

Montpelier Complete Streets Committee

July 10, 2019 at 5:30 pm

Montpelier City Hall – City Manager’s Conference Room

Members Present

Gary Holloway, Chair

Jeanne Kern

Phoenix Mitchell

Nancy Schulz

Others Present

Conor Casey, City Councilor

Carl Etnier

Rick Monk

Philip Picotte

Linda River Valente

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was amended to add (1) approval of May meeting minutes and (2) discussion about the city street sweeper. The agenda, with amendments, was approved by voice vote.

Approval of May and June Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes for both May and June were approved by voice vote.

Public Comments

Linda River Valente expressed interest in pedestrianizing State Street between Elm Street and Main Street. This includes the Rialto Bridge above the North Branch of the Winooski River. Linda noted that Montpelier has a strong walking culture and pedestrianizing this block would enhance appreciation for the river below.

2018 E-Scooter Pilot Review

Councilor Conor Casey review of the e-scooter pilot of October and November 2018. He noted that:

- Bird (the scooter company) felt it was a successful pilot. However, Bird is not interested in managing inventory and logistics for Montpelier alone, given the small population, and does not expect to return to Vermont unless a larger city (such as Burlington) also hosts Bird scooters.
- No scooter accidents were reported to Montpelier Police. There were some users who violated rules (e.g., failing to wear helmets, riding on sidewalks).
- In post-pilot feedback, residents who actually rode a scooter were much more likely to support scooters.
- The pilot included around 85 scooters and 800 riders. Bird gave away 300 helmets.
 - o Average rides per scooter per day was 2.4; that figure is higher than scooter programs in other cities.
 - o 2,500 miles traveled within Montpelier city limits during the pilot.
- Councilors are interested in companies providing e-bikes that would climb hills. The City of Burlington is working with Gotcha on e-bikes for 2019, and Montpelier may issue an RFP for an e-bike program later in the year.

Cycling without Age

Rick Monk described the [Cycling without Age](#) goal to provide recreation and transportation activities to senior citizens using a very stable bicycle rickshaw. A DC-based rickshaw is available for use in Montpelier during the summer. Rick invited use by Montpelier and Barre senior organizations, retirement communities, and churches offering senior activities.

Attendees suggested contacting Project Independence in Barre and the Gary Residence. Both are on flat streets with slow traffic, and the Gary Residence has access to the bike path. Nancy recommended recruiting Onion River Outdoors for free maintenance and recruiting pedicab pilots. An effort in Montpelier would require insurance and a liability release form.

The rickshaw is in Montpelier for this summer and could return next summer.

Questions for the Department of Public Works

Public Works Director Tom McArdle joined the Committee at its last meeting and is preparing to answer follow-up questions. Gary noted that some relevant topics appear in the weekly City Manager's report.

The Citizen Request Tracker is available online but not being actively promoted as the City website is being redone. Gary will follow up with Corey Line about status. Gary will also ask the City Manager if the Complete Streets Committee can participate in the process to hire a new Public Works Director, as Tom is retiring.

Bridge Ad

The late July ad in *The Bridge* will note the four-foot recommended passing law and why cyclists may use the entire travel lane when necessary (e.g., avoiding road hazards, turning left, staying clear of opening car doors).

Siboinibi River Path

Gary and John Snell have identified sign locations along the new path. (Siboinibi means "river water" in the western Abenaki language.) The path is on schedule for October completion. Gary and John are aiming for laser etched signs, although east post takes up to an hour depending on detail and etching depth. Phoenix said he can help determine sign options. Phoenix and Linda said they would like to be involved in creating and placing signs along the path.

Potential New Members

Gary noted there are open seats on the Committee and encouraged interested citizens to complete the application form on the City website. Carl Etnier said he is interested in joining but is an East Montpelier resident. The Committee is open to residents of other municipalities. Gary said he is working with Matt McLane at Montpelier High School, and Jeanne is working with VCIL, to recruit other members.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:38 pm.