

Meeting Minutes
Bike and Pedestrian Paths Committee Meeting
September 26, 2016

Staff Room
Shelburne Municipal Center

Members Attending: Marc Gamble, Joplin James, Wendy Saville, Susan Dunning
Others Attending: Dean Pierce (Staff)

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Chair Marc Gamble.

Approval of Agenda

Joplin James moved approval of the draft agenda. Marc Gamble suggested addition of two items, one pertaining to Susan Dunning's letter regarding Bay Road and the other pertaining to Nate Brangan's Eagle Scout project. Other members concurred with the addition of the items. The agenda was approved as revised.

Review of Bike-Ped Map

Marc Gamble identified what he sees as the three options the committee has to deal with the review of the bike-ped map. One option is to conduct a series of public meetings on the original map and winnow the list of projects shown as a result of the meetings. Another option is to complete an evaluation exercise (using a matrix Marc prepared and distributed previously) to adjust the map before conducting the series of public meetings. Setting the map aside and focusing committee time and energy on other other matters (e.g., zoning bylaw changes in support of bike and pedestrian facilities) is a third option. Marc offered a rationale for pursuing the third option, noting that adding new maps to the Comprehensive Plan is not the only way to obtain grants to help construct projects.

Susan Dunning said she understood this focus of the meeting was to be the evaluation of projects shown on the map and weighing of factors such as whether or not the projects involve private land. Marc Gamble indicated that was his idea initially. But, now he is feeling there are options to be considered. Joplin James offered his support for the third option, adding that deciding to suspend work on the map is not the same thing as throwing it out. Marc added later that the committee could continue to use the map internally.

Marc also noted that there is more than one way to demonstrate community support for projects, including list the project in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Later, Dean Pierce added that having relevant text included in the Comprehensive Plan can be as important as having projects identified on a map in the Plan. The group then briefly reviewed the contents of the CIP.

Wendy Saville expressed some concern that a decision to suspend work on the map might be viewed by some map critics as a sign the map was invalid or misguided. But in her view that is not at all the case. Wendy continued and said she would not mind making more effort to change the map but she can also support pausing work on it to allow the group to focus on other topics. For example, she wants to see the Boulder Hill connector to Pierson Drive completed. Marc Gamble observed that there are some positive trends, including the attention being given to Bay Road.

Susan Dunning recognized the validity of the third option but added there are others on the committee

but not in attendance who are more invested in the map than she is. She suggested that the group here from those individuals (especially Rocco Antinozzi and Chris Trapeni, as long term members of the committee) before a final decision is made. Marc concurred. Susan also expressed interest in the possibility of making changes to the text in the Comprehensive Plan as a way to advance projects. She added she is comfortable with the updated map being used as an internal document.

Marc concluded the discussion by saying the topic would be taken up again at the next meeting. He also clarified it is his priority that over time the committee will find a way to move the non controversial projects shown on the updated map to the CIP.

Comments on CIP

Recognizing that the Town manager had issued an email earlier in the day seeking comments on the draft CIP the committee spent a few minutes discussing the document. Committee members first recognized that not all of the projects listed in the public works section of the document are projects promoted by the BPPC; as Dean Pierce explained, some have origins in plans, studies, etc. The Committee also noted that some of the projects that have been included in past CIPs are not longer listed but at the present time this does not appear to be a problem. By informal vote the committee voted to indicate its support for the draft CIP.

Letter prepared by Susan Dunning

The group discussed the letter prepared by Susan Dunning regarding the improvement of Bay Road. Susan described the aims of the letter, which has the support of all the members in attendance and some not in attendance. Marc Gamble suggested that instead of sending it to Sai Sarapelli of the CCRPC it should be directed to the Selectboard members and to Joe Colangelo. The possibility of posting the letter on Front Porch Forum was mentioned but then determined to be ill advised. Susan also asked for input regarding whether the letter should be sent by mail or via email. Email was deemed acceptable.

In terms of specific comments/edits, Wendy Saville suggested removing the word “informal” from the phrase “informal survey.” Others suggested that she incorporate some simple statistics (e.g., frequencies) as collected in the survey. Susan agreed to modify the text to refer to her neighborhood survey and to incorporate high level statistics. But she strongly prefers not to mention surveys carried out by others. The group also discussed when the letter should be issued. It was noted that Sai Sarapelli's report is expected on October 14 and action by the Selectboard could come as soon as October 25th. Release of the letter should be timed accordingly.

Nate Brangan Eagle Scout projects

The group briefly discussed Boy Scout Nate Brangan's request for input on possible Eagle Scott projects. One possibility—which received lukewarm support—is a bridge in the Laplatte nature park along a former trail alignment that might be reestablished. Another idea, which generated more interest and support, is to have Nate help establish the Boulder Hill-Pierson Drive connector.

Other Business

The group briefly discussed how it might participate in the Selectboard meeting the following evening, September 27, when construction of the Boulder Hill-Pierson Drive connector is considered. Marc Gamble indicated he plans to say little unless he is called upon to speak. He noted that if he does speak he will mention how the project advances the Town's goals for increased connectivity.

The group also briefly discussed the connector path between John Street and Littlefield and ways it might be improved. The topic will be discussed more fully at a future meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.