

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Tuesday, April 30, 2019 6:30 p.m.
Old Town Hall, 12 Derby Square

Members Present: Joe O'Neil (Chair), Eric Papetti, Michael Williamson, Jayne O'Leary,
Richard Frank, Michael Jaros, Ray Swartz, Josh Gillis
Members Absent: Kylie Sullivan
Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

O'Neil calls the meeting to order.

Bike Share 2019 Launch Update

Devine reports that the bike share system is fully launched. The month of April is turning out to have the highest ridership of all months, beating the previous peak in September 2018. Swartz asks what this can be attributed to. Devine believes it is a result of additional bikes and awareness of the system, as well as better weather earlier in the month. Papetti asks for specific ridership numbers. Devine responds that it has between 1300 and 1400 for the month, about 48 rides per day. Papetti asks if there are more bike racks available to fill in bike parking gaps. Devine says that the City has begun installing racks based on the list the Bike Committee helped develop. However, more racks are needed to fill the City's need for bike parking and to serve riders of the bike share system.

Devine adds that the North Shore TMA is going to provide free Zagster memberships to City of Salem employees. Devine expects maybe 100 employees to take advantage of this.

Bike Master Plan Implementation Update

Devine states that Toole Design Group is under contract for preliminary design and cost estimating for up to eight Bike Plan recommendations. They plan to do all their field work in one day and won't start that until we get through coordinating some additional work in preparation for an upcoming pop up bike lane project.

Papetti asks Devine to read through the list of projects they are working on. The neighborhood asked that Toole not do the West Ave. neighborhood greenway, but add a second segment to the Mill Street project. Papetti asks what the timeline is for this work, and Devine says the timing previously was driven by the capital budget process. They also could have fast tracked a project for a MassTrails grant application, but the City chose the Szetela Lane path project for that. Papetti advocates for increasing the bike infrastructure annual design funding from the current \$25,000 to hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Discussion of Potential Inclusive Cycling Product Demonstration

Devine explains that a vender had been in touch with the Mayor about their product and would like to provide a demonstration in Salem. Devine asks whether the Committee would be interested in hosting this event. The Committee expresses interest in doing so and Devine says he will follow up. The Committee discusses the potential market for adaptive bikes among people with varied disabilities and needs and how a public program would be operated.

Discussion of Bicycle Benefits Program

Devine explains that Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts has suggested the City find ways to engage the local business community with biking. Bicycle Benefits is an existing program where businesses offer a discount or reward to customers who show a member sticker on their bike. Devine asks whether the Committee would be interested in helping with outreach to businesses. The group expresses interest in participating.

Update on Potential E-Scooter Pilot Program

Document referenced: “Zagster’s additional micro-mobility options for Salem, MA”. Undated.

The Committee is supportive of the pilot because it provides an additional micromobility option in conjunction with Salem’s successful bike share program. Micromobility has the potential to enhance mobility within Salem without adding congestion or damaging the environment.

The Committee made the following additional comments:

- In order to ensure that scooters are available to all of Salem’s ethnically and economically diverse residents, strong consideration should be given to equity when placing scooters throughout the city. In particular, Zagster should ensure that scooters are accessible to the Point neighborhood as well as Salem Housing Authority properties.
- The initial pilot should limit scooters to operate only within Salem’s boundaries in order to avoid conflict with neighboring municipalities that have yet to establish a policy for scooters.
- Although some sidewalk scooter riding is inevitable, the Committee expects that the condition of the City’s sidewalks will discourage this.
- While the number of proposed scooters may seem high, it is but a tiny fraction of the number of cars driven and parked daily in Salem.
- The introduction of an e-scooter program will put a spotlight on the City’s need for improved roadway signage and striping.

Miscellaneous Updates

Devine follows up on the Committee’s interest in making their terms staggered rather than concurrent. Devine consulted with the Assistant City Solicitor and thinks the best solution is that when members are up again for reappointment, they should be given one-, two-, and three-year terms, rather than having the Council take an additional step now to change the terms.

Devine reiterates that members should be switching over to City of Salem email addresses and not using their personal email addresses for City business.

Papetti notes that International Parking Day is coming up in September, which is when people take over parking spaces for parklets. He also hopes to see the Committee do things in May to celebrate bike month. Devine notes that the TMA's free Zagster membership for City of Salem employees is a Bike Month initiative. In addition, a Planning Department employee is hosting an employee bike ride.

Swartz asks about the Canal Street path. Papetti says once MassDOT issues its notice to proceed, the project will take 18 months. Swartz also asks about the Essex Street project (North to Washington Street). Devine says no bids were received and the City is contacting contractors to investigate why they did not bid.

Papetti asks what happens when the Committee provides project comments. Devine says he gives them to David Knowlton and David Kucharsky. The Committee discusses steps that could be taken to better track the results of their comments, such as reviewing written comments before Devine provides them to David Knowlton and having Devine work to obtain a response. Devine thinks this is achievable and commits to working to be sure it happens.

O'Neil expresses his appreciation of the termination of the parking in the bike lanes on Harmony Grove Road.

Meeting Minutes—December 18, 2018; January 16, 2019

Williamson motions and Frank seconds to approve the 12/18/19 minutes and all vote in favor.

Williamson motions and Frank seconds to approve the 1/16/19 minutes and all vote in favor.

Adjourn

Papetti motions and Jaros seconds to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on September 17, 2019