

**AGENDA  
PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLIST ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
JULY 7, 2020**

**AGENDA ITEM #2A  
APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**JUNE 2, 2020**

**PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**TUESDAY JUNE 2, 2020**  
**REMOTE MEETING – MICROSOFT TEAMS (CALL-IN ONLY)**  
**7:00 PM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Colin Smith (Chair); John Kelleher (Vice-Chair); Erling Heistad (City Council); Alan Schnur; Marie McCormick; Alex Belenz (Alt); Clifton Below (Alt)

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Karen Zook (Planning Board); Sarah Crysl Akhtar

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rebecca Owens (Associate Planner)

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**1) CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. A Roll Call of Board Members who participated remotely is listed above. Alex Belenz and Clifton Below were appointed to serve as regular members.

**Review of meeting procedures and NH RSA 91-A “Right-to-Know” requirements.** Chair Smith reviewed the executive order requiring public audio and video access and options for participation.

**2) APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 5, 2020**

There were no amendments to the minutes. Ms. McCormick thanked Staff for the detail provided in the minutes.

*Mr. Heistad MOVED to approve the minutes.  
Seconded by Ms. McCormick.*

*Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included Mr. Kelleher, Mr. Belenz, Mr. Below, Mr. Schnur, Ms. McCormick, Mr. Heisted, and Chair Smith.*

*\*The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (7-0).*

**3) OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

**4) STUDY ITEMS:**

- A. Updates from Other Boards
  - Planning Office - Planning Staff

Ms. Owens stated that the Planning Board Development Regulation Sub-committee has met several times and is close to completing comments on the draft pedestrian and bicyclist-related amendments that staff proposes.

Ms. Owens reported that the DHMC Patient Tower project has requested a change of Planning Board site plan approval conditions to allow the building permit Certificate of Occupancy to be granted prior to completion of associated site modifications for the project, including pedestrian and bike improvements. She noted that based on a recent communication by the City Manager

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to the Planning Board, the vicinity of the DHMC campus is also being considered by the City for a Special Assessment District (SAD), which is similar to a tax finance increment district (TIF) for value capture but requires a localized increase in taxes. A SAD would be used as an instrument to collect additional fees through taxes from property owners within the district, including those that are on Mount Support Road where several large housing developments have been proposed.

The SAD would fund a coordinated transportation improvement project, or several, depending on how it is ultimately defined, and would have to be approved by the City Council, Ms. Owens explained. It is unclear if previously highlighted pedestrian and bike related needs on Mount Support Road, extending north of Lahaye Drive, would be included in the SAD or if the district would fund a single project as has been identified by the most recent Mount Support Road-area traffic study. Updating the intersection of Lahaye Drive and Mount Support Road, particularly the righthand turn lane going east on Lahaye, is a likely priority for the SAD, Ms. Owens conveyed. She also said it has not been determined what the expectations would be of property owners proposing developments within the SAD in terms of whether they could still be subject to Planning Board exactions for off-site improvements like sidewalks or if the SAD would preclude exactions.

Mr. Schnur asked if such a lane were to be improved whether it would include accommodation for a bike lane. Mr. Belenz asked if a roundabout would be considered, in response to which Mr. Schnur implied that there is not Committee consensus about use of roundabouts in general. Ms. Owens noted that with wetland constraints surrounding the intersection, any new lanes, roundabouts or similar needs for additional right-of-way would be a challenge. Chair Smith expressed that he assumes past conversations with stakeholders about pedestrian and bicyclist concerns would be incorporated with a SAD and hopes that the Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee will be involved with the process, which Ms. McCormick endorsed as well.

Chair Smith questioned staff about the recent Route 12A resurfacing project and if there are final striping plans, commenting on drivers' confusion about turn lanes and the lack of shoulders for cyclists. Ms. Owens clarified that striping would be finalized and be installed in-kind to past conditions, the following week. Mr. Schnur recognized the confusion of the temporary striping but praised the positive end outcome of creating new sidewalks for 12A.

- Safe Routes to School - Planning Staff/Police Staff

No Updates.

