

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee**

Tuesday, October 2, 2019 6:30 p.m.

City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street  
Thirds Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Eric Papetti (Chair), Michael Williamson, Michael Jaros, Ray Swartz, Jayne O'Leary, Kylie Sullivan, Josh Gillis, Joe O'Neil, John Wathne, Matt Caruso, Alexandra Maranto  
Members Absent: None  
Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

### **Call Meeting to Order**

Papetti opens the meeting.

### **Introduction of New Members**

New members Alex Maranto, John Wathne, and Matt Caruso introduce themselves.

### **Bike Share Program Update**

Devine reports that total ridership since the system launched in May 2017 has surpassed 20,000. Ridership increased 51% year over year for September, but riders per bike decreased by 6%. Last year's ridership increased about 30% from August into September, which we may attribute to the return of Salem State students. In contrast, the August to September increase in 2019 is only about 5%. The scooters may be a factor. And with higher overall bikeshare ridership, rebalancing has not been as successful. Zagster strongly recommends charging a fee for off-station parking to make the system more manageable.

Papetti highlights that Zagster pitched the scooter program as something that would increase their capacity to operate the bike share. He is concerned about this proposed change to require an off-station fee. Devine states that the City supports tweaking the system to support our needs, as we have done again and again. The system was never meant to be dockless, but many riders are using it as a dockless system. Members discuss whether an off-station fee would benefit the system.

Papetti expresses concern about the Zagster app failing to accurately show locations of bikes. He thinks this and the poor rebalancing need to be addressed before adding the off-station fee. Devine suggests Zagster could do some clear messaging and more aggressively address riders who lock a bike to nothing.

### **Shared E-Scooter Pilot**

Sullivan says she would like to learn more about who is riding the scooters. Caruso wonders if they may be very different groups. Devine states that the City hasn't received data beyond total ridership for the scooters. The City wants spatial data. There will be a rider survey to get a full picture of the mode shift to determine what modes are the scooter rides replacing.

Devine updates the group on the October operations plan for the scooters. The scooters have proven to be a popular amenity at Salem State and the University is advocating for limiting October restrictions so their community can still use them. The current October plan could make all of downtown a slow-go zone starting the third week of October. Scooters would be restricted to five MPH downtown. The City manages October in a dynamic way, so this may be tweaked the way the police close roads as needed. Sullivan and Jaros note that full speed riding results in a lot of reckless riding.

Papetti suggests 5 MPH may be too slow. Perhaps 8-9 MPH would be slow enough but still useful for traveling. Devine says he was concerned that the City would create too blunt of an October plan, either to completely shut down the system the whole month or make all downtown a no-go zone. Scooters are likely to be heavily restricted on Halloween night.

### **Pop-Up Bike Lanes**

Devine reports that a report on this is forthcoming.

### **Bicycle Benefits Rollout**

Michael Williamson is preparing a flyer to promote the program. Devine will circulate it to the group.

### **Collective Procurement for North Shore Micromobility Program**

Devine states that MAPC is developing a Request for Information to solicit information from micromobility operations about what they can offer. This will inform the development of the eventual RFP.

### **Coordination with MassBike**

Devine reports that Galen Mook, MassBike's Executive Director, is interested in coming to the Committee to discuss that group's statewide bike advocacy if the Committee is interested. The Committee expresses its support for this.

### **Washington Street (Mill Street to Bridge Street) Preliminary Design and Cost Estimate**

*Documents referenced:*

- *Toole Design Group Memorandum, Re: Riley Plaza & Washington Street Long-Term Concept Design—from Lydia Hausle, Pete Robie, and Karen Kitzgerald to Tom Devine and David Kucharsky; 9/27/2019.*

- *Riley Plaza Salem, MA, Short-Term Concept Plan, 9/3/2019.*

Devine unveils the concept plan and explains that it is different than the other design memos. It includes both long- and short-term concepts. This will continue the Canal Street bike path, that ends very imperfectly at Mill Street, to the train station via a safe and separated route. These plans cover only the southern segment from Mill Street to Derby Street. The concept plan for the segment continuing to the train station is forthcoming.

The Committee reviews the concept plans and makes the following initial comments:

- The configuration of vehicular lanes should be carefully considered with additional study.
- Changes to the roadway around the Post Office should ensure adequate access to the building is maintained.
- The short-term plan does not appear to be easily implementable in the short term.
- Adequate signal upgrades will be needed for the intersections.
- The Mill and Washington Street signal, since it was recently redone, may already have the capacity to easily add bike signals.
- A high-level cost estimate for the project would be useful.
- Busses need to be accommodated in this corridor.

The group agrees to submit any additional comments to Devine by email within one week.

## **Canal Street Path, Phase II**

Devine reports that the contractor has begun some vegetation removal, but it unclear whether full construction will begin this season.

## **Harmony Grove Road**

Devine reports that he and his counterpart in Peabody had a site walk with the Solomon Foundation to explore this gap in the region's path network. They have prepared a proposal for Solomon Foundation funding for a feasibility study of options for a separated path. In the short term, Harmony Grove Road is being repaved with the buffered bike lanes being restriped. O'Neil suggests that the existing bike lanes should be raised in elevation to resolve the flooding that occurs there. Papetti mentions that Landworks Studio has interest in supporting a design charette for the larger corridor.

## **Downtown Bike Lane Striping**

Devine reports that the work is underway. O'Leary says that she finds the configuration of bike and travel lanes on Derby Street by Commonwealth Labs near the new rotary confusing.

## **Harbor Connector (Szetela Lane) Path**

Devine reports that the project will be reviewed by the Conservation Commission later this month.

## **Miscellaneous**

Papetti asks for confirmation that the Essex Street roadway project has been submitted for a Complete Streets grant. Devine says he believes it was submitted.

O'Leary states that she is seeing if New England Mountain Bike Association will again take interest in improving connections at Salem Woods.

## **FY20 Community Preservation Plan – Request for Comment/Input – Review of Comment Letter**

Devine remarks that the CPA administrator has advised him that an email is sufficient when there are no new comments and that he has submitted that email.

## **NACTO Conference: Discussion of Lessons for Salem**

Devine and another City employee received funding from the Barr Foundation to attend the national conference of the National Association of City Transportation Officials in Toronto in September. Devine was impressed at how well the conference was run. All attendees received a bike share and transit pass for the week of the conference. Devine says he connected with people and found resources for making intersection better for bikes. We often have the road width between intersections to have the bike facilities we desire, but we often give up at intersections because we lose the width to car turning lanes. In addition, he was exposed to resources for designing roads and sidewalks for the safety of children. When kids are the safety standard, the public space will be safe for most other groups too. Devine also states that he connected with many people he hopes to stay in touch with. The next annual conference will be hosted nearby by Somerville, Cambridge, and Boston.

Papetti reminds the group of the upcoming Moving Together conference.

## **Meeting minutes**

O'Neil motions and O'Leary seconds to approve the June 18, 2019 minutes with edits.

## **Adjourn**

O'Neil motions and Williamson seconds to adjourn at 8:11pm.

Approved by the Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee on March 3, 2020.