



**Amherst Bicycle & Pedestrian
Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes - APPROVED
January 11, 2022

1 Meeting attendees: Chris Buchanan – Chair, Wendy Rannenberg, Chris Shenk, Judy Shenk,
2 Patrick Daniel, Rick Katzenberg, John Harvey (remote), George Bower (remote), and Tom
3 Christensen (remote)

4 Staff present: Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary (remote)
5

6 Chris Buchanan called the meeting to order at 7:05pm. He noted that there was participation
7 from Committee members both in-person at Town Hall and remotely via Zoom.
8

9 **1. Updates: Joint Amherst-Milford Grant Project**

10 Chris Buchanan explained that the proposal for this project looks to extend the Amherst Street
11 sidepath toward the Milford Rail Trail entrance and the Baboosic Greenway. There are six
12 different grant opportunities that will be available for this type of project within the next 1.5
13 years, for 100% federal funding opportunities. He believes that the Committee should work to
14 solidify a project proposal and then work on a project narrative that can be used to apply for
15 any future grant. The Milford proposed route is fairly well defined. It is proposed to run from
16 the end of the Amherst Street sidepath, down Souhegan Street toward the Oval, and south
17 along Route 13 to the Rail Trail, which would then lead down to the Massachusetts border.
18 Milford is currently working to get numbers worked out for this route.
19

20 **2. 2022 Warrant Articles**

21 Chris Buchanan explained that one of the Warrant Articles is the second of a three-year
22 request for \$75,000 to fund the Capital Reserve Fund and, specifically, the School Campus
23 Sidepath project. The second Warrant Article is for \$98,000 for design engineering for the
24 Village Multimodal project. There are five roads up for reconstruction in the Village, for a
25 total of \$485,000. This funding could be used to leverage a federal grant match for
26 approximately \$2M in infrastructure. There will be a public input process for these Articles,
27 and the Committee will need to decide how best to educate the public.
28

29 Wendy Rannenberg explained that Selectman D'Angelo had noted at a previous Board of
30 Selectmen meeting that the Amherst Street sidepath project ended up over budget, likely in
31 part because design engineering was not completed beforehand. Thus, it will be important to
32 have this completed prior to pursuing additional projects.
33

34 There was discussion regarding reaching out to the Joint Facilities Advisory Committee about
35 supporting these projects.
36

January 11, 2022

APPROVED – February 8, 2022

Chris Buchanan explained that the motivation behind the Village Multimodal streets project is to leverage matching funds to seek a federal grant in order to improve infrastructure on streets already slated for road reconstruction. This is much more a streetscape project than a multimodal/bike-ped project. This project will enhance motor vehicle traffic and intersection safety.

The group agreed to work on education and outreach for these items.

3. Updates: Public Trails on Private Land

There is one public trail easement that has been signed by the owners and approved by the Board of Selectmen. There is also an existing booklet to explain questions landowners might have about the process. The Committee needs to work on initial contact with landowners along the proposed route regarding easements.

George Bower stated that members of the Amherst Land Trust are willing and available to help meet with landowners. He suggested that members of the Committee invite landowners to participate in a private meeting with the Committee and the Land Trust. He noted that roles need to be defined for all involved parties, including the Amherst Conservation Commission (ACC), if it wants to be part of the project.

John Harvey noted that the ACC has an active trail program and a stewardship program to maintain the trails. He stated that the ACC would continue in this role for trails created through this process. Mr. Bower agreed that the Bike/Ped Committee has no interest in being the one to manage trails created in Town.

Wendy Rannenberg stated that in October the Committee created a list of parcels to discuss this project with. The ACC was tagged to examine seven of these parcels. It is unclear if the ACC has been working on this task to date.

John Harvey stated that he agrees that the Committee should do the footwork in establishing these trails and then hand them over to the ACC for management. He will check with Rob Clemens, Chair of the ACC, for additional comments.

George Bower explained that the most pressing need for this project is determining who will reach out to each landowner to try to move the process forward. One easement has already been executed and another is in process. It is now important to speak to other landowners to get momentum and to help develop grant applications. He stated that there should be a call with Committee and ACC representatives regarding this process shortly. Amherst Land Trust members are then prepared to help approach landowners with the role of representing the landowners' interests.

It was noted that the Committee will work with the ACC to decide how best to approach landowners on the previously developed list with coordination from all three parties. Rick Katzenberg will help to coordinate this process.

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The Committee discussed a spring date to have an event for the Amherst Street sidepath and to place benches along the route, including the Carolyn Mitchell memorial bench. The group tentatively set a date of April 2, 2022 for this event. The group discussed coordinating with the Amherst Garden Club regarding enhancements along the route. Chris Buchanan noted that the Andras Art Institute of Brookline, NH, has agreed to install sculptures along the route in a rotating schedule.

4. December Meeting Minutes

The group tabled review of the December meeting minutes to its next meeting.

Wendy Rannenberg moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:15pm. Seconded by Rick Katzenberg.

Voting: Chris Buchanan - aye, Judy Shenk - aye, Chris Shenk - aye, Rick Katzenberg – aye, Wendy Rannenberg - aye, and Patrick Daniel – aye; 6-0-0, motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristan Patenaude

Approved – February 8, 2022