

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Tuesday, August 20, 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, Jayne O'Leary, Josh Gillis

Members Absent: Kylie Sullivan

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 23 Orchid Street states that she has ridden the pop-up bike lanes and likes them, but their failure to connect downtown is a major shortcoming and she hopes to see a better connection now. Riccardi also notes that she has observed that the McGlew Park bike share station has been empty and downtown lacks bike parking.

Another member of the public states support for the pop-up bike lanes.

Bike Share Update

Devine reports that July 2019 was Zagster's largest ridership to date with 2,148 rides versus July 2018's 1013. Even with more bikes, there has been an increase of 33% in rides per bike.

Total ridership has reached 17,862. He states that he is watching the data closely to see if there is impact from the scooter share. Jaros reports that the Salem State Central Campus dock was recently empty for several days in a row. Papetti believes that Zagster has not been adequately rebalancing the bikes.

Shared E-Scooter Update

Devine states that the pilot was paused by Zagster to address technological problems with the GPS technology. The City also used the opportunity to take steps to address underage and reckless driving. Actions include reducing the top speed from 15 to 12 miles per hour, adding decals with rules on them, and placing a large ID number to all devices so that bad behavior can be reported and linked to a specific rider. There were up to 350 rides per weekend day, but this information is preliminary. O'Neil says he had trouble with the geofencing, but has not tried it

since the fix. Devine says that the City is ready to address any issues that come up as the Salem State University students return for the semester and to develop an operation plan for October.

Papetti comments that he supports the reduced maximum speed, considering Salem's pavement condition. He does not support the geofencing at Winter Island because scooters cannot reach Waikiki beach. Devine says he will take a look at that to see if there is an opportunity to adjust the geofence boundaries to allow better access and explore the possibility of adding a parking spot. He also reports that he has submitted See-Click-Fix requests for pavement improvements to address issues that may be especially hazardous for scooters. He found his request closed regardless of the issue not being corrected.

A member of the audience said he had trouble ending a ride at the scooter parking location where he started the ride. This occurred before the latest shutdown. Devine says that this is the problem that Zagster worked to correct. Devine states that riders should contact him if the problem persists. And if any of these problems resulted in a rider being overcharged, the rider should contact Zagster for a refund.

O'Leary arrives.

Another member of the public reports that she observed young riders on scooters who were not being attentive. She is also concerned about the lack of helmet use. Devine states that the City has been distributing free helmets, but the City can't force people to wear helmets.

Pop-Up Bike Lanes

Devine notes that multiple members had been involved in collecting data. O'Neil says that it appeared that residents on Canal Street banded together to park in the lane as a protest of the pop up. He did 6 intercept surveys on Congress Street and 14 on Lafayette Street. He counted about 35 total cyclists while he was there. An Amazon delivery driver stayed in the pop-up lane while making several deliveries. While that is not ideal, it did avoid holding up traffic. He observed families and several younger kids. Riders were positive. The residents that spoke to him were supportive too.

Papetti was on North Street near Mason Street. He reports that the side of the street with parking was not fully utilized. A family reported coming for the first time to the neighborhood for haircuts. A group of 7 year olds spoke to him with support. He met a Peabody-to-Beverly commuter who usually drives, but his car had broken down. Papetti would recommend staff and elected officials talk to riders, as it can be very interesting.

Devine reports that Toole Design Group collected parking data and tubes were placed in the road to collect traffic volume and speed data. O'Neil suggests considering a bike/bus lane on Lafayette Street.

8/5/2019 Adaptive Bicycle Demonstration

Devine reports that a vendor demonstrated four models of bikes and about 25 people attended to view and ride the bikes. All the models have electric assist that can be turned on or off. Models included an adult tricycle, a side-by-side two seater with four wheels, and two that carry a passenger in front of the rider. One of those has a ramp that can hold a wheelchair, and the other has a seat that a wheelchair user would transfer into.

Devine says the path forward is to continue investigating options. This could include the City purchasing bikes itself or incorporating them into a bike share program. Options through the current bike share operator are limited and the City will see if these options can be broadened through the upcoming procurement for an operator for 2020 and beyond.

Bicycle Benefits Rollout

The group discusses progress in conducting outreach to businesses.

International Parking Day

Papetti states that one day every September people turn parking spaces into parklets. It began as a grassroots movement but has become more sanctioned with cities creating a formal process. Russell Findley, Mobility Coordinator for the City's Department of Traffic & Parking describes the City's upcoming pop-up parklets.

