

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Wednesday, December 4, 2019 6:30 p.m.

City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street
First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Eric Papetti (Chair), Michael Williamson, Ray Swartz, Jayne O’Leary, Josh Gillis, John Wathne, Alexandra Maranto, Michael Jaros, Kylie Sullivan

Members Absent: Matt Caruso, Joe O’Neil

Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

Papetti opens the meeting.

Public Comments

There are no comments from the public.

Special Guest: Galen Mook of MassBike

Papetti announces that Mook had to cancel at the last minute and intends to attend a future meeting.

Bike and Scooter Share

Devine reports that total rides for November were 650, versus 458 over the previous November. It amounts to an 11% decrease in rides per bike per day, year over year. Rides since 2017 total 22,547. The Director of Traffic & Parking is preparing a presentation to the City Council to address scooter operations and utilization.

Papetti asks what the follow up has been with Zagster since the discussion at the previous meeting. Devine reports that the season is essentially over. The City is working with Zagster to determine operational details for a bike share continuing through the winter. And there have been internal discussions regarding snow removal. Members report that the Canal Street path was cleared of snow, except for the entrances.

Bicycle Benefits Rollout

Devine says that he had reached out to Notch Brewing and they took a starter pack and expressed interest. He had the same outcome with Front Street Coffeehouse. Devine is considering also reaching out to the owner of Gulu Gulu Café and Flying Saucer Pizza. Devine distributes printed copies of Williamson’s flyer.

Collective Procurement for North Shore Micromobility Program

Devine states that the MAPC Request for Information for Micromobility Operators for the North Shore resulted in nine responses plus one letter. It includes Zagster and most of the micromobility operators the Committee knows. Devine will share the responses with the group. MAPC will be compiling our questions to pass on to the companies to solicit additional information.

Devine states that the process to follow to select an operator is not determined yet, and we are still learning which communities are most interested in participating. The group discusses the possibilities for the collective procurement.

Fort Avenue Two-Way Protected Bike Lane

Devine states that the tweaks to the striping have been made and signage is still coming. DPS intends to remove most of the cones. Williamson reports that he observed a car driving down the bike lanes. Sullivan states that she usually sees at least two bikes when she is there. Devine says the City remains open minded about what type of barrier will be installed. Papetti had made some suggestions previously at Devine's request. If flex posts are used, the City needs to be ready to regularly replace them. Or they would have to be strong enough to withstand a strike of a snowplow.

Papetti has suggested planters that volunteers could maintain. He suggests that flex posts on Beacon Street in Boston's Back Bay would be good enough for Salem if they are acceptable in the Back Bay. Washington DC has used modular cubs that have flex posts atop them.

Sullivan says it would be a challenge to have planters maintained through volunteers and donations for the entire street length of the street. Papetti suggests they could serve as accents in limited locations.

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

Documents referenced:

- *Riley Plaza and Washington Street Concept Plan, Toole Design Group, Undated.*
- *Memorandum Re: Riley Plaza & Washington Street Long-Term Concept Design from Lydia Hausle, Pete Robie, and Karen Fitzgerald to Tom Devine and David Kucharsky, Toole Design Group, 12/3/2019.*

Devine states that this concept covers Washington Street from Mill Street to Bridge Street. The Committee saw Mill Street to New Derby Street before and this section was modified based on comments from staff and the Committee, but the Committee hadn't see the New Derby Street to Bridge Street segment yet.

Devine walks the Committee through the concept. He states that they are looking at the recent striping as the short-term project, with the concept in front of the group as a more long-term

project. The exception is Toole's short-term concept to connect the end of the Canal Street path through the Washington/Mill/Canal Street intersection. There is also an opportunity for improvements to the Washington and Bridge Streets intersection in conjunction with the redevelopment of the vacant Federal Street court houses.