- City Council – Erling Heistad

Mr. Heistad reported that the City Manager continues to work with Departments to revise budgets and encouraged Committee members to follow upcoming City Council meetings as relates to potential reductions in City services that would directly impact staff positions relevant to the Committee. Mr. Below commented that while it is not budget season, but that there may be trade-offs related to the school district's ability to pay for taxes this year and whether the City would have to use funds to assist. The implications for the City Budget will depend in part on federal funds and the degree that revenues are diminished, such as due to property owners not being able to pay taxes to the City on time or in full, with one example provided that tenants are finding it challenging to pay rent at Powerhouse Mall. Other factors identified by Mr. Below include fixed operating costs that the City has committed to by contract, including personnel wage raises and benefit increases, with the potential effect that to maintain those commitments while leveling the budget, the City may seek to reduce services. Reductions may include staff based on Department heads' responses to the City Manager when asked to consider potential cuts, and will include a reduced Capital Improvements Project budget. Mr. Below said that the City Manager is looking for direction from the City Council and at a range of contingencies, and that the state's overall revenue structure has made such circumstances more challenging. He

concluded that the City is in a sound financial position overall considering that it is also facing a nonstandard level of debt in part due to the comprehensiveness of recent CSO projects with Complete Streets implementation and that the debt burden will continue to be carried in the next few years so it is clear that the City will have to be on a tight budget.

Chair Smith asked about the status of a Planning Board representative and Ms. Owens responded that she has not heard of an appointee yet.

- Police Reports - Alan Schnur

Mr. Schnur provided a presentation updating year-to-date and overall crash data for Lebanon between 2006-2020. His findings highlighted 0 crashes in April but a total of 3 so far in 2020, putting 2020 ahead of 2019 and showing an overall increase in crashes with pedestrians over the past 5 years. There has been a combined average of 4.6 pedestrian-bicycle crashes per year. The data from Lebanon Police Department suggests that there have been zero bike crashes between 2018 to 2019 but this remains to be validated by Fire Department EMS call data. By month, most crashes have happened in May, followed by October, when conditions are dark more often. Mr. Schnur emphasized that the data shows injuries are worse in crashes that occur during the darker hours, with approximately 30 percent happening after dusk so that could inform the Committee's messaging to the public about risks and needing extra vigilance when it is dark. Mr. Below asked if the fatality in 2010 that was not reported in the Police data can be shown in presentations as a footnote. There was some member discussion about the conditions surrounding a pedestrian fatality in Lebanon, including precipitation and visibility, near Sachem Village.

Mr. Schnur conveyed that parking lots continue to be a riskier location, with approximately 45 percent of crashes in parking lots since 2006, followed by 32 percent in crosswalk areas, and that the former problem can be addressed in part by updating shopping plaza and parking area design requirements as the Planning Board will soon consider with proposed amendments. Gas stations and the Colburn Park area were specifically noted for common areas of risk.

The median age of those involved in crashes since 2006 has been 57, and the average is age 53. Though the age range overall is broad, Mr. Schnur's analysis recommended targeting messaging to older demographics. His analysis also recommends reducing vehicle speed limits to lower injury risks. Mr. Belenz shared that the NHDOT has seen approximately half the normal amount of traffic on state roads, though that depends on where the count is taken, and that with more people working remotely, potentially permanently, that could affect crash risk. Mr. Schnur recommended more driver education and awareness including signage, reconfiguration of the 12A plaza, Colburn Park and Kmart parking areas, and surveys (not studies) like simple road safety audits, as other strategies to assess and reduce risks.

Mr. Kelleher observed that it is difficult to see other road users at night and wondered if it would help to get cyclists to ask if they really need to ride at night and if not, "don't". Mr. Below added that if one has to ride at night then they should use really good lights and try to use the AT bus on the return trip. Chair Smith asked in a one-page synopsis of accident data could be created. Ms. Owens noted that existing development designs are harder to change than when applying regulations to new developments.

Ms. Owens confirmed that she will post the presentation to the Committee's website under "Additional Resources".

- Mascoma River Greenway Coalition - Colin Smith

Mr. Belenz indicated that the Mascoma River Greenway survey was launched and thanked members including Ms. Crysl Akhtar and Mr. Schnur for their feedback. He asked the

Committee for assistance distributing it the survey. Ms. Owens will share the request by email. Mr. Schnur asked if it would help to get children participating in the survey and if SAU88 can be asked to consider it as a teaching exercise.

- State of NH Updates - Alex Belenz

Mr. Belenz reported that the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (UVLSRPC) will have a completed draft of the pilot corridor study on Route 120 soon. He also noted that the Mascoma River Greenway has been added to the State's Rail Trail Plan website. The State's recent rail trail survey focused on economic impacts of trail use in the winter and it may have confused some survey-takers, but Mr. Belenz says that they are working to do more surveys and to better clarify the purpose of each one moving forward.

