On September 18, 2010, Jan Collins of Hebron organized a bicycle transportation review around Newfound Lake.

1. At the easterly end of Shore Drive, participants identified an opportunity for a useful two-way bike path from Shore Drive along the lake side of NH 3A directly connecting to Lakeside Drive. The path would be two-way and especially useful to cyclists traveling counterclockwise around the lake. Cyclists could then use Lakeside Drive, yet avoid two crossings of busy NH 3A. The bicycle path would only need to be a couple hundred feet long to make the connection between Lakeside Drive and Shore Drive. Because Shore Drive is one way eastbound, only a counter-clockwise loop around the lake is currently legal for vehicles, which includes bicycles.

2. Shore Drive (along the beach front at the south end of Newfound Lake) only allows one way eastbound directional travel for all vehicles (including bicycles) from the West Shore Road intersection to the Big Catch Restaurant. Many participants felt that because of the lack of bicycle facilities along NH 3A and West Shore Drive, cyclists should be able to travel in either direction along Shore Drive. Larry noted that historically, streets were often made into one way streets primarily to facilitate the movement of motor vehicles. Where two way traffic in confined spaces is permitted, conversely, there can be a traffic calming effect, making the spaces more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists. Participants agreed to bring up the question of the one way Shore Drive with the Town of Bristol.

3. Some participants plan to advocate for the addition of a bicycle path to go along with the upcoming sewer installation. The existing path to Newfound Lake from Bristol could be extended and constructed along the sewer easement around the west shore of Newfound Lake from the existing path terminus, which is across from the West Shore Road/Shore Drive intersection.

4. A cyclist noted that Bristol has many drainage grates that are not at the level of the road and are a hazard especially to cyclists.
5. At Shackett’s Store, some participants suggested that a 6-foot sidewalk path, similar to some of the side path connections on the “Derry Loop” might work here to allow cyclists to stay out of the West Shore Drive motor traffic.

6. At Wellington State Park, participants commented about a potential for low-impact campsites that could be used by bicycle tourists riding in the region. Such potential use of Wellington State Parkland could bring in additional stakeholders interested in the vision of a Newfound Lake bicycle loop and increase the tourism capacity of Newfound Lake.

7. Some participants suggested that the Newfound Lake Bicycle Loop should exploit a possible opportunity for a short connecting section of bicycle trail though the Wellington State Parklands.

8. Overall, participants felt that a separated bicycle path around Newfound Lake was the goal. Loop promoters have approached, and plan to continue to approach, many property owners for easements. These property owners include many summer camps owning miles of frontage along the road. Where separate paths and/or major road reconstructions are not feasible, Larry Keniston suggested that re-allocated lane space on existing paved surfaces could be tried if the many jurisdictions involved in maintenance agreed. Narrower travel lanes with wider shoulders can effectively provide cyclists and pedestrians with space while calming traffic. In efforts related to various NHDOT resurfacing projects, the municipalities of Concord, New London and Hopkinton approached the NHDOT and had bicycle friendly and traffic calming lane allocation modifications done at the time of pavement resurfacing projects. Bill Lambert (271-2291) of the NHDOT Traffic Bureau is responsible for pavement markings on NHDOT maintained highways. Larry suggested a continuing collaboration with the
appropriate state and municipal authorities, including local police, fire, public works, etc., toward a discussion of traffic calming measures. Other traffic calming measures that may be appropriate for some areas include cross walks, raised medians, and roadside vegetation. Police speed enforcement can be employed toward trying to enhance pedestrian and cyclist safety. Given the way traffic engineers traditionally set speed limits through the “85th percentile speed” method, however, speed enforcement is the least effective method to contain vehicular operating speeds.

9. Participants agreed that all cyclists should be “ambassadors for cycling and not martyrs” on bike safety.

Above: “Newfound Lake Loop” scenes along NH 3A in Bridgewater and Hebron (see attached mapping)
DATE OF MEETING: February 15, 2013 - including information from March 6, 2013 conference at Traffic Bureau with Bill Lambert, Sally Gunn and Walter Keuenhoff

LOCATION OF MEETING: NHDOT John O. Morton Building, Concord, Room G29

ATTENDED BY:

Department of Transportation
Patrick Herlihy, Division Aeronautics, Rail and Transit
Larry Keniston, Bureau of Rail and Transit

Newfound Pathway Team
David Berton
Jan Collins
Nancy Dowey
Bill Dowey
Beth Geever

SUBJECT: Newfound Pathways accomplishments and goals briefing

NOTES ON MEETING:

Jan Collins explained that the Newfound Pathway Team is in its 5th year of operation. Newfound Pathways recently became a New Hampshire non-profit, able to accept tax-deductible donations as a means to build a pedestrian pathway around Newfound Lake and pathways in the Hebron, Bridgewater, Bristol and Alexandria, NH region. All around the Lake, the Team is investigating potential on and off road non-motorized alternatives.

