

**Binghamton Metropolitan Transportation Study
Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee
Zoom Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2024**

In attendance:

Scott Reigle (BMTS), Hadassah Mativeski (Binghamton City Council), Nick Cecconi (Getthere), Alicia Spencer (BCDOH), Stephanie Brewer (BC Planning), Stephanie Yezzi (Johnson City Planning Director), Jacob Rotary (Broome United Way/Fresh Cycles)

Convene: 1:32 PM

September 9 minutes accepted as written.

Topic	Discussion/Follow Up	Action
<p>Roadway Needs Report:</p> <p>Follow Up to Previous Meeting Items:</p>	<p>Follow-up Items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>New Needs Reports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A questions was asked about the status of the Ross Park Zoo Trails Project that was based on the work done by the Cornell Design Connect Team. Stephanie B. noted that it is a City of Binghamton project. Scott will contact the City Planning Department to ask for an update on the project. • It was noted that the sidewalk system is incomplete on Vestal Road between Rt. 201 and Bunn Hill Rd.. It was brought up that the Broome County DPW will be undertaking a project to install sidewalks on the west side of Bunn Hill Rd. from Rt. 434 to Vestal Rd.. Scott will ask the Broome County DPW what the timeline is for that project. • Hadassah asked for input about a proposal from a resident to eliminate perceived safety problems at the Ivanhoe Rd. access to the 434 Greenway. The resident suggests placing a permanent barrier to block through traffic on Vestal Ave at the Jutland Rd. and Hawthorne Rd. intersections, forcing traffic to use those side streets and Blackstone Ave. to loop around the closed-off section of Vestal Rd.. After considering the reasoning for the idea that was shared, the Committee agreed that this would not be an advisable or feasible treatment. Vestal Ave. is designed as a collector roadway and is, therefore, able to carry the larger amounts of traffic. Diverting traffic to the narrower residential streets not designed for such traffic would be detrimental to the neighborhood, creating significant increases in traffic and safety problems such as speeding. It would also be frustrating to motorists, which would increase the tendency for speeding. It is not believed that he road closure would lead to motorists using the parallel Rt. 434 stretch because many motorists use Vestal Ave. 	<p>Action Items:</p> <p>Scott will contact the Binghamton Planning Department and request an update on the trails project.</p> <p>Scott will ask the Broome County DPW what the timeline is for the Bunn Hill Rd. Sidewalk Project.</p>

	<p>to reach destinations between the western connection to Rt. 434 and Pennsylvania Ave. to the east.</p> <p>To improve safety at the Ivanhoe Rd. crossing to the 434 Greenway, more education of motorists is needed regarding yield to pedestrian laws and what RRFB signals are, as well as increased enforcement of the law for motorists to yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk and heed the speed limit.</p>	
<p>Announcements and Status Reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newspaper Articles/Notices • REPORT – The 2024 Walk, Bike, & Roll NY Symposium was hosted at the Double Tree Hotel-Downtown Binghamton on September 16-18. Scott shared a report and photos from the event. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Registered Attendees: 124 registered (17 people paid the extra \$50 late registration fee) ○ Check-ins: 119 in attendance ○ Speakers/Presenters: 30 presenters (24% of registered attendees were also presenters) ○ Walking Tour: 32 participants ○ Biking Tour: 9 participants ○ Organizations Represented: 67 Organizations <p>Scott also said that the keynote speakers were very inspirational. Hadassah stated that she learned about traffic gardens used for pedestrian & bike safety education and would like to see more installed throughout Binghamton. The Committee noted that several exist at a few Binghamton Elementary Schools such as MacArthur. She would also like to put AARP checklists to use to evaluate area streets. Jacob presented the Fresh Cycles Program as one of the Lightning Round stations.</p> <p>The next Walk, Bike & Roll NY Symposium will be in 2026 at a location to be determined.</p>	<p>Action Items:</p>
<p>Education and Outreach</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2025 Binghamton Bridge Pedal –Saturday, August 9th, 9am-12pm. <p>A coordinating team meeting will be set up for November to debrief on the 2024 event and begin planning for 2025. Any others interested in joining the coordinating team are welcome.</p> <p>Scott asked for suggestions for places of interest for ride route stops. The Broome County Public Library was suggested.</p>	<p>Action Items:</p> <p>Scott to set up a meeting for November to debrief on the 2024 event and begin planning for 2025.</p>
<p>Projects/ Reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian and Bicycle Counter Reports are available on the BMTS website but due to the BMTS staffing situation, we’ve gotten behind in monthly reports. BMTS reinstalled the Vestal Rail-Trail Shoppes counter on September 27, but it has not been automatically sending data, which will need to be investigated. Will be reinstalling the S. Washington St. Bridge counter ASAP. Will also be changing a few more expired batteries in several counters. • Binghamton Levee Project & Trail Rebuild – Scott received an inquiry from a BMTS Pedestrian & Bicycle Advisory Committee member Don Doornbos who represents the Southern Tier Bicycle Club, asking if the levee project will not only replace the existing 	<p>Action Items:</p> <p>Download Counter Reports at: https://bmtsonline.com/data/bikeped-counts</p>

trail but also extend it further north from Cheri Lindsey Park toward the Bevier St. Bridge that accesses Otsiningo Park? Ron Lake, City of Binghamton Engineer, provided the following response to that question and to my additional question about the trail design. *The trail should be ready for re-use late Spring. There is no extension, we are fortunate that we are able to replace the existing trail at this time. As you can imagine, it is extremely burdensome working with DEC and USACE as well as expensive. I believe the trail is 8 foot wide asphalt.*

