



## South Hadley Bike/Walk Committee

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## South Hadley Bike/Walk Committee (BWC) Minutes August 17, 2016

Present: Mariann Millard, Melissa O'Brien, Nancy Bozek, Lucia Foley, Marilyn Gass, Margaret Jodoin

Guests: Doris Dubois

The July 20, 2016 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved with some minor edits.

### Membership

Linda Young has submitted her resignation. She has been a valuable member of the group since it was first formed as a subcommittee of the Sustainability and Energy Commission. Her service has been much appreciated and she will be greatly missed.

The BWC webpage has been updated to reflect the resignation as well as the newly elected offices of chair and vice-chair. The town will advertise the opening, and BWC will follow up with details our town web page, Facebook, and an informational email to our mailing list. A one-page information sheet will be developed to share with the town and prospective members about the committee and its structure, goals, and meeting.

### Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) Task Force Update | Melissa O'Brien, Task Force Member

Melissa reported that she supplied priorities identified by BWC in response to Chris Curtis's request to prioritize a partial project list. The next PVPC Task Force meeting is scheduled for 4:30pm on September 14, 2016. She anticipates that a final draft of the Comprehensive Plan for Bicycle-Pedestrian Routes and Hiking Trails and recommendations will be available at that time, as PVPC will make a presentation to the Selectboard in September.

### Communications Update | Mariann Millard, Communications Liaison

**Routes 33/202 Intersection:** Mr. Yee from MassDOT has responded to correspondence from BWC on our proposal for a protected intersection design, citing timeline and funding constraints. The area is not now wide enough this, so additional funding and time would be needed to obtain rights-of-way to make a change. As the project must be completed this year within the existing budget, they must work within existing plans. Mr. Yee indicated that striped bike lanes would be included in the intersection design. He has forwarded a detailed response to Mike Sullivan, and Mariann will follow up with Mike to see if there is anything more that BWC needs to do.

**School Lane:** Redevelopment Authority member and Falls resident Diane LaRoche, emailed Mike Sullivan about the condition of School Lane. Debris from a nearby apartment dumpster and low tree branches make the area unsafe for pedestrians. Mike Sullivan has promised to have the lane evaluated and it could potentially be added to the town's work plan. We will check back with Mike and DPW Superintendent Jim Reidy at our September meeting.

**MassWorks Grant Proposal:** BWC will forward a letter of support to Mike Sullivan in connection with this year's proposal, which would provide a transportation link from the Falls to the recently completed train station in Holyoke. The letter outlines our support for a protected intersection at Route 116, increased bike/walk opportunities and appropriate infrastructure, as well as a network/connection with the Chicopee Riverfront Trail.

**Canal Park Bike Rack:** Mike Sullivan had requested BWC support for the proposed installation of a bike rack at the Canal Park overlook. BWC members supported installation without reservation, which will be relayed to Mike.

### Falls Redevelopment Authority (RA)

The original plan, which included roundabouts as a prominent feature, is available on the RA website. Some changes to these are being considered and the latest draft, presented at a recent meeting attended by Linda Young, shows

three scenarios, including a protected intersection. As sidewalks on both sides of the street to the library and a number of multi-use paths are mentioned in the plan, BikeWalk Committee are encouraged to review the plan. The next Redevelopment Authority advisory meeting has not yet been scheduled. Diane LaRoche is also working with Mariann to schedule a joint BWC-RA meeting to informally discuss the proposed biking/walking pathways in the plan.

### Planning Board

A recent public hearing held in connection with the removal of 10 trees to enhance safety and accommodate repaving/widening of Alvord Street resulted in approval. Once the work is done, the Tree Committee will assess possible replacements. The pavement will include 3-foot shoulders on both sides of the road for use by bikers and walkers. This is the maximum width that could be consistently accomplished within the constraints of the project.

