

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Tuesday, July 16, 2019 6:30 p.m.

City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street
First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Eric Papetti (Chair), Joe O'Neil, Michael Williamson, Michael Jaros, Ray Swartz

Members Absent: Kylie Sullivan, Jayne O'Leary, Josh Gillis

Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

Papetti calls the meeting to order.

Papetti opened the meeting to public comment

Meg Riccardi of the Northfields Neighborhood Association states that she has questions and concerns about the North Street pop-up bike lane. The Committee agrees to discuss the matter under a later agenda item.

Micromobility Update

Bike share:

Devine provides a ridership update on the bike share. The system recently surpassed 16,000 rides. June year over year has had an 83% increase in ridership. Rides per bike have increased 14%. There are over 3,000 members, which includes one-time riders. There are 700 Salem State members and only 282 annual memberships outside Salem State. This includes 18 City staff who took advantage of the free membership for municipal employees offered in May.

Papetti asks for daily ridership numbers. Devine reports that it is 52 per day in this June and 28 the previous June. July is turning out to have even higher overall ridership. Williamson is interested in seeing details about activity per station. O'Neil would like to know how many riders start and end off station. Papetti is interested in seeing a compilation of complaints for bikes and scooters. The Committee discusses when would be optimal to receive a deeper data presentation. Devine suggests that after August may be ideal.

Shared electric scooters:

Devine states that there will be a very soft launch this weekend. Zagster will host an event at the new park at 289 Derby Street on Thursday and Friday to help people sign up and provide a safety demonstration. Zagster will start with 20 scooters and gradually ramp up 250. There will be up to

50 deployment and priority parking zones throughout the City. Thirty locations in the most visible spots will have ground decals. The city boundary will be geofenced to stop the motor when leaving the city. Other no-go zones include roads where the speed limit exceeds 35 MPH, with the exception of Loring Ave. Pedestrian only areas such as Salem Common, the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall, and Derby Square will also be no-go zones. A portion of Derby Street will be a no-go zone to prevent wrong-way traffic. Papetti expresses concern about directing scooters onto Essex Street in that area with its poor pavement. He also has concern about how imprecise geofencing is in other cities. Devine agrees to revisit the matter with the City's transportation staff.

Bike Master Plan Implementation Update

Riccardi notes that a number of residents on North Street are concerned about the temporary loss of parking and she wants to learn more about what this will lead to for permanent infrastructure. Devine states that this is a pilot program that will include data collection on parking utilization and other metrics. This will inform the City as it looks at options for permanent bike infrastructure. The Bike Master Plan recommends protected bike lanes on Lafayette Street that preserve most of the existing parking. Options for North Street include conventional bike lanes (which do not eliminate parking) or some consolidation of parking to one side of the street to gain space to add bike lanes with a buffer and physical barrier, such as flexposts.

Another member of the public states that there are usually few enough pedestrians on North Street sidewalks that it is easy to bike on them.

Devine states that there will be a more robust process before implementing anything permanent on North Street, including some parking analysis and evaluation of multiple options.

Papetti asks for an update on Toole Design Group's preliminary designs for Bike Plan implementation projects. Devine states that the Committee's comments on Fort Ave. have resonated, such as the long-term goal for a fully separated path. Another key comment was having the shorter-term on-street path continue along Derby Street between Memorial Dr. and Webb Street. But overall, the City is working with Toole to identify immediate next steps for the preliminary designs. This may include finding small amounts of funding to conduct necessary further analysis. The City is still waiting for the preliminary design for Washington Street from Canal Street to Bridge Street. The other preliminary designs will be finalized to incorporate the Committee and City comments and budget estimates.

Papetti reminds Devine that all documents referenced should be listed in the minutes per open meeting law, and Devine agrees.

Update on Adaptive Bike Demonstration

Devine reports that a vender, Spinov8, will be coming to an open house to demonstrate their bikes on August 5 in the afternoon at the Community Life Center. He will share final specific details shortly. He presented today at the Disabilities Commission and gained some valuable feedback.

O'Neil asks what the goal is. Devine says he doesn't know the best way to make these bikes available. Zagster has reduced its adaptive options to an adult tricycle with a premium cost and they recommend having local people manage it. It would have to always be returned to a home dock. So besides maintenance, there isn't much value in providing the bikes through Zagster. Perhaps the City will operate a program directly. Overall, there is more research to do. One possibility is to highlight it as something the City wants when issuing its next Bike Share request for proposals. Members discuss possibilities for adaptive bike programs.

Update on of Bicycle Benefits Program Rollout

Members discuss continued outreach to local business owners. Devine reiterates that these conversations are casual with nothing to lose, since no matter what, a connection between the advocacy and business community will be initiated even if they are not interested in this program.

Discussion of Committee Vacancy

Devine announces that Richard Frank has left the Committee due to ongoing schedule conflicts. A candidate to fill the vacancy has a schedule conflict, too. So Devine suggests that the group reconsider their meeting schedule.

Papetti asks how many people can be on the Commission. Devine states that the City Council action establishing the Committee allows for up to 11. Papetti thinks this could be an opportunity to bring in more voices and increase diversity on the Committee. Devine suggests that the Committee work to recruit some candidates when the City posts the vacancy.

Miscellaneous Project Updates

Devine updates the Committee on the pop up-bike lanes coming to North and Lafayette Streets. Volunteers could help with deployment and removal of barriers each weekend and to collect data one weekend before the pilot starts and one weekend during it.

Members had been asking for an update on citywide repaving and restriping. The Roadway Project Manager reported to Devine that a list had been circulated among City staff. It is likely that paving will start this year at the Fort Ave. side of the City. Devine also reports that he and Papetti had been talking about Harmony Grove Road, which is slated for repaving and restriping. The Bike Plan suggests upgrading the bike infrastructure at this location, but it depends on a path connection to Harmony Grove Road as part of the Salem Oil & Grease redevelopment. Papetti suggests that the City take a hard look at whether this is the right time to include the improved bike facility. Devine will consult with his City colleagues on the matter while looking at the potential to partner with the Solomon Foundation on a study for a trail connection at this location.

MassDOT has selected a contractor for the Phase II Canal Street path and a pre-construction meeting has been scheduled, reports Devine.

Devine states that there is not a set date for the upcoming downtown bike lane striping. This also needs to be coordinated with the Norman and Chestnut Street roundabout and District Court project.

Papetti asks for an update on the Lafayette St./Loring Ave./and West Ave. intersection painting. Devine will obtain an update.

Williamson raises the possibility of making better connections to the Footprint Power site. Williamson will share a plan with Devine depicting what he envisions.

Swartz asks for the status of the Essex Street project between North and Washington Streets. Devine remarks that it was put back out to bid and received only one very high bid. Papetti says he thinks the plan is to put it back out to bid at a time more advantageous for bidding.

Jaros asks about the Bridge Street MassWorks project. Papetti reports that the project is being revised to fill less flood zone, but he doesn't know when this design process will be reinitiated.

Adjourn

Williamson motions to adjourn at 8:20pm, O'Neil seconds, and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on November 6, 2019.