

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 | 6:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting

Members Present: John Wathne (Chair), Michael Williamson, Connor Ryan, Matt Caruso, Eric Papetti, Alex Maranto, Michael Jaros, Colleen Downie

Members Absent: Jayne O’Leary, Josh Gillis

Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

Wathne called the meeting to order. Devine describes the remote meeting format and procedure for providing public comment.

Public Comment

Wathne opens the meeting to public comment and there are none.

Propose Federal Street Traffic Calming & Bike Lanes

Document reviewed: Federal St from North St to Boston (0.55 mi), undated annotated graphic.

The Committee takes this agenda item out of order because there are multiple members of the public present wishing to comment on it.

Devine presents the proposal. In response to a neighborhood traffic calming request, the City’s consultant proposed speed cushions and contraflow bike lane on the segment of Federal Street between North and Boston Streets. The neighborhood has not seen this proposal yet, so this is an opportunity to hear the Committee’s initial thoughts and hear any comments from members of the public in attendance. Staff will then present the concept to the Traffic & Parking Commission and the neighborhood.

Jaros says he already rides contraflow on Federal Street because it is safer than Essex Street. Williamson agrees that it is a better route than Essex Street where he currently rides. Papetti notes that Boston and Cambridge implement contraflow lanes with similar dimensions. He finds this proposal encouraging and would like to see it proven in a location and implemented in other neighborhoods too.

Wathne opens the discussion up for public comment.

Lori Hart of 114 Federal Street remarks that there is a blind spot for bikes at Monroe and Federal Streets and no one stops at the Beckford and Federal Streets stop sign. She would like to be able to bike safely and hopes there could be ways to configure a bike lane to resolve the aforementioned issues.

Constance Arlander of 91 Federal Street raised a concern about delivery trucks that already park on the side of the street where parking is prohibited.

Williamson motions and Ryan seconds to support the City's further evaluation and neighborhood outreach for the proposal and all vote in favor.

Staff Update

Devine provides the following updates:

- The proposed redevelopment of Crescent Lot at the MBTA train station is expected to go to the Planning Board and Redevelopment Authority in late spring or summer.
- The NSCDC's redevelopment at the corner of Lafayette and Derby Streets is going through engineering review related to the culvert underneath. It has begun its Planning Board review. The SRA will consider the proposed building demolition and referral to the Design Review Board at its April 13 meeting.
- The City is looking at additional tweaks to the North Street project design in response to comments on parking. The protected bike lanes will remain. The City is gearing up for the pilot at Liberty Hill Ave.
- A public listening session for the Shetland Park redevelopment is scheduled for April 12. The project webpage is publicinput.com/shetlandpark
- A small public art project is in the works that may include installations at multiuse paths. It is called Remembrance of Climate Futures and includes small signs noting climate resiliency accomplishments and aspirations.

Bluebikes Bikeshare Program Data & Promotion

Document presented: Salem Bluebikes Data through 4/5/2022.

Devine presents the bike share data fore March. Ridership is rising from its winter lows. The Ferry and Willows stations are out of their winter hibernation and an eighth station was added in March. The City submitted a Boston MPO Community Connections grant application to add three additional stations no sooner than the fall. The administration supports more expansion sooner than that and although funding isn't confirmed, staff are identifying additional station locations and coordinating with partners at Salem State and Blue Cross Blue Shield. Caruso advocates for a station at Vinnin Square.

Spring Bike Events

Multiple promotion efforts have proceeded. The Park & Recreation Department is leading the Pedal Through Salem Scavenger Hunt that will utilize some Bluebikes day passes that Blue Cross provided to the City. Salem State University held a bike fair last month. City of Salem employees are entitled to a half-price Bluebikes annual membership and Devine is promoting it internally. And Devine has Bluebikes brochures for any Committee members wishing to distribute them.

Prioritization of Small Projects

Document Reviewed: Small Projects Prioritization shared spreadsheet, retrieved 4/6/2022.

Devine presents the matrix. The group agrees to discuss at the next meeting.

Local and State Bike Legislation Update

Devine reports that the joint Planning Board / City Council hearing for the proposed Green Building Ordinance took place and the matter is back before the Council Subcommittee on Ordinances, Licenses, and Legal Affairs tomorrow (April 7) at 6pm. Papetti provided comments to the Council stating that the proposed language on bike storage is insufficient. The subcommittee may wish to keep the current language, or they may recommend adoption of the ordinance without the bike parking element. In that case, the Planning Board would continue to apply its bike parking guidelines as it sees fit. Both Papetti and Wathne are considering providing comments at the subcommittee meeting.

April 24 Great Salem Cleanup

The group decides to hold their own standalone cleanup Saturday, May 14 at 10am and will decide the location at the next meeting.

Upcoming Hybrid Meeting

Devine reminds the group that their May 6 meeting will be hybrid format in which members have the option to participate in person or remotely.

Meeting Minutes

Caruso motions and Downie seconds to approve the 12/1/2021 minutes and all vote in favor.

Adjourn

Jaros motions and Caruso seconds to adjourn at 7:50pm and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on July 6, 2022.