

Pedestrian and Bicyclist Advisory Committee Update April 2019

Written by Colin Smith, Chair, for the committee update session, April 3, 2019.

During the first quarter of 2018, the committee has been focused on:

- Identifying and developing summaries for 15 of the actions and outcome from the Masterplan. More to come on that next time
- Reviewing a number of projects in support of the planning department such as the proposed housing Oak Ridge Road
- Helping the planning department develop updates to regulations on site plans, including to improve safety for pedestrians walking across parking lots
- Supporting plans for a crosswalk on the Miracle Mile
- Supporting the Mascoma River Greenway extension project carried out by the team of students from Dartmouth College
- Also starting planning for two spring events:
 - Curb your car day breakfast on May 17th
 - Bike rodeo on June 1st

Two to discuss in more detail:

Mascoma River Greenway

The committee was very impressed with the work by the Dartmouth team. It was a very well put together report that covered the many issues that must be overcome in order to extend the trail.

One thing that is clear, however, is that there are two elements that we can work on now while the issues with Westboro Yard, with the dry bridge on 12A, with rail with trail, and with Twin State Sand and Gravel are resolved:

- First is access point. Clif shared that the City is moving ahead with a purchase of the lot at the corner of Mascoma Street and Slayton Hill, which will add parking and a trail access. There is a need for more access points further west, such as opposite Lebanon Ford
- The second is to focus on extending the trail to Riverside Park, using the currently overgrown section of the railroad. This seems like an achievable target both politically and in terms of fundraising. While that portion of the railroad is “active” it is not in use and has not been used for many years. The current end of line is at the stone arch bridge over Glen Road and if the greenway can be extended to there, it could then descend into Riverside Park which would provide a safe end point for the greenway for now. I really encourage the City to do what it can at all levels to lobby the state to allow this to happen.

Miracle Mile Crosswalk

The second is the Miracle Mile. Last night the committee discussed the project again. We are really excited about the plan to implement a high quality crosswalk, but expect that to take around 18 months to implement. The main outcome of the discussion last night was to urgently request that the City implement short term measures to improve pedestrian safety while the permanent project is developed.