

Meeting Minutes

Salem Bicycling Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 4, 2020 6:30 p.m.

City Hall Annex, 98 Washington Street
First Floor Conference Room

Members Present: Eric Papetti (Chair), Michael Williamson, Jayne O'Leary, Josh Gillis, Alexandra Maranto, Michael Jaros, Kylie Sullivan, Matt Caruso, Joe O'Neil, John Wathne, Colleen Downie

Members Absent: None

Also Present: Tom Devine, Senior Planner

Call Meeting to Order

Papetti opens the meeting.

Fort Avenue Two-Way Protected Bike Lane

Devine reports that the Director of Parking & Traffic is planning one or more meetings with the neighborhood, likely onsite.

Cynthia Jerzylo, a co-chair of the Willows Neighborhood Association, expresses concern that the neighborhood was not consulted prior to the implementation of the project. She believes that the configuration is now dangerous and could cause collisions and the neighborhood would like the striping to be removed. Tour buses no longer have the space to park safely. She states that a Salem Trolley passenger had fingers amputated as a result of an accident on Fort Avenue. Devine states that there are upcoming meetings, details to be announced, that will include the designers.

Mike Ryan of 129 Fort Ave. says the Fort Ave. striping is very dangerous, especially at the intersection with Winter Island Road. He has experienced a near collision there. He is concerned about older drivers navigating the roadway. Devine states that he addressed the rationale for the project and how they will measure its success or failure at a previous meeting. He suggests that the details of the project, especially anything technical, be discussed in further detail at the upcoming meeting when the Director of Traffic & Parking and a representative of the design firm are present.

Bicycle Benefits Rollout

Devine reports that he has a total of four businesses that have expressed interest, but he does not know if any will pull the trigger and participate in the program. He learned that Gulu Gulu had participated years ago with limited success. But since then, there is

now a critical mass of member and participating businesses in the core of the metro area.

Collective Procurement for North Shore Micromobility Program

Devine states that MAPC has provided a draft RFP to the City for review. The goal is to select an operator who will provide bike share and possibly scooter share services throughout the North Shore.

Bike Parking

Devine says that the Department of Planning & Community Development is requesting \$10,000 per year for three years to install additional bike racks throughout the city based on the prioritization list that the Committee reviewed.

North Street

Devine states that the City has contracted with Toole Design Group to assist with work on North Street. The project will include bicycle facilities of some sort as additional crosswalks. As a first step, Toole Design Group and City staff have been collecting additional parking utilization data. There will be two public meetings for the project. Devine and Traffic & Parking staff will be coordinating an outreach plan in consultation with the ward councilor.

Bridge Street MassWorks Project

Devine reports that the project is out to bid. The Engineering Department has kept a log of their responses to the Committee's comments and this will be shared. The expectation is to begin construction in the spring.

Canal Street Path, Phase II

Devine says he understands that the project will progress this season, but has no specific update.

Harmony Grove Road Feasibility Study

The City is under contract with Weston & Sampson and has held a kickoff meeting for this study to identify a route for a multiuse path through the Harmony Grove Road area along the North River to connect Salem and Peabody's expanding path networks. There will be a working group that will likely begin meeting in May, and Devine will seek a member of the Committee to participate.

Harbor Connector (Szetela Lane) Path

Devine states that tree clearing has begun. The project is underway and there are possible tweaks that may be made on the crossings. The design already includes a bump out at Derby Street and bump outs may be added to the Szetela and Fort Ave. crossings. A Jerzylo complains that their neighborhood was not informed about this project and asks what the project schedule is. Devine says a grant requires that the project be completed by July 2021, but it is likely to be completed months before that.

Derby Street Improvements

Papetti and Sullivan attended recent abutter and stakeholder meetings for the project. Devine says that the project staff anticipate having another such meeting. Sullivan states that it was hard for some of the neighborhood who hadn't been consulted since 2017. Papetti says that DPS should be more transparent about the project and when people can weigh in. Devine states that as a planner his belief system includes having a robust stakeholder engagement process for projects, but he is not the project manager for every project. In this case, his role is to make sure the Committee and bike advocates have a chance to provide input.

Galen Mook of MassBike to Present

Galen Mook, Executive Director of MassBike, introduces himself. He describes MassBike's statewide advocacy. He has been interfacing with advocates in other North Shore communities. He describes advocacy for regional trails and progress with the Border to Boston trail and its multiple segments. MassBike is involved in state legislation for transportation funding and recently, e-bikes and scooters. MassBike likes to also support and bolster the work of local advocates. The organization also does youth education through the Safe Routes to School program, as well as adult education through League of American Bicyclists.

Mook describes the Five E's of Bike Advocacy: Enforcement, Engineering, Evaluation, Education, and Encouragement. There is a sixth E of equity which goes for all of the E's. He provides an overview of upcoming Bike Month events in May.

Boston Street Reconstruction

Document referenced: Boston Street, Salem, MA, Progress Plan, VHB, 1/16/2020.

The Committee, joined by Galen Mook of MassBike and several members of the public, made the following comments on the proposed improvements.

- Consider cyclists' access to local businesses when determining which side of street to have bike path.
- The number of side streets and driveways may be a reason not to have a two-way path. Consider a one-way path the full length of each side of Boston Street.

- The project should be designed with middle-school-aged children’s safety and access in mind. This may be a reason to have paths on both sides the full length toward Collins Middle School.
- The design should be mindful of the sudden dips in grade where the bike path crosses side streets and driveways. Consider raised crossings.
- The proposed configuration of the Boston St./Nichols St./Grove St. intersection is a major improvement, but will still be a congested intersection that may not be the right place for funnel all the bike crossing.
- Reduction of the grass strips may help fit bike paths the full length of Boston Street.
- Consider whether some minimal amount of taking of private property could enhance the project.
- Work with Peabody to connect this bike route to the future Peabody Riverwalk and Harmony Grove Road/North River path where they will reach Howley St.
- An evaluation of parking is needed.

Devine requests that the Committee provide any additional comments to him by email within one week.

Appointment of New Member

Colleen Downie, the newly appointed member to the Committee, introduces herself.

Miscellaneous

Sullivan is planning the Famers Market, Arts Festival and Ice Cream Bowl and describes opportunities for engaging the community in bike infrastructure or safety.

Devine provides an update on the upcoming Harbor Plan update process in light of Michael Williamson’s advocacy for connectivity into the power plant site. The City is contracting with Utile to support the process, which is expected to take 12 to 18 months. Once it kicks off, there will be regular public meetings of the Harbor Plan Working Group and probably three general public meetings. Seth Lattrell is the City staff that will be leading the process and he is available for a call or a meeting with anyone who wants to learn more or share ideas in this early part of the process.

Discussion of February 20, 2020 Joint Meeting with Traffic & Parking Commission and Commission on Disabilities Regarding Snow Removal

Members discuss the meeting regarding best practices for snow removal for streets, sidewalks, and bike infrastructure. Participants learned much about the City’s operations, amount of equipment, and the challenge of getting the needed manpower.

Meeting Minutes

O'Neil motions, O'Leary seconds to approve the 10/2/2019, 11/6/2019, 12/4/2019, and 1/8/2020 minutes, and all vote in favor.

Adjourn

Wathne motions and Jaros seconds to adjourn at 8:17 p.m. and all vote in favor.

Approved by the Bicycling Advisory Committee on April 1, 2020.