Newfound Pathways grant successes already include an HNH Foundation grant that brought Dan Burden to the area last summer and a $100,000.00 grant from the National Park Service toward creating a safe environment for bicyclists and pedestrians to travel around Newfound Lake that will link the entire area by non-motorized transportation. Newfound Pathways goals include increased bicycling and walking as an environmentally sound and healthy lifestyle choice and the promotion of tourism and local commerce without adding more cars onto the highways.

David Berton noted that the Department’s Lakes Region bicycle map identifies a bicycle route “Loop 403” around Newfound Lake. David felt that adding bicycle lanes, wider paved shoulders, and signage would be consistent with the message promoted by the bicycle maps. The current New Hampshire state bicycle map features the Newfound Lake “bicycle loop” without warning cyclists of narrow paved surface sections (pictures along 3A in Bridgewater and Hebron provided by Newfound Pathways shown below).
The Team specifically cited as a safety concern the current 50 mph speed limit along NH 3A in the narrow unimproved section of NH 3A in Bridgewater and Hebron. The team noted that the excessive rates of speed and heavy truck traffic on Route 3A create an environment that is especially unsafe and intimidating to pedestrians and cyclists, but also unsafe for motorists. The Pathways Team had previously asked NHDOT District 2 Engineer Alan Hanscom to lower the speed limit, currently 50 miles per hour. Citing the results of a speed study that indicated lowering the speed limit would have negligible effect, however, Mr. Hanscom declined the request to reduce the speed limit.
With no improvements in the Ten Year Plan in sight for the narrow section of NH 3A in Bridgewater and Hebron, the Team suggested one possibility for improvement could come by way of the Department’s annual striping work. The Team noted that careful reallocation of some of the space currently dedicated to the travel ways could have a traffic calming benefit. Traffic Bureau’s practice has been to routinely paint over existing white edge lines rather than produce a new line because the old line is never completely obliterated. The Department posts the annual resurfacing projects list and encourages communities to suggest lane space re-allocation upon resurfacing a highway where appropriate.

Patrick Herlihy suggested that the Team connect with the Department’s newly formed Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (BPTAC). Subsequent to the meeting, Larry shared with Newfound Pathways the Department-accepted recommendations forming the basis to establish the Committee. The BPTAC held its first general meeting in February and expects to meetings about once every two months, depending on need.

Subsequent to the meeting with Patrick Herlihy, Bill Lambert of Traffic Bureau hosted a second meeting with the Newfound Pathways Team on March 6. The Team noted that international walking and bicycling expert Dan Burden had suggested wider edge stripes could help calm traffic speeds. The existing edge stripes in the case of NH 3A could therefore simply be widened to the inside travel way, which could narrow the travel lanes slightly. Mr. Lambert noted that the proposed modification would be costly if applied to the entire State. Any such new practice would at least require some evaluation and selection criteria for new applications.

By a “firm and longstanding” policy of the Department, any pedestrian and bicycle facilities generally must be maintained by the local municipality. This includes mid-block pedestrian crossings (except in school zones), sidewalks, sidewalk ramps and most non-motorized paths. Therefore any non-motorized facilities not only must be desired by the local municipality, but also maintained by the municipality. “Share the Road” signing, Mr. Lambert noted, is an exception and therefore could be provided by the State. (Subsequent to the meeting, Mr. Lambert asked sign personnel to review the sites based on the meeting and install Share the Road signs as warranted. Mr. Lambert can forward a copy of the work order for information if requested.)

