

TOWN OF AMHERST
CIP Committee

September 9, 2021

APPROVED

1 In attendance: Steve Coughlan - Chair; Beth Kuzsma - Vice Chair; John D'Angelo - Selectman Ex-
2 Officio; and Amy Facey - SAU.

3
4 Staff present: Natasha Kypfer - Town Planner.

5
6 Department/Committee representatives present: Roger Preston - SAU 39 Director of Facilities;
7 Christopher Buchanan - BPAC Chair; and, Rick Katzenberg - BPAC member.

8
9 **Chair Steve Coughlan called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. +/-.**

10
11 Christopher Buchanan and Rick Katzenberg were present to speak on behalf of the Bicycle and Pedestrian
12 Advisory Committee (BPAC).

13
14 Chris Buchanan explained BPAC is a relatively new committee, as it was formed in 2017. He started
15 with a power point presentation. The first slide explained the factors the Committee considers when
16 selecting projects: 1) Using cost-effective opportunities; 2) Contributing to a town-wide network; and, 3)
17 Meeting established needs (requests, volume). The second slide explored cost-effective infrastructure
18 budgeting the Committee considers once a project is selected, including: "Is there upcoming road
19 construction that may offer ~60% costs savings?". If yes, Chris Buchanan explained the Committee raises
20 funds in advance of road construction and builds concurrently with road construction. If no, he asked,
21 "Are there upcoming grant opportunities that may offer cost savings?". If yes, Chris Buchanan explained
22 the Committee seeks to raise the required matching funds in advance of grant application, and
23 subsequently applies for the grant. If no, he stated, funds are sought to be raised conventionally.

24
25 Chris Buchanan reviewed the three priority projects of BPAC, aided by the remaining three slides
26 showing vicinity maps highlighting the "Baboosic Greenway" three segments: the AMS-SHS School
27 Campus Sidepath project; the Village Special Walkway District project; and, the NH DOT Ten Year Plan
28 (#42953) project.

29
30 Chris Buchanan stated BPAC has applied for two grants and is potentially planning to apply for a third
31 soon. He explained that for the types of grants they are applying for, BPAC needs to supply 20% of the
32 funds, and the remaining 80% are provided by the federal government if the grant is awarded. Rick
33 Katzenberg stated that having the funds ready, allows for them to be "more ready" to receive funds, like
34 the upcoming infrastructure bill, and it allows the Committee to be more shovel-ready.

35
36 In response to a question from Amy Facey, Chris Buchanan explained how a portion of the school
37 campus sidepath project extends along the abandoned railway bed between the Village and the high
38 school.

39
40 Chair Steve Coughlan explained how the tax impact forecast spreadsheet functions. He explained how the
41 total cost column works and how the Town portion should be represented, resulting in the capture of the
42 true tax impact to answer the question: "What should the taxpayers expect?". Vice Chair Beth Kuzsma
43 suggests the totals be spaced out versus showing one lump sum. The Committee suggested BPAC look to
44 the school project forms as an example, in order to update the project request forms.

45
46 Amy Facey passed out an updated project request form for the new school building as well as a summary
47 sheet showing all 23 SAU project requests.

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49 Amy Facey explained how the first six line items represent annual contributions from 2023 through 2028
50 to the expendable trust fund to support a funding plan for future capital projects.

51
52 Amy Facey highlighted project request #20, the replacement and upgrade of the turf at Souhegan High
53 School, explaining how there is ~\$60,000 in a separate fund to support this. In addition, \$85,000 from the
54 FY21 Unassigned Fund Balance (UFB) will be added in, plus the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee
55 (JFAC) plans to ask for \$85,000/year from the UFB in order to fully fund this project.

56
57 Amy Facey discussed project request #21, the renovation of the science labs at SHS. She explained this is
58 a planned upgrade and renovation in order for the science classrooms to meet educational needs. JFAC is
59 currently working with the Souhegan Cooperative School Board to determine the timing and funding
60 source for this project.

61
62 Amy Facey highlighted project request #15, the HVAC system upgrade at SHS. She explained how the
63 conditions of the current facilities necessitate a plan for HVAC renovation in order to accommodate
64 educational needs. JFAC is currently exploring the timing and funding, therefore the year request and
65 funding amount are placeholders. The approximate cost is currently at 17 million, previously the estimate
66 was 6 million.

67
68 In response to a review of the Schools summary sheet Amy Facey distributed, Steve Coughlan suggested
69 an amendment to the fiscal year entries for project requests #14 and #15, shifting to 2023 and 2024
70 respectively.

71
72 As a final item, Amy Facey discussed project request #14: the new school. The conditions of the current
73 facilities and the anticipated growth in the community necessitate a plan for building renovation or
74 replacement. The current plan is to replace Clark and Wilkins schools with a new Pre-K – 5 Elementary
75 school and to renovate the Amherst Middle School for Grades 6 – 8. Elementary school estimates run
76 \$50-55 million and the AMS renovation estimate run \$25-30 million. These are both preliminary
77 estimates based on conceptual designs and include both hard construction costs as well as “soft costs” and
78 contingencies.

79
80 Amy Facey mentioned a meeting with the hired architect and engineer from the night prior, noting how
81 contingency assumptions are based on different variables. For example, \$4-5 million could be saved by
82 having a smaller number of classrooms, but that enrollment projections informed the total number
83 planned. John D’Angelo mentioned there is no principal interest the year of request. Roger Preston stated
84 that forty years is the lifespan of a school. Vice Chair Beth Kuzsma discussed the value in the Schools
85 (and all Town departments) to plan ahead over the next 5 – 7 years in order to anticipate future needs.

86
87 The committee reviewed the draft spreadsheet that was handed out at the start of the meeting.

88
89 The last item of business was approval of minutes from the August 12, 2021, meeting.

90
91 **John D’Angelo moved to approve the meeting minutes of August 12, 2021, as presented.**

92 **Beth Kuzsma seconded.**

93 **Voting: 4-0-0; minutes approved unanimously.**

94

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95 The committee agreed to having the final meeting, prior to the presentation to the Planning Board, next
96 Thursday, September 2 at 4 o'clock. This meeting will serve to allow for finalizing and balancing the
97 spreadsheet.

98

99 **At 5:14 p.m. +/- Chair Steve Coughlan adjourned the meeting.**

100

101 Respectfully submitted,

102

103 Natasha Kypfer

104 Town Planner

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106

107

108 Minutes approved: