

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Tuesday, April 24, 2018, 6:30 p.m.
Old Town Hall, 32 Derby Square

Members Present: Dan Shuman (Chair), Jayne O’Leary, Joseph O’Neill, Eric Papetti,
Michael Williamson, Ray Swartz
Members Absent: Kylie Sullivan, Richard Frank, Michael Jaros
Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

O’Neill calls the meeting to order, as Shuman arrives later.

Bicycle Master Plan Update

Devine states that he had distributed to the Committee Toole Design Group’s Task 1 Report summarizing outreach and input. Papetti asks if more will be done to document existing conditions. Devine replies that the upcoming Task 2 Report will more directly address existing conditions. Papetti states that the existing conditions shown in the Task 1 Report needs to be cleaned up. O’Neill asks who this report will go to and Devine states that it will go to the Master Plan Steering Committee. Papetti notes that the report does not include feedback from Public Works. Devine says Matt Smith is still working to schedule interviews with Police and DPW.

Devine reports that he thinks the outreach was successful. The City worked to supplement Toole’s outreach by doing stakeholder interviews and Toole did a great job synthesizing all the input.

Salem Bike Share Program Update

Devine says that the City is holding off doing any big outreach push for the off-station docking pilot, but the City has decided to first give the pilot time for any problems to be worked out. However, the pilot is going smoothly and up to one third of rides have started or ended off-station. Devine says it is hard to compare ridership year over year, since the system has expanded over that period. However, rides are now shorter, perhaps because people don’t have to go all the way to a dock. If the off-station pilot continues to work, the feature will remain. Devine thinks that this system is superior to a fully dockless system, like Ant Bike in Swampscott that Salem is watching closely. The Committee discusses the details of how the off-station feature is managed.

Williamson suggested having bike share information at the train station and Salem Ferry. Papetti will provide a contact to for the MBTA to Devine.

Bike Parking Policy Strategy Discussion

Devine states that Papetti suggested that the Committee consider developing bike parking requirements for new development before the Planning Board, since this is not part of Toole’s

master plan scope. Papetti says he would like to have this initial discussion about what can be done, whether members or staff lead it, and what kind of final product results. Williamson thinks members could come up with ideas. Shuman states that as a retailer he wants to avoid any requirement, but thinks suggested guidelines could be useful. Williamson says that in downtown locations it may often be appropriate for the City to provide the bike storage. Papetti states that bike parking would be a minimal cost compared to the cost of constructing parking in a new development. Devine remarks that he has heard from developers through the master plan outreach that there is interest in seeing the City provide incentives for projects to include alternative transportation amenities, such as a density bonus. Swartz notes that there is potential for a smaller number of self-driving cars to replace the high number of private vehicles on the streets, which will open up road space for bikes and other uses.

The Committee agrees to bring forward ideas for a continued discussion at the next meeting.

Discussion of Bikes on Essex St. Pedestrian Mall

Papetti says the Traffic & Parking Commission has been looking at the Pedestrian Mall in general, including this matter. It is not known whether the Commission will make a recommendation to change the prohibition on bikes, as it is split between those supporting repeal and others who would prefer a trial period of allowing bikes. Papetti states that Massachusetts General Law Ch. 85 Sec. 11B requires bike access on all public ways, excluding only limited-access highways. Williamson acknowledges the conflict between bikes and pedestrians and favors a trial period. Shuman asserts that the street is not safe for bikes traveling at high speed. The Committee discusses an earlier planning initiative that explored possibilities for opening up the street to vehicles for some or all times of the year.

Shuman motions and Williamson seconds to recommend to the Traffic & Parking Commission that the City explore allowing bicycles on the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall and all vote in favor.

Miscellaneous Updates

Shuman announces that he has been in touch with the Mayor about the idea of a pump track and that she is supportive. He has also consulted with Parks & Recreation Director Patricia O'Brien. One potential location may be in space freed up if Camp Naumkeag and Pioneer Village swap locations. Palmer Cove Park, McCabe Park, and Fort Lee are potential locations, as well as upper Gallows Hill Park.

Devine distributes a preliminary design identifying routes and crossings for the multiuse path from Collins Cove through the City's Szetela Lane property and Beattie Park to the power plant and the waterfront. Members make the following comments:

- The Committee strongly supports the project and does not want any of their comments to slow its implementation.
- An asphalt surface is preferred.
- The path should be at minimum 10' wide.
- Physical improvements at crosswalks, beyond flashing beacons, should be considered, including but not limited to bump outs and speed tables.

- City should consider moving Beattie Park side of Fort Ave. crosswalk east to make a straighter connection between the two path sections.
- Access to the waterside of Settler's Way should be maintained.

Devine reports that City staff are considering a project to make a 10' wide multiuse path out of the sidewalk in front of the Bell at Salem Station Apartments on Bridge Street. There would still be a narrow chock point in the approach to the entrance to the train station.

The City, Devine states, has submitted a very conceptual design to MassDOT to further the Boston Street redesign project. Devine shows said plan to the Committee. Although separated bike lanes are shown on the plan, the high number of conflicts with the many driveways is acknowledged. Ray Swartz remains on deck to serve as the Committee's representative when a working group is formed for this project.

No update is available currently on spring street restriping, reports Devine. For the state's project to add striped bike lanes downtown, a contract has been awarded but no notice to proceed has been issued.

Papetti explains that Planning Board meeting minutes show that the Osborne Hills Subdivision Trails have been discussed and some are concerned that they are hard to locate. Papetti himself said he felt like he was trespassing when walking the trails.

Williamson mentions Peabody's study to consider trolley service from Salem to Peabody.

O'Leary announces that Viking Warrior Day is Thursday, May 3rd, 10-1, starting at the Salem State Central Campus Zagster hub.

Devine announces the upcoming MAPC trail and path charette happening May 15 at the new City Hall Annex.

A member of the public introduces himself and notes that the Zagster bike share could be more tourist-friendly than it currently is. He suggests a simpler guest option that would be easier for a one-time use. He also suggests having stations at parking garages or major parking lots.

Discussion and Vote for Election of Officers

Shuman motions and Williamson seconds to elect O'Neill as chair and all vote in favor.

Meeting Minutes: March 13, 2016 and March 20, 2018

Williamson motions and Papetti seconds to approve the March 13, 2016 minutes, and all vote in favor.

Williamson motions and Shuman seconds to approve the March 20, 2018 minutes with edits, and all vote in favor.

Adjourn

Papetti motions and Williamson seconds to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on July 17, 2018.