

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee

December 8, 2016

7:30 p.m.

50 Carby Street

Committee Members Present: Michael Kraft (Chair); Bob Rich (Secretary); Steven Olanoff; George Lester; Virginia Lester; Rory Laughna; Jim McLaughlin; Abigail McCabe

Committee Members Absent: Enkelejda Klosi; Tom Prior; Paul Sicard; Todd Korchin; Stephen Botelho

Meeting called to order at 7:45 pm

Jim McLaughlin was welcomed as a new member of the committee.

DPW Update – Todd Korchin via Abby McCabe

There was a meeting on November 2nd at the Downey School to discuss the Canton, Everett, Forbes traffic calming measures that have been implemented so far and to get feedback from residents on impacts. The results indicated that traffic conditions have improved in that area and that no additional traffic calming measures are needed at this time.

There was a meeting on November 30th at the Downey School to discuss renovation of the East Street Bridge. There was a presentation by the MBTA on the Mass DOT's 30% design. The current plan is to start construction of the bridge in the summer of 2018. To minimize traffic disruptions, contractors will attempt to do as much work as possible on week-ends. The height of bridge will be increased from 10.6 feet to 13.5 feet tall and there will be 6 foot wide (5.5 ft. excluding the curb) sidewalks installed on both sides of the road. Current truck restrictions will remain.

Planning Board and Community and Economic Development Update – Steve Olanoff and Abby McCabe

There is now an emergency access road between a new single-family residential development on Hedgerow Lane (off of Canton Street) and Lyons Drive (off of Everett Street) that will prohibit vehicles but remain open to pedestrians and bicycles.

Islington Task Force

The Islington Task Force Committee is a 21 member committee made up of 14 Westwood residents and about 7 live in Islington - the group has been meeting monthly to discuss and review possible redevelopment opportunities and improvements of that area. The committee will meet again in January to discuss the six concept plans that are currently being considered, with the goal being to select one of the plans and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectman. The Selectman will then determine if they will enter into an agreement with the developer, Petruzzello Properties. The developer doesn't have any right to town owned property unless the Town permits it. A 2/3 vote at Town Meeting is required for approval, expected to be held in Fall 2017.

University Station

The Planning Board will review the second phase of University Station development between Not Your Average Joe's restaurant and the Bridges Assisted Living Facility. There is a Marriott Courtyard hotel being

constructed there now. A walkway from the train station parking lot to the hotel will be constructed. Abby McCabe will bring plans to the next meeting.

Old Business:

The October meeting minutes were approved.

At the October meeting, there was a discussion of fences and plantings. The town is seeing more neighbors erecting fences and tall shrubs in front of their properties at intersections, which is becoming problematic for pedestrian and driver visibility. Steve Olanoff thought that there was a town bylaw to address this issue and agreed to follow up and find the bylaw. He found that the Zoning Bylaw only covers new roads, not existing roads and that there are currently no restrictions on fences and bushes up to 6 feet tall. The Planning board will submit a zoning article for the 2017 Spring Town Meeting that if approved, will change the existing Zoning Bylaw to address fences and bushes from blocking sight lines at road intersections.

New Business:

At the October meeting, Steve Olanoff reported that if developers don't want to install sidewalks on both sides of a street in a new development, then they can petition the Planning Board for a waiver. If granted, then one sidewalk will be installed and the developer will contribute the equivalent amount of money for the second sidewalk to the town. This money will go into a sidewalk fund that will be set up to receive these funds. This led to a discussion about the possibility of expanding the sidewalk fund to become a sidewalk and trails fund, so that money can be used not only for sidewalks but also for maintenance of existing trails, making new trails and protecting town conservation land. This led to a brief discussion about the role that the committee can play on supporting more walking, running, hiking and bicycling in town. Michael Kraft, Steve Olanoff and Bob Rich were nominated to form a subcommittee to explore this topic and will start by meeting with Hale Reservation to discuss this further.

Virginia Lester brought a table cloth printed with various safety messages that can be used at the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety table at Westwood Day next year. She also mentioned that there is a Mass Bike advocacy boot camp on Saturday, 12/17/16 in Watertown. Some of the topics include: 1) Bikes and Beacon Hill: Making Lawmakers Your Allies, 2) Dining With the Enemy: Effective Engagement of Opposition, 3) Starting from Scratch: Getting Your Community Going, and 4) What the 2016 Election Means to Federal Bike Policy. More info can be found on www.massbike.org.

Bob Rich volunteered to write a draft of the 2016 Annual Report for the committee.

The new Westwood Town website is expected to go live next week.

Committee Reorganization

There was a motion to appoint Michael Kraft (chair), Steve Olanoff (vice-chair) and Bob Rich (secretary) as officers of the committee. The motion was seconded and the committee voted unanimously to approve each position.

2017 Meeting Schedule:

The committee agreed to maintain meetings on the fourth Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm at 50 Carby Street. The 2017 committee meetings will be held on:

Thursday, January 26

Thursday, February 23

Thursday, March 23

Thursday, April 27

Thursday, May 25

Thursday, June 22

Thursday, July 27

Thursday, August 24

Thursday, September 28

Thursday, October 26

Thursday, November 16 (no meeting on fourth Thursday due to Thanksgiving)

Thursday, December 28

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm.