads off of Seminary Hill Road and Poverty Lane, and shimming on sections of Hardy Hill Road. This will add life to the road surfaces. Re-striping of the roads will not occur until the City has established a policy on default City roadway project lane widths, with DPW and Planning staff are coordinating to draft a recommendation on. Ms. Owens elaborated that the policy and its review for consideration was requested by the City Manager and that it related to recent Committee conversations about providing more accommodations of roadway space in the road shoulder for cyclists, including on Route 10. Right now, without a policy, the lane widths could be 11-12 feet wide by default.

Mr. Heisted commented that anything that could be done to increase space for pedestrians and cyclists on roadways would be good. Ms. Owens commented that Hardy Hill is a popular bike route including for those coming from Hanover. Ms. McCormick and Mr. Heisted asked if there is an opportunity to treat Hardy Hill as Glen Road was recently, with a shared lane marking (and limited shoulder, narrower fog line) on the downhill side and wider shoulder on the uphill side. Ms. Owens added that on the downhill side, it's safer for cyclists to be farther from the road edge so that such a striping design could make sense on Hardy Hill too. Mr. Donison said that DPW can look into it and that they cannot go narrower than 10 feet. Mr. Schnur asked what is being planned for the Hillcrest and Prospect Extension projects. Mr. Donison replied that a 4-foot wide pedestrian space is being designed for the northern side of the paved part of Prospect Extension between the southern gate of the Prospect development and Laplante Road, and that there will be 11-foot travel lanes and a 1-foot wide space beyond the fog line on the south side.

As other updates, Mr. Donison reported that the Mall Tunnel restoration will be complete in May and open in June. Ms. Owens relayed that the City Manager has highlighted some priority projects for staff to progress to feasibility and potentially design, for funding readiness. They include sidewalks for Mechanic Street, to be investigated by DPW, as the NHDOT Ten Year Plan will not accomplish roadway reconstruction there in the near future. Planning staff was asked to obtain a new study of trail and access options in Westboro Yard for the West Lebanon Greenway section. The Old Pine Tree Cemetery Road connection to the Mascoma River Greenway is to be reviewed by Recreation staff for new path route options (not through the

cemetery) and there are some updates on how that might be accomplished but NHDOT approval will be required.

Ms. Owens asked Mr. Donison if DPW has any activities planned for the Northern Rail Trail (NRT) in 2021, as it had been involved with some bridge repairs in 2020, however he was not sure. Mr. Donison noted that the western-most leg of the NRT, adjacent to Spencer Street, could be paved in 2021, as a bid alternative, and that the section alongside the Senior Center would be widened. He asked Committee members if they have ideas on traffic barrier bollards that could be bid in April and then installed on either side of Spencer Street, where the NRT crosses the road. Members and staff exchanged a number of visual examples and ideas, including potential for the bollards to have art or signage overlaid on them, the need for bollards to be a certain height for visibility, and potential for impact-friendly bollards that would bend if hit. Chair Smith said that bollards would be preferable to a low center island, as had been shown in one of the conceptual designs, in terms of safety.

Mr. Schnur asked Mr. Donison if DPW has explored more bike-friendly storm grates for in areas of roadways that cyclists use, including shoulders. Mr. Donison was not aware of any and there was discussion with visual examples exchanged about what such equipment looks like, and whether it could be considered for replacement as the grates come up for review in the asset management software. Mr. Schnur also asked if DPW knew the reason for why 25mph speed limit signage was placed just after the 30mph sign on Route 4. Mr. Donison was not aware; Ms. Owens indicated that Lebanon Police Chief Mello could provide insights.

Chair Smith asked if Mr. Donison had any updates about the Lebanon Middle School crossing and associated new trail between the DPW building and NRT. Mr. Donison said that the crossing design is still under NHDOT review and that DPW is awaiting quotes from contractors; they will mobilize in the spring to install sidewalks, lights and the crosswalk. The rail trail connector path will be approximately 10-12 feet wide and will not have any hardpack surface; originally SAU88 had indicated that they would help with surfacing but now it is DPW's task and they will be applying wood chips. Chair Smith noted that rain events can damage looser surfaces and that the existing Ruth Shepherd Trail that is the end leg tying to the new trail is in need of maintenance.

Mr. Schnur thanked DPW for updating Prospect Street with safer multimodal facilities and more its recent sidewalk snow removal activity. Mr. Heisted said he was pleased to learn of the updates to planned street sweeping.

5) OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Bike Rodeo 2021

Ms. Owens noted that she had shared an email with members with some ideas for bike rodeo programming, including a concept proposed by Ms. McCormick. She also read from an email that the local Rotary Club sent to the City to solicit ideas for community projects that the Rotary could help seed with \$50,000 funding to leverage other partners and funding. Ms. Owens mentioned that one idea is for a bike "traffic garden". Ms. McCormick referred to a similar popular loop track in Norwich and asked if improvements to the rehabilitated Tunnel entrance could be considered. Chair Smith said that near the tunnel, he was aware of Greenway signs that are being designed by Hypertherm. Mr. Below mentioned that he heard of some discussion between Fran Hanchett and Dick Mackay about using funding to historical information displays along the Northern Rail Trail in honor of its 25th anniversary in 2021. Ms. Owens said that that could be informed in part by the Heritage Commission's 2019 Mills of Lebanon study. Chair Smith said that there were some similar historical markers on trails in Hanover. Mr. Kelleher requested placement of Rotary funding ideas on the Committee's April agenda for detailed

discussion and Ms. Owens asked if members could share ideas with her prior to that meeting, for consolidation. She will contact the Rotary Club in the meantime to determine their timeline.

B. City and NHDOT Projects

No discussion based on limited meeting time remaining.

C. Bike Friendly Community

No discussion based on limited meeting time remaining.

Ms. Owens shared that in addition to Mr. Kelleher and Ms. McCormick, there is now a third volunteer, Sarah Riley, for the July UV E-Bike Lending Library in Lebanon. She plans to ask LEAC, at its March meeting, for volunteers.

Ms. McCormick and Chair Smith reported that they had received Welcoming Lebanon training emails from the City but that the messages were in their junk boxes so that they had failed to see them. Ms. Owens said that she would re-send this information to members.

6) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & FOLLOW-UP NEEDS:

- Share Rotary grant project ideas (all)
- Share bollard and bike friendly storm grate ideas with DPW (all)
- LebNews – determine Spring 2021 communications
- Special Assessment District project update (Ms. Owens)
- Fill open Ped-Bike regular member position (all)
- Review of Bike Friendly Community designation, due in 2021 (working group)
- Get clarifications on LFD 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 Ms. McCormick to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Kelleher.

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

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

The meeting was adjourned at 5:32 PM.

Prepared by Rebecca Owens, Planning Staff