I followed-up with the concern of the 8-foot wide trail when current guidelines call for 12-foot wide to be the norm with a 10-foot width the minimum except where there are constraints. Ron's response follows.

We were restricted by DEC. The top of the Levee is 10 feet wide, and we were restricted to 8 feet. We could not afford to rebuild the levee to your requirements. We are doing all that DEC would permit at this time and that is returning the levee to original height and alignment. Sometime in the future, if there were enough interest and grants available, it is conceivable the trail could be extended.

- **Friends of the Two Rivers Greenway (TRG) Group** – Scott shared the following report from Mike Haas regarding the October 19 volunteer maintenance event.

We were well equipped and had perfect weather, but had a very poor turnout. Susan Pitely, Mark Bowers, Pete Perkins and myself. Pete turns 83 next month but worked as hard as Mark and me. Sue picked garbage for the first hour while we tackled the weeds. We focused on the segment East of the connector near the ballfields. We covered about 1/3 of the total length at the guiderail with closer to 1/2 on the South side. Not bad for a small crew. With a dozen we could have tackled most if not all the length. The city mows a strip on both sides which keeps the trail neat. At the guiderail they are unable to get close enough to the chain link screen beneath guiderail. This is a maintenance challenge as many of the weeds are entwined within the mesh and the heavier weeds have a 1/2" stalk with substantial roots. We were consigned to hand pulling and cutting stalks with pruners, as the string trimmers were ineffective. A slow process and a poor design. We need to discuss some solutions to this as this maintenance is unsustainable. Nick Ballard (city parks) provided garbage bags. We filled many and transported to the dumpster in the rear of the parking lot. My garden cart was helpful moving the debris. Easier to load bags with heavy weeds into plastic garbage can lined with a bag. Vines provided trimmers and wheelbarrows. The linear nature of the greenway makes access limited, and time spent transporting materials.

On the South side we focused on taller weeds that impeded the existing railing. We were careful not to cut many known perennials. It would be helpful to get a lesson from Kris Gilbert on what is invasive. I took out many Black Locust trees (invasive in NE) that seem to be colonizing. The trunks are 2-3" in diameter and these have nasty thorns and were left on the bank. I am afraid these may grow back as a bush with multiple stems next

	<p><i>year. There are hundreds more and we need a plan to remediate. Staghorn Sumac also observed.</i></p> <p><i>Two news services (WBNG and WIVT) showed for interviews and film. I did not get a chance to watch but were promised coverage Sat evening and Sunday morning. Both did not know about the river clean-up scheduled for the same time.</i></p> <p><i>Other observations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The meadow seems to be maturing with mostly grasses but the seeds are visible and should produce more variety next year.</i> • <i>The greenway gets good use with younger people recreating. There is need for benches and trash bins would reduce the amount of litter.</i> • <i>Interpretive signs would be beneficial to describe native flora and fauna. Even history of the neighborhood tract would be interesting.</i> • <i>Friends of the TRG need to have representation from all municipal segments with a goal toward cooperative maintenance from the municipalities.</i> • <i>TRG Friends need to build a better network for these types of efforts. Social media is best platform.</i> • <i>Maps from Kris are helpful and should be a good tool in planning.</i> • <i>New trees will need wood stakes and guy wires removed next year. We did not get to fertilize these.</i> • <i>We need to discuss an alternative to this strip below the guiderail to provide a better mow edge.</i> 	
<p>Agency/ Dept. Updates</p>	<p>NYSDOT Region 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Binghamton University</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None <p>Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village of Johnson City: Stephanie Yezzi, Planning Director, will check if all the REDC and EPA grant applications for trail development have been submitted. • Nick Ceconi, Getthere, asked if it could be considered to add to the BMTS Unified Operations Working Plan a study for an Enhanced Transit Route on Main Street. Scott will talk with Jennifer Yonkoski, BMTS Director, about that possibility. 	<p>Action Items: Stephanie Yezzi, Planning Director, will check if all the REDC and EPA grant applicatins for trail development have been submitted.</p>
<p>Other</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>Action Items:</p>

Adjourn: 2:40 PM

Next Meeting: Monday, November 18, 2024 at 1:30PM *(Note that this is the third Monday of the month due to the Veterans Day holiday.)*