



TOWN OF NEW LONDON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

375 MAIN STREET • NEW LONDON, NH 03257 • NEWLONDON.NH.GOV

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

July 9, 2024

Whipple Memorial Town Hall

5:00 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Russ Moore, Chair, Emily Campbell, Vice-Chair, Ed Condict, Donald Eberly, Judith Ferreira, Woody Canaday, Grant Smith, Erica Brown

ALSO PRESENT: Bebe Hammond Casey, Selectman, Bob Bowers, New London resident

Chair Russ Moore called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.

IT WAS MOVED by Woody Canaday AND SECONDED by Emily Campbell, to accept Minutes from Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Meeting 5-9-24 THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

Administrative Points of Clarification:

Russ reviewed the Committee Meeting Schedule (sent via email to members prior to meeting). Meetings will be held beginning 9-24-2024 on the third Thursday of each month with the exception of August and December when no meetings will be held. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held at Whipple Memorial Town Hall at 5pm.

Minutes for the Committee will be taken by Committee members in alphabetical order (member's last name). These minutes will be posted on the Town of New London's website.

Chair will facilitate Committee discussions. In absence of Chair, the Vice-Chair will act in the Chair's capacity.

Chair Update:

Russ is working with Kim Hallquist, Town Administrator, on the website for the Committee. He hopes to have a list of resources on safety. Draft of these resources will be shared with Committee members before being posted.

At our first meeting, Ed Condict, had requested a digital GIS inventory of New London sidewalks. While this does not currently exist, Adam Ricker, NL Town Planner, has made a request of the Lake Sunapee upper Valley Regional Planning Council to prepare this map.

Committee member, Grant Smith, requested that offroad trails be added to our agenda in terms of scope moving forward. To this end, he will invite the "Pleasant Lake Peddlers," to our September meeting. We look forward to hearing from this group as well as a few other interested stakeholders on this topic.

NL Hospital Days will take place on August 3, 2024. The Bike Walk Coalition will have a contingent at the Parade. All Committee members are invited to participate.

Thank you to Bob Harrington for the collaborative work he has done along with the Bike Walk Coalition to increase safety for biking and walking in town. (Specifically noting the bike racks in public locations).

Update from Bob Harrington, Public Works Director:

Water Main Project Update: The project is ahead of schedule. The temporary water main went up quickly. Upon completion of the project - the Town will let sidewalks sit for one calendar year before addressing any issues that arise as these must be addressed by the install team.

Points of clarification from Bob:

- The Town will not go in and repair small bits and pieces of the project. Any laterals hooking into property owners (sprinkler systems for example) - must be addressed by the installer.
- The Town will not begin to address any sidewalk improvements until extensive testing of the line has been completed (over the course of the next 18 months) to ensure the work is done in such a manner that there are no issues down the line.

Update from 5-5-2024 Conversation between Russ Moore, Bob Harrington and Sam Clarke, Dept. of Public Works:

The need for a bicycle and pedestrian master plan that is a further iteration of our overall Town Master Plan should be completed. This plan should incorporate community input and is estimated to be a 3-4 year effort.

Committee Discussion:

Question from Chair Russ Moore: "Given the central feature of the town being Main St. and knowledge that we cannot tackle anything short term - we've looked at several other segments that would give the public some confidence that we in fact are squarely tackling the issue of improving safety on a more short term basis and also a demonstration project of how motor vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists can coexist on a roadway. We spoke about specific segments (some incorporated into Downtown Business Bike Walk Loop). The concept has been reviewed and approved by Town Committees including the Board of Selectmen (no exact route or funding). We will be sure to include the mapping of the Loop in our Committee website resources.

One of the segments discussed was the Rotary to Little Sunapee Rd. on Country Rd. that goes by Hilltop. A segment that has quite a bit of bike/walk traffic - physical infrastructure may be conducive to widening the road or making other accommodations for people. The rationale here is to communicate to the public that we are being proactive in the short term in terms of thinking through the hazards. Question? Does Public Works have the budget for making modifications to that segment and for maintaining what would be required - is this feasible?

Reply from Bob Harrington: "Coming out of the operating budget, no. As far as planning for, that is definitely something that can happen. With respect to maintenance, the issue we have now is we are fairly taxed in terms of maintaining sidewalks. We have one machine that has a dump body on the back which gives us the opportunity for a long distance for treating sidewalks, however the questions are how would we treat them and how long would it take? We had several complaints from Elkins that we are not down

there as well - usually this takes us 3 days. The first step would be the budget process, maybe taxing at this point - but not impossible - Sam will have to get some numbers together.