Bike Master Plan Projects Preliminary Design and Cost Estimates: North Street, Bridge Street Neck, Fort Ave., Jefferson Ave., Washington Street (Mill Street to Bridge Street)

Document referenced:

- Memorandum from Lydia Hausle of Toole Design to Tom Devine, City of Salem department of Planning & Community Development, "Re: Response to Comments Received on Preliminary Design Assessments", 8/3/2019.
- CITY OF SALEM PAVEMENT MARKING & SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENTS, DERBY STREET FROM WEBB STREET TO FORT AVENUE, FORT AVENUE FROM DERBY STREET TO WINTER ISLAND ROAD. 25% DESIGN SUBMISSION. Toole Design, 8/15/2019

Devine recaps that the Committee had provided a substantial amount of comments on the designs that have been drafted so far and Toole has responded to these. Toole is also working on the preliminary design for Washington Street that includes the connection from the end of the Canal Street multiuse path to the train station. Devine shared select responses to the Bike Committee from Toole. The Committee discusses the preferred width of buffer between parked cars and a parking-protected bike lane for Bridge Street and Jefferson Avenue.

Devine reports that the Fort Ave. project is being fast tracked. Since the roadway is being repaved, Toole is designing a two-way protected lane for the length of the repaving. It will follow the route suggested by the Committee, including the segment of Derby Street between Memorial Drive and Webb Street. Williamson had depicted the possibilities for connecting through the Power Plant site.

The group reviewed Toole's 25% design plans for Fort Ave. and made the following observations and comments:

- Narrowing the travel lanes will calm car traffic.
- This will create a separated route from Old Salem Jail to the Willows.
- The bike lanes total enough width for a plow to fit through to clear snow.
- This will accommodate runners as well as cyclists.
- Winter Island Road and Columbus Square should become one way in and one way out, respectively.
- The bike lanes should extend all the way to the Willows, regardless of the current repaving scope.

Canal Street Path, Phase II

Devine reports that the City hopes to see this project begin this season.

Harmony Grove Road

Devine states that the City has considered the question of whether the repaving of Harmony Grove Road should include restriping in-kind or something more. The Salem Oil & Grease development will include a separated path that ends partway down Harmony Grove Road, but the project's timing is uncertain, possibly at least two years away. Devine is coordinating with the City of Peabody and the Solomon Foundation to consider partnering to fund a study of path options for this area to connect the gap between Salem & Peabody's path network.

Downtown Bike Lane Striping

Devine reports that City staff have met with MassDOT regarding design revisions to incorporate the Norman and Chestnut Street roundabout. There is no date yet for the painting.

Harbor Connector (Szetela Lane) Path

Devine states that because the project is in a flood zone and near the shore, it will soon be reviewed by the Conservation Commission. The Committee had previously made comments on the concept plans. The project will incorporate a stone dust path to maintain the connection to Settler's Way that is currently just a desire path. A segment of sidewalk at the path triangle at by H & H Propeller, previously not on the plan, will be retained. The surface material of the path has been confirmed to be asphalt and 10' wide. Papetti says the committee had requested that consideration be given to widening the path beyond 10' and he would like to know the cost difference for this. Papetti suggests 12' to 14' with 10' as an absolute minimum to be done only under extreme circumstances. Physical improvements at crossings beyond flashing beacons are under consideration. Papetti underscores the importance of this for the safety of the school children walking there. VHB has straightened the crosswalk at Fort Ave.

Discussion of Complete Streets Program

Papetti asks if any of the projects the Committee is looking at are good candidates for the complete streets program. Devine thinks that none of these are at the level of design needed for the program. Papetti wonders if North Street could be at that level in time for an application.

Discussion of Committee Vacancy

Devine reports that there are multiple strong candidates for the vacancy, including a woman with a young child who wants to ride more as a family. Papetti has been spreading the word about the vacancy.

Miscellaneous

O'Leary says that she will have an ongoing conflict with the Committee's schedule. Devine notes that one of the applicants for the vacancy has a similar long-term conflict and thinks the Committee may want to consider changing the regular meeting time. Members discuss their availability and agree that Wednesday is a preferred evening to meet. Devine will email the group to get everyone's availability for an alternate time, including members not present.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 30, 2019 and May 21, 2019

The Committee tables the minutes to the next meeting.

Adjourn

Williamson motions and O'Leary seconds to adjourn at 8:05pm and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on January 8, 2020.