Any other signing related to non-motorized highway use, however, would require the local municipality (or Newfound Pathways acting by agreement as agent of the municipality) to provide, install and maintain the signing. Newfound Pathways desires guide signing that would need to be approved by Traffic Bureau as to form and location. Newfound pathways suggested that their sign style of choice would be M1-8a and David suggested that the “route number” should be related to the number shown on the NH bike map loop, or “403,” in the case of the Newfound Lake Loop. Preferring to prove widespread support for M1-8a toward standardizing future bicycle guide signing throughout the State, Mr. Lambert recommended that the BPTAC choose one guide sign from three MUTCD (http://muted.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/part9.pdf) choices, namely Bike Route sign (D11-1), route placard (M1-8) or route placard with a provision for custom text (M1-8a). Mr. Lambert noted that the Bike Route sign, too, could include an optional lower panel for custom text such as the local pathways organization information.
Moreover, the D11-1c (Bike Route sign with subtext) could also include route-specific text. Newfound Pathways can send a representative to introduce the topic to the BPTAC meeting. If necessary, the BPTAC could form a subcommittee to discuss further as necessary and make a recommendation for bicycle route sign style uniformity to the Department.

While understanding that the Department’s resurfacing schedule is on the Web, David asked if there could be a list-serve where information such as relevant resurfacing locations and schedules could be distributed to interested organizations such as the Newfound Pathways Team. In the meantime, David expressed the Team’s eagerness to serve as a guest of the new bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee toward gathering information about Committee and NHDOT activities that could affect non-motorized transportation.

As a process model for Newfound Pathways, Mr. Lambert agreed to provide contact information for the NH Safety Pass campaign successfully begun last year by Dan O’Neill (danponeill@comcast.net 603-731-3333) from Claremont. Working with the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Planning Commission, the NH Safety Pass campaign proposes to install informational signing about New Hampshire’s 3-foot law within state right of way along highways in the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee region. Commissioner Clement has endorsed the concept.

Based on a discussion about pedestrian and bicycle counts, Bill Lambert noted that current traffic counting methods and funding are not adequate. The Traffic Bureau owns 6 Miovision units that can be used to count bicycles and pedestrians but currently lacks a funding source to pay for the processing of bicycle and pedestrian count data. Beth Geever agreed to share with Mr. Lambert bicycle and pedestrian counts in the Newfound Lake area.

Submitted by

\s\ Lawrence Keniston
Larry Keniston
Intermodal Facilities Engineer

Noted by W. Lambert, A. Hanscom

cc: (by email) W. Lambert, David Berton, Jan Collins, Beth Geever, S. Gunn W. Keuenhoff, P. Herlihy

S:/Keniston/Newfound Pathways/02152013&03062013.doc
May 8, 2015

William Lambert  
NHDOT  
Concord, NH 

Re: Restriping of Rte 3A 

Dear, Mr. Lambert, 

The Bridgewater Board of Selectmen strongly supports the restriping of Rte. 3A through Bridgewater, Hebron, and Plymouth with 10’ lanes and a bigger white line on the side as suggested in discussions with Newfound Pathways. 

Sincerely, 

Terence Murphy 

Hank Woolner 

Maurice Janness 

Selectmen
May 22, 2015

William Cass, Acting Commissioner  
William Lambert, Bureau of Traffic  
Larry Keniston, NH DOT Intermodal Facilities Engineer  
P. O. Box 483, 7 Hazen Drive  
Concord, NH 03302-0483

Dear Gentleman,

There is a scheduled “paver shim” from the northern Bridge Abutment (Br. #079/105) near Paradise Road in Bridgewater northerly to a pavement joint approx. 500 ft. north of Tenney Mountain Road in Plymouth. This passes through Hebron and most of the mileage is in Hebron.

We are requesting that 10 ft. lanes be painted on this new paver shim section when the new lines are applied. The road is very narrow and there are no shoulders in this section. We are aware that this has been successful in other towns like Hopkinton and New London and would like to use this method on this section of road to help calm the traffic. There are many that use this road for walking, biking and running and there are 4 large camps that are in session for 7 weeks of the summer along this road.

This is a recreational area and we are extremely concerned about the safety of our roads. The town of Bridgewater has already sent a letter to Bill Lambert with the same request.

Please make this happen in the towns of Bridgewater and Hebron.

Sincerely,

Patrick Moriarty  
Chair  
Hebron Select Board

John Dunklee  
Vice-Chair

Éleanor Lonske  
Member
NH 3A, Hebron, July 17, 2015
Completed Project With 10-foot Travel Lanes