Understanding that Sam will be charged with figuring out next steps and we need to be aware of capacity questions.

Additional questions and discussion from Committee Members regarding budget and price to install per square foot of linear sidewalk. There is no exact number, it is heavily weather dependent based on the number of times Public Works has to be out and often redo the 6 miles of current sidewalks in Town. Long term it could look like adding another team member and another machine (approximately \$250,000) to the Public Works department to increase capacity.

Committee member, Grant Smith, suggested labeling sidewalks as “seasonal” i.e. not maintained in the winter months. There is potential here to label these as “bike paths,” however, the Committee/Town would need to look into liability issues.

A variety of other Town intersections and sidewalk locations with current upgrade needs were mentioned by the Committee. Mr. Harrington noted that the Committee would need Select Board approval to address these - and made note that the Capital Reserve Fund is to be used for addressing existing sidewalk upgrades, not adding new sidewalks.

Bebe Hammond Casey stated that of the \$250,000 in the Capital Reserve Fund, \$120,000 was voted on/expended almost four years ago. Will need to look into the remaining \$130,000 and confirm if it has been expended/confirm as well as use requirements.

Donald Eberly thanked Bob for his time today and for all his hard work and commitment to the Town over the course of his career.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Discussion Guide:

The plan, shared with the Committee via email prior to the meeting, is in draft form. Chair Russ Moore noted that the Guide is an attempt to lay out a comprehensive overview of where we might head, mentioning that Lebanon and Hanover, NH both have detailed Bicycle/Pedestrian master plans that we can use for guidance.

The plan should include a timeline and benchmarks, specific action steps and financial goals in terms of funding. It will involve a review by the Town and other entities.

Question from Grant Smith, “Is this Committee going to serve as an advisory or action Committee? If we (the Committee) are going to provide the steps forward as to how the Master Plan will be executed, that puts us into the action category - which he is happy to be in.”

The Committee asked for the current status of the Master Plan - Chair Russ Moore explained that in his role as a representative of the Bike Walk Coalition - one of the Plan’s first action steps was the formation of this Committee. Bebe Hammond Casey played a very important role in suggesting we form this Committee and was extremely supportive. The Master Plan Discussion Guide encouraged the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen to develop the formal document that was a further iteration of the Master Plan. At this juncture, the Planning Board and Board of Selectmen are looking to this Committee for the development of a Master Plan.

As a follow-up, Bebe stated that her recommendation would be that this Committee work in conjunction with the Planning Board (who owns the Master Plan) to present our portion.

Suggestion from Vice-Chair Emily Campbell to speak to other towns who have completed this process for advice. Chair Russ Moore also mentioned the need to involve engineers and those with specific expertise in these areas to join us. Chair Russ Moore proposed “working groups” of Committee members to focus on specific agenda items - this may also include adding other interested community members to support these groups.

On this topic, private state funding resources was noted by Chair Russ as a labor intensive opportunity for the Committee. From Federal Grants to Planning Grants ranging from \$50,000-\$2M. Bebe reminded the Committee that the Housing Commission recently obtained a grant from the State for \$102,000, encouraged Chair Russ Moore to reach out to their Chair, Peter Nichols for guidance in this area.

Public Comment:

Bob Bowers, Town of New London resident expressed concern about the broad scope of the Committee and the need for manageable progress. He specifically highlighted the poor condition of sidewalks on the north side of Main Street and urged the committee to prioritize addressing them. Mr. Bowers suggested forming a working group to focus on sidewalks and secure funding for repairs and the needs for a phased approach to sidewalk repairs.

He noted that the Selectmen and Budget Committee have a Capital Plan that divided this project into three pieces with each piece allocating an estimated \$165k. He maintains it is very important for this Committee to secure funding this year to be able to tackle work beginning in 2025.

IT WAS MOVED (Russ Moore) AND SECONDED (Ed Condict) to adjourn. THE MOTION WAS APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

The meeting adjourned at 6:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Erica Brown
Committee Member

Note: RSA 91-A:2, II provides that “*Minutes of all such meetings, including nonpublic sessions, shall include the names of members, persons appearing before the public bodies, and a brief description of the subject matter discussed and final decisions.*” A video of the entire meeting may be available for viewing on the town website, NewLondon.NH.gov, if more than the brief description contained in these meeting minutes is desired.