



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

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## MERRIMACK BICYCLE

### APPROVED MINUTES

**Tuesday, September 16, 2014**

**Planning Board Members Present:** Alastair Millns, Desirea Falt, and Nelson Disco.

**Others Present:** NRPC Transportation Planner II Matt Waitkins, Public Works Director Rick Seymour, Planning and Zoning Administrator Jillian Harris, and Assistant Planner Donna Pohli.

#### 1. Call to Order.

Chair Desirea Falt called the Merrimack Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Work Group (Group) meeting to order at 7:30pm in the Matthew Thornton Meeting Room.

Item #4 was taken up before items #2 and #3.

#### 4. Update on NHDOT expectations.

The Group recapped a meeting with NHDOT Highway Maintenance District 5 employees Rich Radwanski and Bill O'Donnell, that Tim Thompson, Jillian Harris, Donna Pohli, Desirea Falt and Nelson Disco attended on Monday September 15, 2014 in the Community Development Conference Room. During the meeting, NH DOT District 5 explained their letter from last winter saying that it was primarily in regards to Route 3 since Continental Boulevard is in the Turnpike Authority's jurisdiction and that the small section of 101A has existing sidewalks already.

The take away from the meeting is that NH DOT District 5 was not aware that the Group would like to see sidewalks along both sides of Route 3 North of Greeley Street. DOT would like to see where the Group predicts future sidewalks are needed. To do this, a map showing existing infrastructure, including drainage infrastructure and existing sidewalks should be created. Priority areas of where the Group would like to see sidewalks in the future would also be necessary. Coupled with the map(s) would be a list of priority locations to add sidewalks with an explanation of how to tie into the existing drainage infrastructure ideally. After the Group showed NH DOT District 5 the Bedford, NH Bike/Ped Plan, DOT District 5 said a plan similar to Bedford's would be satisfactory but the same intensity of the plan would not be necessary to meet their expectations. The thought of focusing first on a plan for only Route 3 north of Greeley Street was brought up. It was also announced that in the future, District 5 may be looking for a 100' right of way and that if possible the Planning Board should start planning for that future need as the Group creates this initial Route 3

corridor plan. Staff will continue to try to get a hold of their suggested contact Tom Jameson, a Highway Design Project Manager, on possible funding opportunities.

The Group agreed that the initial focus should be on creating a map showing the existing pedestrian, bicycle, and drainage infrastructure for Route 3. Staff will work with Matt Waitkins from NRPC to see if they are able to create such a map with the necessary layers using the Town's existing stormwater drainage data. Staff and Desirea Falt will also draft a brief/initial project scope to send to NRPC so that NRPC is aware of what the Group is looking for and can determine how much help NRPC can give the Group at this stage.

## **2. Project Scope.**

Staff and Desirea Falt will begin to put together a brief project scope write-up to send to NRPC in order to begin the process of creating the Route 3 Corridor Plan. Staff will also ask if it is appropriate to have the Group consult Legal Counsel about how new "payment in lieu" regulations can legally be put in place.

## **3. Discussion with NRPC.**

Matt Waitkins, Transportation Planner II from NRPC, was in attendance and explained that he has roles with both the NRPC Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (an update to the 2005 plan) and as the Safe Routes to School Facilitator. He discussed that his Regional plan committee, which Nelson Disco also sits on, is looking at why the 2005 Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian plan was not implemented in ways it was intended to. He began comparing the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian plan to a local one such as the Group is proposing. Matt Waitkins sent around a draft of the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian plan update for the Group to observe. He explained that implementation specific to pedestrians often must occur at the local level rather than regional level. He explained how the plan is outlined into Goals, Objectives, Actions, and Strategies and gave examples of each. Matt Waitkins or Nelson Disco will provide the Group with the Appendix to the Regional Plan Draft.

## **5. Discussion regarding Safe Routes to School Plan.**

Matt Waitkins briefly explained the process for creating the Safe Routes to School Plan (SRTS) for Merrimack in 2013. The SRTS plan fell under a subcommittee of the Town Center Committee. Nelson Disco explained that the Town Center Committee strictly focuses on one area whereas the Group will be focusing on larger portions of Merrimack. Matt Waitkins listed some questions used in the SRTS questionnaire and will send the questionnaire to staff. The Group realizes that the questionnaire would need to be expanded to cover all of Merrimack's residents rather than just students and parents. Matt Waitkins suggested the Group's future Bike/Ped Master Plan also consider shorter trips in smaller walkable neighborhoods with places to walk to rather than focusing on a pedestrian getting north to south along Route 3.

Alastair Millns commented on the bike lane from Durham to Dover and wondered how they were able to get that done. Donna Pohli explained that she believed it took several years of small steps to have the bicycle infrastructure present today.

Nelson Disco would like to have executive summaries created based off of the regional plan and the future local bike/ped master plan to more easily inform the public about active transportation. Matt Waitkins agreed that it is always good to make plans friendly and easily readable. Matt Waitkins also suggested including a complete streets check list and using the Livable/Walkable Toolkit approach rather than just looking at infrastructure in the Merrimack bike/ped master plan.

Nelson Disco expressed his concern that drainage runoff inventory will take more time. Rick Seymour explained that the Town already has a drainage layer on GIS that is fairly up to date.

The Group reiterated that Bob Best offered to put together a letter to send to Town Council inviting them to participate in the planning process for the bike/ped plan.

## **6. Public Outreach Ideas/Timeline.**

The Group explained that the focus for the end of 2014 would be on Route 3 by creating a map with existing and proposed priority infrastructure and then in 2015 begin the public outreach portion for the entire bike/ped plan. Desirea Falt explained that she, Nelson Disco and Donna Pohli have been attending the training sessions with NH HEAL which share other ideas of gaining public input. The public input ideas will depend on funding so the Group should revisit the topic after receiving further information on funding.

Nelson Disco will try to find additional information regarding the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP).

## **7. Minutes-August 12, 2014**

The minutes from the August 12, 2014 meeting were approved, with changes, by a vote of 2-0-1 on a motion made by Nelson Disco and seconded by Desirea Falt. Alastair Millns abstained.

## **8. Adjourn.**

The September 16, 2014 meeting of the Merrimack Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Work Group was adjourned at 8:52pm, by a vote of 3-0-0 on a motion by Alastair Millns and seconded by Nelson Disco.