

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Wednesday, July 7, 2021 | 6:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting

Members Present: Eric Papetti (Chair), Michael Williamson, Alex Maranto, Josh Gillis, Matt Caruso, Jayne O’Leary, Colleen Downie, Michael Jaros, John Wathne

Members Absent: Connor Ryan, Kylie Sullivan

Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

Papetti called the meeting to order. Devine describes the remote meeting format and procedure for providing public comment.

Public Comment

Papetti opens the meeting to public comment and there are none.

Staff Update

Devine provides the following updates:

- Devine states that the legislature acted to continue to allow public meetings to be held remotely through April of 2022. The City may transition to in-person or hybrid format and Devine will update the Committee as that is planned.
- A draft of the Harmony Grove Path Feasibility Study is available for review. Devine will send it to the Committee with a deadline for comments. The City has pending funding requests through the state’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program to evaluate climate adaptation strategies in the corridor and a federal earmark to further the path design.
- Devine reports that there is a state investigation underway regarding the fatality on Fort Ave. The investigation is likely to proceed slowly. In the meantime, no details have been confirmed beyond what is reported in the recent Salem News article. Papetti asks whether the District Attorney’s office is leading the investigation and Devine will follow up to confirm. The group discusses the City’s ongoing work on this corridor. Caruso wonders whether there should be an effort to education the public on new bike infrastructure.
- The NSCDC’s redevelopment at the corner of Lafayette and Derby Streets has paused its process with the Planning Board to refine their plans in response to feedback. It is likely to return to the Board the second meeting in September. The

proposal includes an improved connection from Lafayette Street to the South River harborwalk.

- The ambulance facility at North and Franklin Street has progressed through the Planning Board and staff are drafting a decision for the Planning Board to consider this Thursday. The project is adjacent to a public way connecting North Salem toward the train station and downtown. The City has applied for grant funding to study connectivity between North Salem and downtown.
- The proposed Crescent Lot development adjacent to the MBTA station is before the SRA at the coming July 14 meeting. The SRA normally defers design review to its Design Review Board. That project is likely to go to the Planning Board in the fall. Papetti adds that the developer is having an informal community meeting, organized by Councilor Riccardi, next week.
- Salem Oil & Grease, which will include a public path segment between Grove Street and Harmony Grove Road, will be returning to the Planning Board for some project changes. Devine has been informed that the path will not be changed.

BlueBikes Bikeshare Program Data and Marketing

Devine states that Salem State University will continue to heavily promote BlueBikes as they did with the previous bike share. They are giving free ride codes to students and will heavily promote the income-eligible program. They will piggyback BlueBikes promo on existing social media communication and campus events. BlueBike has a systemwide marketing plan. The City will work with them to get the most out of this for local promotion. This includes upselling from day passes to annual passes. Blue Cross Blue Shield is providing some funding support, and they will provide some support for local marketing. Local marketing so far includes inclusion in the visitors guide and online tourism content. The City will collaborate and coordinate with its partners on this.

Caruso asks if any of the marketing efforts involve having a person at events? Devine says he used to attend the Farmers Market with a Zagster bike and swag at a table. Caruso said he may be available to help with promotion like this.

Devine says he was given access to the BlueBikes data portal just today. Since the July 16 launch to yesterday, there have been 220 BlueBikes rides. He asks the group what they would like to regularly see for data. There is no GPS data like Zagster had, but there is much else. Wathne asks for the list of available data. Papetti is interested to know membership statistics: How many are Salem residents. Wathne is interested in time-of-day ridership. Devine says he will at a minimum report data on ridership by station and when stations are full or empty. Williamson interested to see how BlueBikes coincides with MBTA ridership. Wathne says it would be interesting to see long-term shifts in ridership.

Bike Master Plan Progress Tracking

Document: "Bike Plan Tracking" spreadsheet, 7-1-2021.

Devine states that he has generated an updated tracking table of 2018 Bike Plan recommendations. Michael Williamson had generated this soon after the completion of the plan and Devine is updating it to include with the City's Bicycle Friendly City application. It includes all 87 infrastructure recommendations and the smaller number of program and policy recommendations. Devine had shared this document with the group and will take any comments on it, but he is leading the update and collecting information from within the City.

Small Projects to Consider

Williamson had suggested the Committee be prepared to advocate for small projects and be ready for when funds arise. An example could be to connect Washington Street to the Collins Cove path. Another would be connecting from Dodge Street to the South River harborwalk. He suggests members come up with priorities to continue discussing a future meeting.

Bike Friendly City Application

The Committee had advocated for the City to seek this designation from the League of American Cyclists. The Mayor has also expressed support for this. Some Bike Committee members had offered to help with the application and begun to work on it. We now have an intern in the Traffic & Parking Department who has been populating the application. The application deadline was initially early August, but it has been extended to early September while the organization prepared to revamp their application for future rounds.

Meeting Minutes: 2/3/2021 & 4/7/2021

Williamson motions and Wathne seconds to approve the minutes and all vote in favor.

Adjourn

O'Leary motions and Williamson seconds to adjourn at 7:21 p.m. and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on November 3, 2021.