



www.southhadley.org/bikewalk

Bike/Walk Committee Minutes

Tuesday, August 8, 2023 at 6:00pm via Zoom

Roll Call

Andy Rogers, Recreation Director; Anne Barry, Jim Buckley (joined late from out of town), Ruth Camuse, Lucia Foley, Marilyn Gass, Caroline Martin, Patrick Tracey, Jake Woodruff

Not present: Larry Dubois

New member Anne Barry was introduced and welcomed

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Anne, seconded by Ruth, and approved unanimously to accept the minutes from May and April with a date correction to the April meeting. There were no meetings in June or July.

OLD BUSINESS

Recent Treks/Events

▪ **July 13, 2023—Summer Bike Ride Event—Thursday at 5:30pm**

Jake Woodruff, who organized the Ride, reported that there was an article in the Town Reminder and things went well for a first try. The weather was quite hot, which likely reduced the number of participants. Scheduled in conjunction with the Thursday Summer Concert Series on the Town Common, the casually paced Ride for adults and kids 13 and up accompanied by an adult left at 5:30pm to return in time for the 6:30pm concert. The 4-mile route, with some hills at the end, started from the Village Commons rear lot and went up Hadley Street/Rt. 47 by the Town Commons and across Rt. 116 to Park Street, passing through Mount Holyoke College and then by the Equestrian Center, continuing straight onto Mosier Street, and looping back to Rt. 116 at the south end of the MHC campus, turning north on Rt. 116 and back up to the Town Common. All riders were advised to bring helmets and a water bottle.

Upcoming Treks/Events

▪ **September 23, 2023—Black Stevens Trek—Saturday at 10am**

Jim Buckley and Pat Tracey will plan and lead a Fall Trek at Black Stevens Conservation Area, suggested by Jim, who lives nearby, as does Pat. Conservation Administrator Rebecka Cornell noted in May that the 'Black' in 'Black-Stevens' is Dr. Jean Black, an early woman physician connected with MHC, and 'Stevens' was associated with the Stevens Papermill family. Andy will reach out to local historian Leo LaBonte for more background information. Lucia can help with creating a Trek map with the event route, but will need lead time to do that.

October, 2023—(Tentative) Historic 'Around Town' Trek—Day and Time TBD (pending confirmation from Leo)

Leo LaBonte of the Historic Commission is seeking someone to assist with designing a historic walk to take place in conjunction with the Showcase South Hadley Town Arts/Culture event (<https://southhadleyarts.org>) during Indigenous Peoples/Columbus Day weekend (Friday-Sunday, October 6-8, 2023). Andy will share Leo's contact info with all members and Ruth will reach out to him to get things started. Lucia and Jake can help with advance

planning, but will not be available that weekend. Pat, Anne, and possibly Marilyn can assist with the event, which would be part of a joint effort by the Historic Commission and Bike/Walk to address **Master Plan Goal G14**. It was suggested that it might be possible to work with MHC students to tie in local history with slavery and the underground railroad during the 1740s to 1780s, as South Hadley is in the center of a slave-involved area.

Future joint Treks may include a Falls walk originally developed with the Historic District Study Committee, and we will look to work with Leo and the Historic Commission to identify and map additional walks.

▪ **November 5, 2023—Bachelor Brook/North Trek—Tentative Sunday date, time TBD**

Caroline Martin volunteered to lead this Trek, with assistance from Anne Barry. They will meet up soon to assess conditions and identify a route involving the north or full section of River to Range/Bachelor Brook area with a possible start from the Town Farms/Community Garden where participants could park at the Athletic Field. Due to hunting, the Trek will be planned for a Sunday and Ruth suggested earlier in the month. Andy will explore options with Rebekah, who had expressed interest in a northern route on the property. After Caroline and Anne identify the route, they will get info back to Lucia for mapping and publicity. Andy can accompany them on the upper section, but is not available most weekend mornings.

▪ **No Treks currently scheduled in December and January**

▪ **February 11, 2024—Ledges Trek—Sunday at 1:00pm (tentative)**

Details to be determined.

