

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Committee notes

Date:	2/25/10		
Meeting start:	7:40 p.m.		
<b>In attendance:</b>			
David Belcher	Suzanne Becker	Dave Atkins	Steve Harte
Sgt. Paul Sicard	Kela Klosi	Virginia Lester	George Lester
Steve Olanoff	Nora Loughnane	Bill Conley	

### **Updates on issues investigated since last meeting:**

Each of these updates was longer than the anticipated allotted time of 5 minutes, but fruitful discussion ensued.

#### **1. MPO Clean Air and Mobility Program**

Steve Olanoff looked into this opportunity. Communities can submit an application for a project that would increase pedestrian safety and can commit to a 20% match from the town. We anticipate a project that would address the crosswalk issue in the area of Washington Street and Croft Regis Road: pedestrian-activated, pole-mounted flashing lights and/or curb extensions to shorten the crossing and create a physical barrier for cars that attempt to drive around other cars stopped for pedestrians.

There is an April 1 deadline for the proposal. The DPW supports us moving forward with the application. Paul and Steve Olanoff will forward their cost information to Dave Atkins who will fill out the online application. John Bertorelli may be another resource for cost information.

#### **2. Lighting near the Senior Center entrance, Crosswalk near Tot Lot and entrance to TMS, Nahatan-High St. intersection**

Suzanne Becker looked into this issue. In order to add streetlights or crosswalks, Sgt. Sicard and the Town Engineer would have to check the safety of the area and make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen. This will happen in the near future.

It may be cheaper to install a new streetlight at the crosswalk to the Tot Lot rather than move an existing streetlight.

It is unlikely that a crosswalk across Nahatan Street near Baker Street would get much use. As it is, some students cut across Nahatan Street and up the embankment to the middle school rather than walk up to the crossing guard at the existing crosswalk. Most students probably would not walk farther south on Nahatan Street and then back north to the middle school.

There is a proposal to change the intersection of Nahatan and High Streets that has been presented to the Board of Selectmen. Sgt. Sicard will look into obtaining a copy of the proposal for our review.

### **3. Winter Maintenance on Sidewalks**

Steve Harte looked into this issue. Steve spoke with Tim Walsh who will be retiring soon. Dave Atkins will post some of the information that Tim shared for public education. Currently the town clears snow from about 35 miles of sidewalks, which makes up the school walking zones. It is illegal to leave snow mounds on a sidewalk. However, it is difficult to enforce since the bylaws, as currently written, make it the responsibility of the plow driver who was hired by the property owner. The town uses a V-shaped plow to clear a path on sidewalks. In the event that the snow just falls back into the middle of the sidewalk, or during a significant snow event, the town uses a snowblower. The snowblower does an excellent job of removing the snow from the sidewalk but is very slow, which means it is not practical to use for every storm.

### **4. East Street Bridge**

Kela Klosi looked into this issue. The bridge has been a topic of debate in town, most recently in response to a December 2009 accident which included an ice cream truck flipping over and seriously injuring an occupant of another vehicle. According to her research, the bridge and its possible redesign to improve safety have been a source of discussion for decades. The last significant discussion took place in 1995. A preliminary bridge replacement design was submitted with construction to take place in the fall of 1996. The MBTA supported the redesign which included widening the bridge. Opposition from townspeople who feared that the higher clearance would encourage more truck traffic stopped the plans. In 1987, plans to put a flashing light on the bridge were opposed.

Sgt. Sicard shared that there are close to 8 signs that a truck will pass on its way west from the East Street Rotary to the bridge including: No Trucks, Bridge Clearance 10'6", Narrow Bridge, Low Clearance. Sgt. Sicard also shared some historical data on accidents at the bridge. Not all of the accidents

involved trucks. Therefore it follows that not all accidents were due to the low clearance. In some cases vehicles have hit the side of the bridge or the curb.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Accidents</b>	<b>Injuries</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>2010</b>	1	0	truck traveling west
<b>2009</b>	5	3	2 trucks traveling west
<b>2008</b>	5	1	3 trucks traveling west
<b>1992</b>	4	0	
<b>1989</b>	3	not available	
<b>1988</b>	13	not available	
<b>1987</b>	7	not available	
<b>1986</b>	12	not available	

## **5. See Click Fix Reporting System**

David Belcher looked into this issue. David spoke with the two developers of this boston.com program. He discovered that officials from Dedham and Needham don't actually use this system. Residents from those communities can submit problems but they aren't being officially monitored by the towns. The developers of the program haven't reached out to municipalities. Rather they were hoping that their system would create more awareness of problems and that officials would begin to monitor the website on their own. David also spoke with Donna McClellan, Director of Information Technology for Westwood. She wants to start up a portal for residents to submit complaints, issues, etc. through the town's website, possibly using a service like Gov. QA. There is an existing service request form on the Town website:

<http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/index.cfm>. Check the bottom left of the page for Service Request. This is just a form that sends an email; it does not display the status of existing requests, etc. The town of Arlington has a system prominently displayed on their website:

[http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public\\_Documents/index](http://www.town.arlington.ma.us/Public_Documents/index). Clicking on the Request/Answer Center takes you to a request page using mygovhelp.com.

## **6. Gay Street Striping**

The fog lines from Thatcher Street to Milk Street will be painted when the weather and temperature permits. The plan is to paint the fog lines a consistent 11 feet out from the center line.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Next meeting is Thursday, March 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen Harte