



**Complete Streets Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
4/21/2020**

ATTENDEES:

Chris Buchanan, Town of Amherst Julie Chizmas, City of Nashua Tom Christensen, NH Rail Trail Association Ryan Friedman, NRPC	Betsy Gamrat, Nashua Rick Katzenberg, Amherst Jay Minkarah, NRPC Matt Waitkins, NRPC
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CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Waitkins called the meeting to order at 1:05pm.

AGENDA ITEM #1: NH101A RAIL TRAIL DISCUSSION

To discuss the feasibility of developing a rail trail and/or rail-with-trail bike path along the NH101A corridor.

Topics of discussion included:

- Consider the formation of a regional coalition to coordinate outreach, planning, research, and other related activities
- Consider the initiation of a corridor feasibility study
- Consider federal funding opportunities and what work would be required to be considered
- Consider an appropriate course of action regarding how to approach current landowners and rights of way.

Some basic estimated data points:

Within a half-mile, either side, of the NH101A rail corridor between downtown Wilton and Main St/Library Hill in Nashua there are approximately (courtesy of Ryan at NRPC):

- 35,000 jobs (including 6,500 retail)
- 15,000 households
- 36,000 population
- 26 municipal buildings (including 2 libraries, 3 post offices, 6 schools, and 2 town halls)
- 300,000 yearly NTS pickups

Discussion:

Should the CSAC pursue the idea of developing a rail trail?

- One option is for the CSAAC to adopt this as a strategy and assign a working group.
- Another strategy could include a range of interest groups that have an interest in developing a rail trail but may not be interested in other aspects of the complete streets.

- This strategy would include a broader reach of interest groups which could be advantageous.
- NRPC would support this strategy and provide initial data towards developing a corridor profile.

Is this politically feasible?

- Non-partisan approach:
 - It will be important to have buy-in from communities along the corridor
 - A delegation from each community along the corridor is necessary
 - Key individuals will need to be contacted.
- Consensus among the group is that it will be necessary to include property owners near or in the rail ROW in any planning effort early in the process.
- Property owners should be approached early in the process, so they aren't broadsided when any planning effort becomes public.
 - However, prior to approaching key stakeholders such as PanAm the group should develop a better understanding of the corridor profile.

What should be included in the corridor profile?

- Length of corridor
- Width of Right of Way
- Parcel ownership
- Adjacent land uses
- Choke points
- Public access points
- Amenities within ¼ mile walking shed and a x-mile bike shed
- Rail trail vs. rail-with-trail
- Identify best practices (this will be helpful when approaching PanAM).

Main components of corridor profile

- Benefits of rail trail
 - Economic benefits
 - Recreational benefits
 - Health benefits, other social benefits
- Feasibility
 - Cost of ROW
 - Political hurdles
- Best Practices
 - Rail trail vs. rail-with-trail
 - Examples of where this is working
 - Stowe, VT tourism trail

Working Group

Chris Buchanan
 Ryan Friedman
 Tom Christianson
 Matt Waitkins

Next Steps

- Outreach
 - o Matt will reach out to individuals in Merrimack, Hollis, Milford, Wilton, and Brookline
- Ryan will begin developing a map of the corridor that will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the data mentioned above
- Chris and Tom will research best practices and economic benefits.
- Tom mentioned that NH Rail Trail Coalition is developing a survey to identify amenities on NH rail trails. He will provide the information when it becomes available.

Next Meeting: TBD

ADJOURN:

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 2:30

NEXT MEETING

TBD