



**Amherst Bicycle & Pedestrian
Advisory Committee**

Meeting Minutes - APPROVED
April 11, 2023

1 Meeting attendees: Chris Buchanan (remote), Wendy Rannenberg, Judy Shenk, Chris Shenk,
2 Rick Katzenberg, George Bower, and Tom Christensen.
3 Staff present: Eric Slosek – DPW Director (remote), Kristan Patenaude – Recording Secretary
4 (remote)

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6 Rick Katzenberg called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

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8 **1. Article 30 reflections**

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10 The Board discussed the positive outcome of Article 30 at Town Meeting.

11
12 The Committee discussed the possibility of congressional funding and an application from the
13 Committee. Chris Buchanan noted that the outcome of this application will likely be known
14 shortly.

15
16 Rick Katzenberg asked what can be done with the Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) amount of
17 \$135,000. George Bower stated that it would likely remain in the CRF until such time that the
18 Committee kicks off its project.

19
20 Chris Buchanan noted that, if the Town is not selected for congressional funding, an
21 additional TAP grant through the NH DOT will be offered next year. The scope of the
22 proposed project could be amended to pursue this application.

23
24 **2. Grant funding/NHDOT Ten Year Plan & fundraising for local match funding**

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26 Chris Buchanan explained that the State has awarded over \$1M, or 80% of a project, to extend
27 Baboosic Greenway from Courthouse Road to Walnut Hill Road. This will occur through two
28 separate projects, one funded through the federal government. It requires a 20% match from
29 the Town of \$475,913 some of which will be due July 1, 2025. The Committee previously
30 agreed to apply to the Bean Foundation for some of this match. In calls with the Bean
31 Foundation, it was recommended that the Committee apply for \$70,000 in order to obtain a
32 firm match from the resident philanthropist, who is also offering an amount. The Bean
33 Foundation grant was applied for on April 1st. Chris Buchanan stated that he has applied for
34 other 100% grant funding opportunities, though these will not cover the entire amount
35 required.

36
37 The Committee agreed to discuss this item further in May.

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39 **3. County ARPA funding**
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41 Chris Buchanan explained that Amherst and Milford applied for a multi-jurisdictional grant
42 for ARPA funding through the Hillsborough County in March. This is a 100% funding grant
43 request consisting of three mini projects, one of which is the gap between the Milford
44 sidewalks and the Town line along Amherst Street, another is the gap between Boston Post
45 Road and Courthouse Road, and the third would be a ramp from Baboosic Lake Road to the
46 rail bed. These projects, if awarded, would be built within approximately one year. This grant
47 opportunity is more competitive than originally thought. There is \$8.5M of funding available
48 and \$46M worth of applications. The local contribution to this grant is heavily considered,
49 and the local contribution for this project is currently \$0. The results should be known within
50 a month.
51

52 **4. RTP grant opportunity.**
53

54 Chris Buchanan explained that the Shenk family recently made a generous donation to help
55 with surveying and related needs for the Baboosic Lake Greenway Rail Trail. There are
56 eleven parcels along this area where people are in communication with the Committee
57 regarding the prospect of donating easements along the rail bed. Even with the people waiting
58 to sign on the dotted line, the Committee has failed to produce legal property descriptions
59 which can be used to define the rail bed and reference the right materials for the Hillsborough
60 County Registry of Deeds. Furthermore, some parcels require special work, whether that be
61 surveying a spur or other needs. Certain parcels will require more than simply a description of
62 the rail bed. There is an RTP grant, administered by the State of New Hampshire Bureau of
63 Trails, which has an 80/20 match but is not very competitive. He suggested that the
64 Committee could use some funding from the Shenk's donation or team up with the Amherst
65 Conservation Commission (ACC) to assemble the match amount needed. The RTP funding
66 could be used to help hire a survey company, land company, etc., to help with legal property
67 descriptions, as well as survey where necessary. The RTP grant may even provide some
68 funding for the purchasing of easements. The application is due June 10th.
69

70 Wendy Rannenbergh noted that the ACC just spent all of their funding to purchase land in
71 Town and likely will not be available to help fund this item. She noted that this legal
72 description of the rail bed is the only item holding up many of these easement prospects at this
73 time.
74

75 Chris Buchanan suggested that it may be appropriate to go before the Board of Selectmen for
76 this request. The Committee agreed to this suggestion.
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78 **5. Federal funding requests**
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80 Chris Buchanan stated that the school campus project and the bridge over the Souhegan River
81 funding requests were applied to through both Senator Shaheen's and Representative Kuster's

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offices. The results will not be known for a number of months, but early feedback speaks to the fact that matching funds are not available through the Town.

Rick Katzenberg suggested that the Committee find more ways to educate and communicate with the Town regarding its projects. George Bower suggested creating a report at the end of the fiscal year, especially regarding the grant and funding opportunities applied for and if, and why, they failed or succeeded.

Chris Buchanan noted that the Village Streets project, which is now a project of the Board of Selectmen, had its second public input meeting which seemed successful. The consultants for this project will be at a Board of Selectmen meeting on May 15th at 6:30pm to present options and a potential grant application.

6. February 14, 2023 Minutes

George Bower moved to approve the February 14, 2023, minutes, as presented.

Seconded by Wendy Rannenberg.

Vote: 6-0-0, motion carried unanimously.

Chris Buchanan explained that the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) would like to join the Committee at its meeting next month, May 9th. There are two multimodal counters along the Amherst Street sidepath and NRPC would like to come and teach the Committee how to extract and upload that information. The Committee agreed to meet at 6:30pm for a site walk along the sidepath with NRPC on May 9th. The Committee would then continue to Town Hall for the rest of its meeting.

Chris Buchanan noted that the Committee should schedule a non-public session to discuss details of the proposed easement sections along the rail bed. The Committee agreed to try to do this at its May 9th meeting.

Eric Slosek, DPW Director, stated that there is planned work for the upper Mack Hill Road section. This is out for bid at this time. Based on pricing, it will be determined how much work can be done. He stated that the best course of action would be to propose advisory shoulders along the road as a pilot project to the Board of Selectmen. George Bower suggested extending the pavement to Remington Road with an advisory shoulder to create a path into Joe English.

Wendy Rannenberg moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:02pm. Seconded by Chris Shenk.

Vote: 6-0-0, motion carried unanimously.

*Respectfully submitted,
Kristan Patenaude*