### Conservation Commission

Janice Stone is working on a new Black Stevens write-up that will hopefully be available for our September Trek. Other content updates from the CC are progressing more slowly due to lack of time and staff. A Mount Holyoke College intern is slated to assist this fall with a project aimed at improving information available online about Conservation lands and how they may be accessed and enjoyed by the public.

### Other Town Committees and Groups

Gillian Woldorf of the South Hadley Falls Neighborhood Association requested BWC support for their planned fall neighborhood cleanup on 10/22. BWC members are encouraged to spread the word and attend if available. Mariann will have more details posted to the BWC Facebook page as well as including it in a monthly Trek announcement once further event details are available.

### Open Streets (11am to 3:00pm on May 7, 2017)

A planning meeting on 8/4/16 brought together a number of South Hadley and Holyoke residents to discuss initial plans for a cross-community Open Streets event focused on the Route 116 bridge and the Connecticut River as a unifying connection. Interim South Hadley Police Chief Steven Parentela and South Hadley Department of Public Works Superintendent Jim Reidy were also in attendance to provide information about logistics, and Selectman Ira Brezinsky was present as a representative of MASH. Sean Condon of Holyoke and Mariann Millard of South Hadley will be co-chairs. The event will be planned for 11am to 3pm on Sunday, 5/7/17, rain or shine. There will be no theme, per se, but the name "A Sunday in SoHo: An Open Streets Festival" was suggested.

In South Hadley, Main Street will be closed from the South Hadley Public Library to Beach Grounds Park. Holyoke will focus on Race Street/Dwight Street to Heritage Park. Sean will connect with MassDOT about possibilities for closing the Route 116 bridge during the festival. Chief Parentela suggested that options for partial closing may be available should this not be possible. Subcommittees will include Logistics, Music and Entertainment/Activities, Recruitment and Outreach, Funding/Sponsorship, Food/Beverage, Publicity/Marketing. Everyone will need to do some outreach with their contacts to bring other people on board to assist with subcommittee work.

The next planning meeting is scheduled for 6:30pm on September 22, 2016 at the South Hadley Public Library.

### Monthly Treks

The 9/18/16 Trek at the Black Stevens conservation area will include an interpretive talk by horticulturalist and Tree Committee member Mike Lamontagne. Melissa and Nancy will lead the trek. In the event of inclement weather, the Trek will be postponed to 9/25. Details have been posted at southhadley.gov/bikewalk and media announcements will be forwarded for Facebook and local media. Two email blasts to our mailing list will also be scheduled, and information will be provided to Martha Terry for distribution to her town-wide email list.

An October Trek is planned for 10/16/16 at Mount Holyoke College. The Trek at Bachelor Brook-Stony Brook conservation area has been rescheduled to 12/4/16 and a new Canal Park Trail Trek is planned for 11/20/16.

### FY17 Committee Goals

Those present agreed on these primary focus areas for FY17: Open Streets, Master Bike/Walk Plan, Monthly Treks, and supporting other town committees to enhance/promote bike/walk opportunities.

### BikeWalk Committee Meeting Dates

Meetings for the balance of 2016 are scheduled for 7:00pm on third Wednesdays at the South Hadley Public Library: 9/21/16, 10/19/16, 11/16/16 and 12/21/16. Nancy Bozek will act as Clerk for the 9/21/16 meeting. The October meeting date will be further discussed in September as Mariann is not available to chair the meeting on 10/19.

### Announcements

Mariann reminded members that an opportunity is available for Bike/Walk members to attend an Audubon Society training scheduled for 9/22-24, which includes a workshop on trail stewardship. Mike Sullivan is willing to reimburse up to four BWC members for the cost of the program.

Marilyn shared an article about the Worcester Polytechnic Institute Gompei's Gears bike-share program and app.

Mariann reminded members of her upcoming 3-week vacation out of the country from 8/26-9/18. Melissa Obrien as vice-chair will be available for any urgent and/or important matters during this time period.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lucia Foley