Other Projects

South Hadley Master Trail Map Brochure

Rebecca completed the brochure artwork and the resource has been printed and distributed at various locations in town. The cost is \$2400 for 1000 copies; Andy paid \$1000 out of his account with the remainder from Planning/Conservation.

2023 Summer Fun Run Program—Thursdays at 6:30pm, July 6 to August 10 (6 weeks)

Andy reported that the new Recreation program has been going well, with about 70 kids signed up, good reviews, and suggestions to start a local youth running club. Due to flooding at the River-to-Range location, that had to be canceled. There are still two runs left this season. Caroline Martin noted that her son really enjoyed the races, though they did encounter a group of mountain bikers on the trail at Black Stevens Conservation Area.

Community Seating

Marilyn Gass volunteered to identify locations on public property around the community to target where new or additional benches/community seating would be beneficial so we can determine where we want things. In October, we will look to have a list of public property in need of more seating, which might be added with a Memorial Bench Program. Everyone can assist by looking around town and creating their own short lists for the September meeting of public locations in need of seating—in parks, playgrounds, public ways, etc. We will need to be mindful there may be constraints on placement near roadways, as well as specific siting needs for those with disabilities. Andy noted that the Parks Department has a budget for bench replacements. A maintenance plan is also important, and responsibility for upkeep and how is that managed will need to be determined. We also need to understand how we can be certain that community seating/benches are included in upcoming road and sidewalk improvement projects by Mass DOT, etc.

Buttery Brook PARC Grant

The Town has applied for a \$500,000 grant for Phase II renovations Buttery Brook Park, which are estimated at approximately \$715,000. Plans include new accessible walking trail and Frisbee Golf 'course.' A lengthy grant application was submitted on time in July, and a state representative is making a site visit in two weeks, and former Town Planner Richard Harris will join the meeting as the grant writer.

NEW BUSINESS

Andy will continue to assist and serve as our Town Liaison, but with Covid over, we must have new officers elected at the next meeting from among the committee members to serve as Chair, Vice Chair, and Clerk. Andy noted the following duties for Bike/Walk officers:

- Chair:** Runs meetings, works with Andy to set agendas and post agendas on the town website Agenda Center, communicates with the Town Clerk about basic committee needs, and signs any correspondence (on occasion letters of support are needed for related projects, and samples of past letters are available).
- Vice-Chair:** Fills in for the Chair when they are not there, and typically moves up to become Chair in the future.
- Clerk:** Takes meeting minutes, forwards draft meetings to the chair for distribution to members, and posts approved minutes in the Agenda Center on the Town website.

Lucia noted that the Committee also needs to **maintain and update the Bike/Walk Town website page** (<https://www.southhadley.org/bikewalk>) with information about Treks and other events, along with news and resources related to our mission of promoting and improving safe bike/walk resources throughout South Hadley. Page maintenance can be done by the Clerk or we the Committee might identify an additional person for a separate Communications position.

Since she has been taking minutes and maintaining the Bike/Walk page, Lucia volunteered to continue doing both tasks as Clerk.

All Bike/Walk members are appointed annually for one-year terms. In response to a request from Jim, Andy will forward 'job descriptions' for each office to everyone.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held in-person at **6:00pm on Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at Buttery Brook Park**. We will plan to meet in the main Pavilion, or in the Log Cabin if it is raining.

A motion to adjourn by Jake was seconded by Jim and approved by all at 7:11pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lucia Foley, Member

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Master Plan Tasks

Actions for which Bike/Walk is the primary entity are:

- G1-1:** Development of brochures/trail maps, support for wayfinding (**ST**)
- G1-2:** Encourage families/school children to use/enjoy outdoor resources (**I**)
- G2-1:** Create master map for locating outdoor seating/gathering areas (**ST**)
- G3-2:** Develop commemorative bench program (**ST**)

Also, related action for Trek planning:

- G1-14:** Develop historic walks around town (**ST**)
(Primary Entity-Historic Commission; Sub-Entities-Disabilities Commission, Bike/Walk)