The Committee makes the following comments:

- The reduction of car lanes on Mill Street should be studied carefully to fully understand impacts.
- Consideration should be given to whether a bike and pedestrian connection can be created within the train tunnel to connect the train station to Washington Street.
- The Church Street intersection is a pinch point that requires careful thought.
- The Washington/Mill/Canal Street intersection may have the hardware already to add a bike signal.

Devine requests that any additional comments be sent to him by email within a week.

North Street

Devine states that Toole had completed a design memo to evaluate feasibility of both conventional and protected lanes. City staff have taken the position that some improvements should be made to make some bike and pedestrian improvements and calm traffic, but feel that the City isn't ready for a project that includes substantial removal of parking. There have been discussions with the Ward Councilor Elect and Noah Koretz of the Planning Board. The Mayor is planning to convene a meeting with these individuals, City staff, and Eric Papetti to further review the options.

The Committee makes the following comments:

- Staff bandwidth should be considered.
- Connectivity to the larger network is a legitimate concern and therefore boundaries of the project should be considered with that in mind.
- The City should consider focusing on downtown connections and trunks emanating from downtown.
- There should be an internal plan to address phasing that leads into a long-term solution.
- The City shouldn't lose sight of other important projects recommended by the Bike Master Plan.
- Bus and pedestrian circulation should be considered in the design.

Bridge Street MassWorks Project

Devine had previously provided Stantec's responses to Bike Committee comments. The design may be further along than the Committee might like without having had another chance to chime in. There will be a draft construction document set that will need to be shared by email, due to the short turn around with the bidding schedule.

Canal Street Path, Phase II

Devine provides an update on the project schedule. The group discusses the logistics of construction adjacent to an active rail line.

Harmony Grove Road Feasibility Study

Devine announces that the RFP has been issued to procure a firm to conduct the study. Proposals are due later in the month and the hope is to start the study in January.

Harbor Connector (Szetela Lane) Path

Devine states that the design firm had responded to some of the Bike Committee's comments. The project is going out to bid and changes would have to come in the form of change orders.

Bike Parking

Devine reports that he has maintained a working list of locations for adding bike parking and may be putting in a modest funding request for the coming fiscal year. The Committee wants to be sure that bike parking is added to replace any parking meter racks that are lost as the City transitions away from meters. Papetti suggests a \$100,000 to \$200,000 funding request for bike parking. He suggests having a bigger discussion at the next meeting. The Committee agrees that this discussion should be supported by data, including the inventory of existing racks and Zagster's off-station parking locations. Maranto suggests putting a bike parking map online, the same way we have a map of public car parking locations.

Miscellaneous

Swartz has observed that the no-biking signs have been removed from the Essex Street Pedestrian Mall. Papetti says they were gone for two years and replaced by October.

Papetti asks that member names be updated on the Bike Committee webpage. He also suggests having snow removal as a future meeting agenda item.

Sullivan states that this year's Arts Festival in June will have the theme of "vision". She hopes to tie in work from Imagine Salem and Salem's future in general. There is space to fill at the festival if someone wants to do something related to future bike infrastructure.

Update on Salem State University South Campus Reuse Study

Devine states that the second and final public forum for this study is December 9. The consultant will summarize public input to date and unveil redevelopment alternatives. One of the potential transportation enhancements is either a second driveway to the site south of Dead Man's Curve, or at least a bike and pedestrian connection at this location. O'Leary is interested in advocating for the Forest River Conservation Area to begin allowing mountain biking on its trails. Devine suggests speaking with the Conservation Commission, which manages that land. He adds that the

consensus from stakeholders is that any development plan for the South Campus should maintain or enhance access to the conservation area.

Review of 2020 Meeting Schedule

Document reviewed: *City of Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee Draft 2020 Meeting Schedule, created 12/3/2019.*

The group accepts that 2020 meeting schedule.

Meeting minutes

The Committee tables the August 20, 2019 minutes to the next meeting.

Adjourn

Wathne motions and Williamson seconds to adjourn at 8:11pm.

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