

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee**

Wednesday, August 3, 2022 | 6:30 p.m.

98 Washington Street, 3rd Floor Conference Room Remote Participation

**Members Present:** John Wathne (Chair), Michael Jaros, Connor Ryan, Colleen Downie, Eric Papetti, Josh Gillis

**Members Absent:** Michael Williamson, Matt Caruso, Alex Maranto,

**Also Present:** Tom Devine, Senior Planner

#### **Call Meeting to Order**

Wathne called the meeting to order.

#### **Public Comment**

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

#### **Staff Update**

Devine provides the following updates:

- The North Street pilot at Liberty Hill Ave. is happening in the next couple weeks. There will be an announcement from the City. Toole is also initiating the study to determine how to bring the bike lanes off-street for the one block where they remain that way in the current design.
- Staff have met with the Lafayette Street residents who would be directly impacted by the proposed change from standard on-street parking to parking-protected bike lanes, as well as with the two ward councilors and Salem State University representatives. The City received a lot of helpful input and support for proceeding with further outreach.
- The Town of Marblehead received a MassTrails grant for the part of their trail through the Lead Mills and to the Lafayette Street crossing. The grant is for design of improvements, including the two trail bridges. Wathne advocates for removal of the bollards at the bridges.
- The Boston Street reconstruction project will have a public meeting for its 25% design as it entered the state TIP, date to be determined.

#### **Bluebikes Bikeshare Program Data & Promotion**

*Document reviewed: Salem Bluebikes Data, Through 7/31/2022*

Devine presents the ridership data for July. Ridership is continuing to rise month over month and year over year. Per-bike-per-day ridership in Salem is below the systemwide level, but closer to Everett and Revere and higher than Chelsea.

The expansion is coming. Seven new stations are planned: North Street, MBTA Crescent Lot, Salem State North Campus, Forest River Park, Community Life Center, Dalton Parkway, and Goodhue/Grove Street. Three more could come no sooner than October: Vinnin Square, Derby Street, and Bridge Street Neck. This would make a total of 18 stations.

Devine describes marketing efforts. Staff tabled at the Farmers Market last week. Bluebikes is doing free “Mindful Mondays” rides this month. Salem State continues to aggressively promote the system on campus. And there will be an expansion celebration event probably at Salem State in September. The Committee is also welcome to hand out materials to the public. Devine will bring materials to the next meeting.

### **Development Projects Under Review: Update on El Centro (Lafayette & Derby St.) and Crescent Lot (Washington & Bridge St.)**

#### *Documents referenced:*

- *The Exchange (Crescent Lot and Washington & Bridge Streets) plan set from Salem Planning Board filing, dated 6/9/2022*
- *El Centro (Washington & Derby Streets) plan set from Salem Planning Board filing, dated 6/7/2022*

Devine shared plans for the “Exchange” at the crescent lot. Wathne wondered if bikes and pedestrians will be able to share the sloped path through the development. Papetti is concerned about the project design proceeding before the study for bike and pedestrian connections around the North Street overpass is completed. He states that the City and the Salem Redevelopment Authority do not have a positive track record of coordinated projects with adjacent transportation projects. He is also concerned about connecting the ramp to the Washington and Bridge Street intersection. Devine reports that the City is considering submitting a grant application for the new USDOT Reconnecting Communities program to design and permit the study’s recommendations. That application is due in October, so that may be the driving force to complete the study by then. At the same time, the City still may pursue a MassWorks grant to improve the intersection. Wathne remains concerned about the Exchange and suggests submitting a letter. The group supports issuance of a letter advocating for a better bike connection that is separated and wide enough.

Devine then shares plans for the “El Centro” project at Derby and Lafayette Streets. Wathne makes the disclosure that his wife is on the board of the North Shore Community Development Coalition that is the proponent of the project and he will recuse himself from any vote.

Josh Nagle of 35 Washington Square, Unit 2, says he often rides through the area and is supportive of the new path connection from Lafayette Street to the harborwalk around the South River basin.

Papetti asks if the sidewalk and curb are being reconstructed. If so, he states that it should include a sidewalk-level protected bike lane. He says this should be stated as a requirement by City staff in their first meeting with developers about a project. The group supports Wathne issuing a letter for the project. The group further discusses how to ensure that bike facilities are incorporated early in project permitting and design. Devine will coordinate a meeting between Wathne and Traffic & Parking Director David Kucharsky to discuss.

Ejyo Kategiri of 2 ½ Ropes Street supports Papetti's advocacy for incorporation of bike facilities into the El Centro project. He also suggests a better Lafayette Street crossing.

Wathne reads a draft letter to the Mayor summarizing the Committee's priority projects and the group supports issuing it.

### **Public Meeting Remote Participation Policy**

The state action allowing remote meetings was set to expire last month but has been extended to April 2023. The group wishes to continue holding remote meetings where everyone has the option to meet in person or remotely.

Ejyo Kategiri says it is difficult to hear everyone on Zoom.

### **Discussion of Committee Name and Webpage Content**

Devine put the Committee's requested content on the webpage, except for the new name. A proposed order to change the name to "Bicycling and Shared Pathway Advisory Committee" will be before the City Council on September 15. Wathne plans to attend and is willing to speak.

### **Committee Vacancy**

Devine announces that Walter Morrell was nominated by the Mayor to serve on the Committee and is expected to be confirmed at the September 15 City Council meeting.

Josh Nagle states that he applied last month. He will forward his application to Devine to check the status.

### **Meeting Minutes**

Ryan motions, Jaros seconds, and all vote in favor to approve the 5/4/2022 minutes.

### **Adjourn**

Ryan motions, Gillis seconds, and all vote in favor to adjourn at 7:52 P.M.

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Approved by the Bicycling & Shared Path Advisory Committee on December 7, 2022.