City of Essex Junction
Bike Walk Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2026 • 7:00 PM
Online & 2 Lincoln Street, Essex Junction, VT 05452

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1. **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

   John O'Brien, Lauren Philbrook, David Achee, Robert Frederick, Jessie Huntley, Daniel Liguori, Ian VanKirk

2. **OTHERS PRESENT**

   Michael Giguere, Ashley Snellenberger, Jack Evans

3. **CALL TO ORDER**

   John called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

4. **AGENDA ADDITIONS/CHANGES**

   Michael added a Staff Update on the Comprehensive Plan.

5. **PUBLIC TO BE HEARD**

   No public comment was provided.

6. **MINUTES FOR APPROVAL**

   a. August 13th, 2026

      i. David made a motion, seconded by Daniel, to approve the August 13th, 2026 minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

7. **BUSINESS ITEMS**

   a. Open Meeting Law and Ethics Policy Training

Ashley presented an overview of Open Meeting Law. Information provided included background on the Community Vision and Strategic Action Plan, departmental workplans, the categories of various City committees, and basic expectations for committee members and staff. State law requirements were covered, including public notice for meetings, allowing for public participation, the definition of quorum, taking and posting minutes, preparing agendas, subcommittee work, and an overview of the Open Meeting Law complaint process.

Michael asked for clarification on what types of staff updates can be added after an agenda has been published. Ashley clarified that staff updates should not involve any committee work or detailed discussion. David asked to what extent committee members are permitted to ask follow up questions on a staff update, and Ashley clarified that wider committee-level discussion of the topic or decision-making should be avoided until the topic can be posted in a public agenda.

Ashley provided a second presentation on Code of Ethics, specifying that this is a state law requiring a municipal code of ethics. This requires a complaint process, an appointed liaison, and training provided for staff and committees. Ashley covered the definition of conflict of interest and how to recuse oneself from a conflict of interest. Jessie asked for clarification on how to determine whether a committee action leads to an increased personal benefit, and Ashley provided reassurance that the example of installing a new sidewalk would not disproportionally benefit an individual since it's publicly accessible infrastructure. Ashley provided further guidance, explaining recusal, disclosure, and keeping confidential information safe. She provided more examples of prohibited actions under the ethics policy, such as encouraging others to act unethically or accepting gifts that are intended to influence behavior. She mentioned that Colleen Dwyer, Human Resources Director, is the City's liaison for processing ethics complaints. A complaint form is available on the City's website.

b. Review of Bicycle Friendly Community Feedback

The group reviewed the scorecard and feedback provided by the League of American Bicyclists in response to the City's application as a bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community. The report card provided feedback on how the City could improve the safety and accessibility of cycling.

Lauren mentioned that Pearl Street West's shared-use path should be a huge improvement as a low stress route. Education was a category identified as a key area to improve in, and Michael mentioned that building on the library pavilion bicycle repair event hosted in 2025 provided some learning lessons for outreach on events. He also mentioned a desire to improve outreach to target demographics. Lauren mentioned that Hiawatha Elementary had bicycle education as a part of their curriculum last year and could be tied into the next BFC application.

Daniel was interested in the feedback to encourage to work with Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) more and encourage them to get involved in the Bicycle Friendly programs. Lauren mentioned that BWAC should prepare event programing for Celebrate National Bike Month in May, and the committee discussed the idea of handing out food for cyclists. John mentioned that having this scorecard as a roadmap will be helpful for BWAC in the coming years.

Michael noted that the League recommended performing more bicycle and pedestrian counts to better understand movement patterns around and through the City. Lauren asked if any New England towns have gold status, noting that winter can be a deterrent for some cyclists. Michael mentioned that Fort Collins, CO is a platinum status BFC, and Jack mentioned that the selection criteria is adjusted depending on climate. David mentioned that bikeshare programs have had difficulties in the region and questioned whether pursuing more League Cycling Instructors was useful at this time. Michael mentioned wanting to work on the feedback provided of performing a connectivity analysis and improved mapping evaluation.

John asked if updating the 2014 Bike and Pedestrian Plan would be a BWAC responsibility. Michael confirmed that the committee would be key in that process, and that a consultant would likely need to be brought on board to help with this process, but agreed to discuss this idea further with City staff.

The group agreed to discuss Bike to Work programming in December.

c. Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes Rotation

David made a motion, seconded by Lauren, to approve the drafted meeting minutes rotation as presented. Motion passed unanimously (7-0).

8. MEMBER UPDATES

John and David presented their work on organizing two bike bus routes to Hiawatha Elementary with help from Local Motion. They connected with Daniel, who volunteered to help pilot one of the routes. Lauren asked if they were planning on running the route all winter, which John confirmed, and David offered the possibility of walking if cycling was not possible due to weather.

9. STAFF UPDATES

a. Park Street Complete Streets

Michael mentioned that the City accepted a bid to restripe Park Street to include wide, buffered bicycle lanes and remove all on-street parking in the project area, other than the diagonal spaces in front of 27 Park Street, which will remain. Daniel asked if the City had determined whether BWAC's annual funds will be used for this project's budget, which Michael agreed to look into and report back.

b. Grove Street Traffic Calming Community Input Meeting

i. Thu 10/8 during BWAC

Michael mentioned that BWAC will host a Community Input Meeting to discuss potential traffic calming improvements on Grove Street during their October 8th meeting. The City will be mailing property owners on Grove Street and placing yard signs along the roadway in an effort to increase public participation. David asked if a traffic calming treatment has been chosen for Grove Street, which Michael clarified has not been finalized, as a community input meeting is a prerequisite step. Lauren asked if the City planned on contacting residents on North Street, noting that changes made to Grove Street may have impacts on how North Street is used. Michael mentioned that all members of the public are encouraged to attend these meetings, but would discuss the idea of targeted outreach to North Street residents among City staff.

c. Meet Me on Main

   i. Sat 9/19, 9/26, and 10/3

Michael promoted Meet Me on Main, a series of events put on by Essex Junction Recreation and Parks. For three Saturdays in a row, a short portion of Main Street near Five Corners will be closed to vehicular traffic to provide space for food, vendors, music, movies, and other activities.

d. Comprehensive Plan – Transportation Chapter

Michael noted that CCRPC and staff have been working on required updates to Essex Junction's Comprehensive Plan, the primary long-term planning document that guides policy, development, and growth in the City. BWAC will be presented with the drafted update to the Transportation chapter in November. Michael will plan to share the Transportation chapter from the 2019 Comprehensive Plan in BWAC's October meeting packet to prepare for this review.

e. Pearl Street West

David asked if there were any updates on Pearl Street West. Michael mentioned that this is still going through design work internally with no update on bidding or construction scheduling.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Ian made a motion, seconded by David, to adjourn the meeting at 8:11 pm. Motion passed (7-0).