

CITY OF PORTLAND, MAINE
Committee on Sustainability and Transportation
Councilor Andrew Zarro (D4), Chair
Councilor Victoria Pelletier (D2)
Councilor Roberto Rodriguez (At-Large)

Minutes September 14, 2022

Members Present: Councilor Zarro, Councilor Rodriguez, Councilor Pelletier

Staff Present: Troy Moon, Erin Ferrell, Bruce Hyman, Katie Tims

Guests: Mayor Snyder, Councilor Ali, Emma Bond, Nancy Grant

Meeting called to order.

July 13 Minutes

Councilor Rodriguez moves to approve the July 13th meeting minutes. Councilor Pelletier seconds the motion. June 8th minutes passed unanimously, 3-0.

Sustainability Update

Presented by Troy Moon

The Office welcomed a new team member in August, Katie Tims. She will be focusing on education and community engagement. Courtney Crossgrove has been a huge help to the office and her term will end in October. EV charging usage continues to grow. Food waste recycling program continues to be successful with sites reviewed weekly. Electrify Everything! Pilot year has come to a close with the last site visits happening in October. The office believes we have reached the intended goal of 75 residents assisted but will know an exact number later on. The Office is working on creating the next version.

Bird Safe Glass policy is in development with help from the PSA and Maine Audobon. The Office has held numerous outreach events including a pop-up fair in the park, Wayside picnics, presentations to north atlantic bioregion, sustainable landcare event, and coffee and climate.

Committee Comment on Sustainability Update

Councilor Zarro asks if Electrify Everything! Will conclude with survey to participants and vendors to receive feedback on how the program worked for residents and vendors.

Yes, the office is currently working on a survey that will go out later in October to ask for this feedback. The next version of the program will be different and the office is working on creating the new version.

Portland Bikeshare Program

Presented by Bruce Hyman

This was a very collaborative process with many departments in the City. Program goals include promoting bicycling as a sustainable transportation mode, expanding low-cost/low-barrier and equitable transport options, providing 1st mile-last mile options – connect to other modes, decrease drive alone trips, supporting transportation demand management programs, expanding tourism travel options/encourage car-free visits. Tandem Mobility was chosen as partner in August 2021 and program launched August 15th, 2022. There are currently 25

Tandem station and 13 virtual stations. There will be 150 cruiser bikes and 50 e-bikes. There are few off-peninsula stations right now.

A user would download the Movatic app, find a station, select the bike you want, bluetooth is used to unlock the bike. Pedal bikes are \$1 to unlock, \$.15 per min – e-bikes are \$2 to unlock, \$.30 per min. Return and lock bikes to stop charges. In the first month, there were 802 users with 2,203 rides. Official launch celebration on 9/16/22. The system will operate into November with a few key locations staying in the winter. System performance will be reviewed after the end of the season.

Councilor Comment on Bikeshare Program

Councilor Pelletier asks about the equity aspect of the bikeshare and if there could be an alternative unlocking method without a credit card or phone. *The planning department is working on this and looking into locations where residents could purchase a cash card to use to access the bike. For those who want to use the program with no phone, the department is looking into creating an online signup form to use.* Councilor asks if the department looked into connecting with schools about setting up locations near schools so students could use them. *Bruce mentions that they have not directly looked into connecting with schools but there are locations near Portland High School and they can expand to more schools in future years.* Is there any thought about Tandem connecting with social service organizations or if there could be a bike loan program for those unable to make the payments? *This is something they could look into in the future. The pilot year included much work on the infrastructure for the program.*

Councilor Rodriguez asks if there is any way to collect data on the purpose of use for the riders, whether users are going to work or using for pleasure. *Bruce mentions that is not being collected now but the department has emails of riders and could send out a survey asking these questions.* In initial planning, was there a desired use? *Bruce mentions that they estimated 1/3 work, 1/3 tourism, 1/3 leisure.* Councilor Rodriguez notes the possibility of subsidizing passes for students. In the winter, where will bikes be stored and what is Tandem's responsibility? *Tandem stations will be removed by them. Virtual stations will remain in place. Contract goes through November for the year but it may end sooner.*