- Class VI Roads – Colin Smith

Chair Smith has not received any updates about the Committee re-engaging however Mr. Heisted said he heard that two citizen candidates are being interviewed for the group.

- Rails to Trails - VACANT

Mr. Belenz stated that New Hampshire has launched a new Rail Trail plan website but that he has not heard about the status of the statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

- Planning Board/CIP Meeting - VACANT

No Report.

#### B. Communications Plan Update

Ms. McCormick provided a brief summary of the June 2<sup>nd</sup> Bike Rodeo-to-Go activities which included distribution of play packs by the Recreation Department through school bus routes. Ms. Owens added that the Rodeo sponsored 400 play packs and distributed approximately 80 multisport helmets that the Children's Hospital at Dartmouth Hitchcock donated. The helmets were handed out at the two new zip code bike racks, with support from Lebanon Police and their mascot, Justice.

Mr. Schnur recalled that over 100 children registered for the Rodeo in 2019, so the increased outreach for 2020 was successful, and Chair Smith celebrated that almost 500 children "got something" on June 2. Ms. McCormick asked to recognize the Rodeo sponsors and said that she will coordinate thank you notes on behalf of the Committee.

Ms. McCormick read from the Communications Plan that engagement had been planned for the July Farmer's Market and for group ride in August but that the Committee should look at alternative opportunities in light of social distancing needs. As an example, Ms. McCormick suggested that members assist with the Greenway survey outreach in July and with review of the Committee's webpages on the City of Lebanon website, for July-August. One update to consider for the website is a link to the bike routes compiled by Vital Communities. Mr. Below reminded all that helpful hints could be distributed to LebAlerts subscribers, with a link to the Committee's webpages.

Mr. Schnur said that a Valley News letter to the editor on behalf of the Committee was submitted in May and Ms. Owens will share a link with members.

#### **5) OTHER BUSINESS:**

- Educ./Encouragement – Refer to the Communications Plan Update.
- Bike Friendly Community – Ms. Owens reported that working group tasks have not been assigned yet, as the original application to work from needs to be located.

- CIP 2020-2026 – Ms. Owens gave a brief timeline of the CIP proposal review. Mr. Belensz said that he and others at the regional planning commission were working with City staff to refine the scope of work for a proposed ped-bike plan, which is now being reframed as a complete streets implementation plan. The plan would not repeat past study components but instead synthesize and prioritize their recommendations to help expedite the research and data collection phases of such a project. He offered to speak with City representatives about this project and other CIP proposals to help match them to funding opportunities and build the accompanying budget worksheets.
- Other
  - Ms. Owens reported briefly about recent Upper Valley Transportation Management Association topics including communities' COVID-19 responses and a proposed transit route from Claremont to Lebanon. Mr. Belensz said that the UVTMA was also looking at examples of street closures
  - Mr. Heisted asked if there has been progress on a Miracle Mile plaza access to the Mascoma River Greenway and in reply, Ms. Owens said that communications are in progress with the property owner. He also reminded members of the City Council meeting on Wednesday June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

#### **6) FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS & FOLLOW-UP NEEDS:**

- Create guidance for, and create a Ped-Bike working group to, review of Bike Friendly Community criteria for renewal of Lebanon's designation, due Spring 2021. Topic to be added as standing Study Item for agendas (Ms. Owens and Mr. Kelleher)
- Review the Committee's webpages for updates (Ms. Owens to share; all to review)
- Thanks to sponsors for Bike Rodeo-to-Go and helmets (Ms. McCormick, Chair Smith)
- Explore a central document repository for the Committee (Ms. Owens)
- Participate in and promote Mascoma River Greenway survey (all)

#### **7) ADJOURNMENT:**

***A Motion by Clifton Beloew to adjourn the meeting.***

***Seconded by Erling Heisted.***

***Roll Call Vote: Members voting in favor included Mr. Heisted, Mr. Smith, Mr. Kelleher, Mr. Beloew, Ms. McCormick, Mr. Belensz, and Mr. Schnur***

***\*The vote on the MOTION was unanimously approved (7-0).***

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 PM.

Prepared By,  
Rebecca Owens  
Planning Staff