

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Wednesday, September 7, 2022 | 6:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting

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

Members Absent: Eric Papetti, 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 has no updates to provide outside the agenda items.

Bluebikes Bikeshare Program Data, Promotion, and Expansion

Document reviewed: Salem Bluebikes Data through 8/31/2022

Ridership is up year over year, but down month over month. Ridership is strong so far in September. A free month pass is available to anyone during the Orange Line shutdown and this has resulted in record ridership systemwide.

Three of the 7 planned new stations have been deployed: Salem State North Campus, Dalton Parkway, and Forest River Park. The next to be deployed will be the Commuter Rail crescent lot, Community Life Center, and Goodhue at Grove Street. The North Street station will be deployed after the roadway project is implemented. The City has funding for an additional three stations for spring deployment. The group discusses signage and mapping for Bluebikes. Devine will ask Bluebikes about adding the stations to Google maps.

Devine reports that the Mayor, Salem State President, and leaders from Blue Cross Blue Shield will be at an event at the Salem State North Campus to celebrate the expansion on September 14 at 10am. The Committee is encouraged to attend. In addition, Caroline Robitaille of the Parks & Recreation Department will be tabling with

Colleen Downey at the Farmers Market to promote the upcoming kids bike safety event September 17 and 9/18 at the Community Life Center.

E-Bikes Update

The Governor signed legislation to define and allow electric bikes under state law. The legislation also includes funds to establish a rebate program for e-bikes. The group discusses implications for Salem eventually having e-bikes available as part of a public bike share. Devine states that Bluebikes and the participating communities are interested in adding e-bikes to the system, but there are considerations to address. One is the added cost to riders and communities.

Upcoming Project Presentations

Devine states that Lafayette Street (West Ave. to Marblehead Line) is under design for protected bike lanes. And there is a sidewalk expansion and segment of off-street bike path under design on Washington Street northbound between Front and Essex Streets, by the Ledger Restaurant. It would be implementation of a first part of the vision for Washington Street. These two projects could be presented to a joint meeting with the Traffic & Parking Commission on September 28. The group is supportive of this. Devine adds that MassDOT will have a public meeting, time to be determined, for the 25% design of the planned Boston Street improvements.

FY23 Community Preservation Plan – Request for Comment/Input

Devine reports that the Community Preservation Committee is seeking input as it undertakes its annual update to its Community Preservation Plan. Years ago, the CPC added bike infrastructure as something that would make a project be considered more favorable for funding. Wathne connects this back to the recent discussion regarding how the Bike Committee can encourage projects to incorporate bike infrastructure early in the design. Devine confirms that there are only limited mentions of bike infrastructure in the CPP's criteria for review of requests for funding. Devine will draft a letter for review and ultimate execution by the Chair.

Discussion of Committee Name

The City Council will consider renaming this Committee on September 15 to the Bicycling & Shared Path Advisory Committee. Wathne plans to attend and speak.

Committee Vacancy

Devine says there are two vacancies and the first is being filled by Walter Morrell. His confirmation is expected to occur at the September 15 City Council meeting. There are four applicants for the remaining vacancy. Williamson remarks that he is interested in stepping down if there is someone good to take his place.

6/1/2022 Meeting Minutes

Jaros motions, Williamson seconds, and all vote in favor to approve the 6/1/2022 minutes.

Adjourn

Jaros motions, Williamson seconds, and all vote in favor to adjourn at 7:33 P.M.

Approved by the Bicycling & Shared Path Advisory Committee on 1/4/2023.