



www.southhadley.org/bikewalk

Bike/Walk Committee Minutes

Tuesday, March 19, 2024 at 6:00pm via Zoom

Roll Call

Anne Barry, Andy Rogers, Recreation Director; Ruth Camuse, Larry Dubois, Lucia Foley, Marilyn Gass, Jake Woodruff

Absent, Pat Tracey, Jim Buckley, Caroline Martin

Guest: René Gosser

Approval of Minutes

Anne made a motion, seconded by Jake, to approve the February 13, 2024 minutes as written, and all agreed.

OLD BUSINESS

Treks

▪ **March 10, 2024—Mount Holyoke Trek—Sunday at 1:00pm**

Ruth gave an overview of the MCH Trek and commented on the very interesting information about the campus provided by volunteer Trek guides Wayne Gass and Paul Breen, both former facilities managers.

▪ **April 20, 2024—Earth Day Vernal Pool Trek at Bynan—Saturday at 2:00pm**

Last year's Earth Day Trek was very well attended and Rebekah is willing to lead another one this year. She will forward additional information prior to the event. Lucia will forward a press release and Rebekah will promote the event through the Conservation Corps, Conservation Commission, and Rec Department email lists.

▪ **May 8, 2024—Falls Canal Area History Trek (Walking Tour and Van Tour)—Wednesday, Times TBD**

In addition to a Walking Tour of the area with Historian Leo LaBonte that is open to all and will begin at the library parking lot, there will also be a narrated Van Tour for 10 people, with advance registration at Senior Center. Free van transport from the Senior Center to the Library and back will also be offered through advance registration at the Senior Center for up to 12 people who wish to participate in the walking tour but need a ride to do so. The program will be provided through a partnership among the South Hadley Bike/Walk Committee, the South Hadley Council on Aging, and the South Hadley Historical Commission.

▪ **May 18, 2024—Conservation Commission Bird Walk at River to Range Trail—Saturday**

Rebekah will also lead this spring walk; additional details to come.

▪ **May 19, 2024—South Hadley Spring Bike Month Ride—Sunday at 1:00pm**

Jake and Anne will review the route, which will start from the lot behind the Village Commons and go to Ferry Street and the MHC Boathouse area, by Brunelle's to River Road and Upper River Road toward Stonegate and back up to Alvord, then left to stop at McCray's for ice cream and back to the center. The cemetery on the route is also interesting, as some of it was moved at one point. They estimate the route to be about 8-9 miles and plan to publicize on MassBike, with notices for middle and high schools to go to Andy so he can submit to their newsletters. Anne will send write-up and the route mapped by Apple watch to Lucia for the Ride map.

Community Seating

We need to write a letter to Jeff Cyr to bring to District 1 Water Commission requesting consideration of placing a bench, perhaps with some native plantings, on the area outside their entrance so walkers along the newly finished sidewalks on Route 202 would have a place to rest along the route.

Considerations for Data Collection and Mapping:

René Grosser, who moved to South Hadley last year and saw our information about the Community Seating project on our web page, reached out via email to the Bike/Walk Committee as he has expertise in mapping projects and thought he might be able to help. After meeting with Lucia and Ruth, René forwarded a discussion paper based on Marilyn's seating inventory that outlined considerations for data collection and mapping. The paper, which also included some online map examples, was shared with Bike/Walk members.

One suggestion René made about the data to be collected was to build on Marilyn's initial inventory. One data element at the initial meeting had to do with accessibility/ADA compliance; condition would be another, and more discussion is needed to identify exact needs. Larry, who is still a Disabilities Commission member, note that a pad 3.5 feet wide is needed for a wheelchair. Additional needs include accommodations to prevent those in wheelchairs from being separated from others, and the location itself must be accessible for those with disabilities or people with baby carriages, etc. Federal/state loans require ADA compliance. While hard surface many not be required, it must be able to hold up for a wheelchair and have no gaps between pavement and other surfaces. There are also installation ratios (for example, see the Beachgrounds). René noted that there may be multiple data sets needed. Three examples for mapping were offered in the paper: Google Map and Felt (both online), as well as traditional GIS software for a graphic map in a handout or posted as a PDF (this is more flexible). Map types could be used for different purposes and in combination with each other.

To move ahead, we need to think about how mapping will be used. Marilyn suggested that people would want to know what is available in a given area for accessible seating. Larry suggested that elevation might be important. Ruth also noted that, in addition to use by those going on a hike or whatever, maps would also be used for planning purposes to see gaps in coverage. Lucia suggested additional data might include location information, such as scenic views, proximity to public transportation such as bus stops, or shopping.

Perhaps an overlay on the bench map might include data about where people are doing things (from crowd-based sites like Map My Run and other route-based sites). Straba shows popular routes. There are also benches not included in Marilyn's list, but clear criteria are needed for inclusion. It may make sense to include locations on private land (such as a business) that is intended for public use; perhaps with for providing permission to list the location.

It was decided that a small workgroup will work to identify issues and report back to the larger group.

Bike Racks

Anne and Jake haven't had a chance yet to work on this. Larry suggested asking about placement on a right of way, and he will email Andy on that.

Valley Bike Share

A Bike Share vendor has been selected by Northampton, but anticipates there will be fewer bikes. Planning/Conservation Coordinator Colleen Canning forwarded a summary about the project under review, which has been discussed by the Selectboard. There will be a higher buy-in for participation and to remain within the Valley Bike program. Jake noted that for sustainability and accessibility, this resource should exist for our community, noting that it is more flexible than working around a bus schedule, and the program offered reduced fees for lower income users. Members will write to Selectboard members to express our support for the program.

NEW BUSINESS

Master Plan Matrix Update

Lucia completed the March update and it was reviewed by Ruth and Andy. Everyone agreed that the report should go to the MP Committee.

2024 Annual Town Report—Ruth and Lucia will see that the Bike/Walk report is written and submitted.

NEXT BIKE/WALK COMMITTEE MEETING

A motion to adjourn by Larry was seconded by Jim and approved by all at 7:15pm.

The next Bike/Walk meeting will be held at **6:00pm on Tuesday, April 9, 2024 via Zoom**

Respectfully submitted, Lucia Foley, Member

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Master Plan Tasks

Actions for which Bike/Walk is the primary entity are:

- G1-1:** Development of brochures/trail maps, support for wayfinding **(ST)**
- G1-2:** Encourage families/school children to use/enjoy outdoor resources **(I)**
- G2-1:** Create master map for locating outdoor seating/gathering areas **(ST)**
- G3-2:** Develop commemorative bench program **(ST)**

Also, related action for Trek planning:

- G1-14:** Develop historic walks around town **(ST)**
(Primary Entity-Historic Commission; Sub-Entities-Disabilities Commission, Bike/Walk)