Councilor Ali agrees with Councilor Pelletier's notes on the accessibility of the program to those without phones or credit cards. Councilor adds the idea of creating a bicycle hub to loan bikes. Is there any plan to make sure that bikes will not be left in the street? *Tandem proposed a system to prevent this happening. Bikes need to be docked in specific locations and bikes are geotagged.*

Mayor Snyder asks if those who sign up for a monthly subscription works if the bikes are removed for winter sooner than expected. Will amounts be prorated? *Bruce will find the answer to that question and will share with Troy for the next update.*

Councilor Zarro advocates for off peninsula locations. Is staff planning on an educational how-to for the public? *Continuous outreach for launching the program has been a big priority. The next step would be explaining how to use it and Bruce is very open to focusing more on education.*

Naming Donatelli Square

Presented by Councilor Ali

This is about a community family and individuals that helped make Munjoy Hill what it is today. Recognizing and naming the square will help protect the area. Councilor Ali notes they are owners of the history of Munjoy Hill. Councilor Ali would like to make two amendments to the proposed naming to include Lafayette and North St to the proposed language to make it a full square. The name Vange should be used instead of Vonge so that it is spelled correctly.

Public Comment on Naming Donatelli Square

No public comment

Councilor Comment on Naming Donatelli Square

No councilor comment.

Passage of Naming Donatelli Square

Councilor Rodriguez motions to recommend to the council. Councilor Pelletier seconds. The recommendation is approved 3-0.

Amended language:

Add Lafayette and North St to the existing language. Name Vange should be used instead of Vonge so it is correctly spelled.

Motion to Adopt the two Amendments the Language of Naming Donatelli Square

Councilor Rodriguez motions to recommend to council. Councilor Zarro seconds.

Recommendation approved 3-0.

Motion to Recommend the Naming Donatelli Square with Amended Language to the Council

Councilor Rodriguez motions to recommend to the council. Councilor Pelletier seconds. The recommendation is approved 3-0.

Casco Bay Trail Alliance

Presented by Emma Bond and Nancy Grant

The Casco Bay Trail Alliance requests the S&T keep abreast of developments at the Advisory Council through Portland representative and incorporate off-road trails, including Casco Bay Trail into long-term plan for Portland. The full trail starts in Portland and the section under consideration now goes up to Auburn. The Casco Bay Trail would provide off-road trail infrastructure for more than Portland and connect many areas. Benefits of this trail include lowered ghg emissions with fewer car trips and connecting passengers to public transit options; better physical and mental health connecting people with the outdoors; the trail would be accessible to all users - bikes, walking, running, wheelchairs, and more; as well as economic benefits.

The Advisory Council considers the best use of the SLA Corridor. MDOT consultants have provided preliminary cost estimates which includes large investments. Next steps in the Advisory Council includes sharing the report on the 2022 rail feasibility study (the one that eliminates the Ocean Gateway route from further consideration), MDOT consultants will provide estimates and economic impacts for each of the available options, and the Advisory council members will vote on the recommendation to MDOT.

Councilor Comment on Casco Bay Trail Alliance

Councilor Pelletier asks who makes up the advisory council and what steps are taken to make sure all voices are heard? *The members are decided by the state legislature law. Members include representatives from each town along the trail, one from DOT, a train advocate, a trail advocate, and some more nonprofits in Maine, Bicycle Coalition of Maine, someone from GPCOG. There are many people on the council and not just Portland. There is also an ongoing public comment site throughout the process with a public meeting in later 2022 with live public comment. Each meeting includes time for public comment.*

Councilor Zarro asks that Emma stay in touch with the date of any public event.

Councilor Rodriguez notes that transparency is very important and it is difficult to make sure all are aware we are discussing potential use and everyone should have the opportunity to share their views.

Other Business

Councilor Zarro asks that fellow councilors bring forward any additional business as the year comes to an end.

Motion to Adjournment

Councilor Rodriguez motions to adjourn. Councilor Pelletier seconds.

Meeting Adjourned