

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee

October 27, 2016

7:30 p.m.

Westwood Town Hall

Committee Members Present: Bob Rich (Secretary); Steven Olanoff; George Lester; Virginia Lester; Paul Sicard; Todd Korchin; Rory Laughna, Tom Prior; Stephen Botelho

Committee Members Absent: Michael Kraft (Chair); Enkelejda Klosi, Abigail McCabe

Resident Attendees: Dave Atkins, Roger Christian

Additional Attendees: Mike Myers from TEC

Meeting called to order at 7:40 pm

Committee Reorganization

This topic was tabled until the November 2016 meeting.

Rory Laughna, Tom Prior and Steve Botelho were welcomed as official members of the committee.

Westwood Day - September 24, 2016:

The committee discussed our participation in Westwood Day. The feeling was that the event was very successful. There were 112 bicycle helmets that were distributed for free to Westwood children, flyers from the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee, Mass Bike, Bikes Not Bombs and Hale Reservation were distributed, and we signed up 19 residents who expressed an interest in volunteering. There were lots of positive feedback and good suggestions for next year. Residents really liked the maps showing Complete Streets projects in town. George Lester's electronic board game showing various locations of bicycle racks in Westwood was very popular. Virginia Lester suggested that we update our committee flyer next year so that people know what we've accomplished this year. We would also like to have a Pedestrian and Bicycling Safety banner on the table for next year so that people approaching the table know who we are. Todd Korchin volunteered to provide contact information from a vendor who has supplied banners for the town.

DPW Update – Todd Korchin

Westwood received \$400,000 in Complete Streets funding from the State. Good progress is being made on three projects that will utilize this money: 1) sidewalk improvements on Route 109 from Millbrook Road to Mill Street, 2) bicycle lanes on Blue Hill Drive, and 3) Route 109 and Pond Street intersection improvements near the Sheehan School. Mike Myers from TEC presented plans for these projects and the committee discussed the merits of each. The goal is to complete designs by the end of December, put the projects out to bid in January and finish these projects by June 30, 2017. On Nov 7th, Todd Korchin and Mike Myers will present an update of plans and get feedback from the Board of Selectman.

Todd Korchin is also having a sidewalk analysis being done throughout the town. TEC is 90% finished with the Gay Street sidewalk survey.

There will be a meeting on November 2nd at 7 pm at the Downey School to discuss the Canton, Everett, Forbes traffic calming measures that have been implemented so far and to get feedback on next steps.

There will be a public meeting on November 3rd to discuss the proposed plans to add a left hand turn lane when approaching the Clapboardtree Street/Washington Street intersection.

Police Update – Paul Sicard

There have been some changes to the speed limit laws in Massachusetts. Towns that accept the new laws can lower the speed limit in non-posted thickly settled areas from 30mph to 25mph. They can do this town wide or street by street. These changes would not affect any streets with posted speed limits. Following appropriate engineering studies, towns can also create special 20mph speed zones, (much like a school zone) in front of senior housing, playgrounds etc.

There is a Girl Scout group in town working on their Silver project, which involves collecting used bicycles, repairing them and donating them to a homeless shelter on Cape Cod. Paul Sicard will send out more info.

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.

There have been several more requests for speed humps from Westwood residents. The town is working on putting together a plan to address this issue.

There has been resolution regarding two signage issues at University Station. The town will place a “Right Turn on Red After Stop” sign at the traffic light at Blue Hill Drive and University Avenue and will remove the Blue Hill Drive sign that leads drivers directly on to Route 95.

There have been no recent East Street bridge accidents to report. There has been some borehole test drilling to determine pavement integrity as part of the bridge reconstruction project.

Planning Board and Community and Economic Development Update – Steve Olanoff

Steve Olanoff reported that if developers don’t want to install sidewalks on both sides of a street for subdivisions, then they can petition the Planning Board for a waiver according to the Planning Board’s current Subdivision Rules and Regulations. 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.

New Business:

There was a brief discussion about the role that the committee can play on supporting more walking, running, hiking and bicycling in town. Several ideas were proposed by committee members, including a person to coordinate trail maintenance volunteers throughout town, organized bike rides and hikes, walking and running groups, an annual Town Pound Day and an historical bike tour of Westwood. We agreed to continue this discussion at a future meeting.

Old Business: The September meeting minutes were approved.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 17th at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 pm.