

Town of Westwood

Pedestrian & Bicycle Safety Committee

Thursday, October 27, 2022

600 High Street

Westwood Library First Floor Community Meeting Room

**Committee Members in Attendance:**

- Vice-chair Enkelejda (Kela) Klosi
- Steven Olanoff
- Tom McShane
- Dave Atkins

**Ex-officio:** None

**Residents in attendance:** None

**Police officers in attendance:** Stephen Connelly, Frank Baker

Proposed changes to quorum calculation were not yet approved so there was no quorum.

**Selected to record minutes:** Tom McShane

**Meeting Start:** 7:36 pm.

**Topics Discussed**

Updates from Police

- Pedestrian strike at Washington St/Rt1A was explained. Crosswalk was not used as it was further up the street from where the pedestrian was crossing.
- Cross walks with flashing lights have been added. Officer Connelly explained how they work stating some work with a motion sensor that trips the lights. Some of these are near Rt 109, Pond St, Washington and Dean St.
- They are recommended at Eastern and Smith streets, near St. Dennis church, and a few others. High and Mill St is another (only has a school zone flashing light at the moment).
- Westfield St. had an accident this summer
- Several school areas received flashing speed limit signs, including one near Clapboard St. These also collect data. There are other speed limit signs that move and some of them also collect data. They collect volume, speeds, average speeds. Various statistical information is

available from these. Officer Connelly offered to email the data from the signs.

- Regarding traffic volume, Tuesdays and Wednesdays are generally the busiest days.
- Kayla commented that the data could be helpful to evaluate traffic patterns in conjunction with location and considering if sidewalks are present along those busy areas.
- Pond St has varying levels of speed limits 30, 35, back to 30 as a result of a study in the 1950s. Officer Connelly explained at a high level that the speed of traffic is set based on calculating around the 85% percentile of average speeds.
- Getting traffic to slow, then performing the study will help reduce the mean speed limit and can help reduce speed limits.
- Steve O mentioned MassDOT recently changed their policy and some feedback was previously provided.
- Officer Connelly also mentioned some changes have occurred at Pond St.; yields removed, stop signs added (all-way stops).
- Kayla asked if weather data is used in conjunction with the speed information. They're generally removed during storms.
- Steve recommended we follow through with proposed physical changes at Pond St. and Clapboard tree, such as diagonal cross-walks. The select board is the next stop for this item. 3 of the 4 corners may need some adjustment.
- Forbes has a permanent road sign, officer mentioned it may be better placed on Pine Lane as Forbes has speed bumps and sidewalks already.
- Steve recommended we recommend Forbes speed sign be moved to Pine Lane. Kayla asked where it would be on Pine Lane, officer mentioned the permanent one is placed in one direction. Kayla brought up the point about the new school and potentially greater volume on Pine Lane as a result of the new school.
- Steve recommended we may want to ask select board to do a traffic study for University Ave.
- Officer Connelly mentioned they are still keeping an eye on aggressive driving. Lots of truck traffic around Canton Ave with more regular enforcement. Heavier volume of vehicles around the Canton Ave area. Speed trailer is currently in the Canton Ave area. There is some variance to the volume measures for the signs collecting the data. Spacing between cars may not be being identified and they're clumped as one (TraffiCloud is used by the portable signs).

- List of Accidents:
  - Pedestrian near Roche Brothers - Islington employee.
    - Town website has "See Click Fix" to report issues with cross walks, lights, etc.
    - The operator of the motor vehicle was not charged.
    - Beginning of October, a driver on Thatcher street was pulling out and there was an accident between the cyclist coming down Gay St. and the car pulling out of Thatcher
  - Another accident near Pond St. and Martingale whereby a cyclist was allegedly struck by a landscaping vehicle. Ring cameras had video to help locate the vehicle.
  - Winter and Colby St, a driver was turning right onto Colby and right-hooked the rider. Driver was charged with leaving the scene of the accident.
    - Dave mentioned protect bike lanes as a tool used to avoid right-hook accidents.
    - Kayla mentioned shared bus and bike lanes in Boston.
    - Kayla mentioned potential collaboration with Needham to understand what we in Westwood could do better. She recommended this to help us learn what other towns similar to Westwood are doing to improve their pedestrian and bike safety
    - A bike box was mentioned by Dave.
  - Steve mentioned the moving together conference.
  - Kayla mentioned design and colors can influence behavior; perception changes; perceived as more residential. It would be good if we, the committee, could understand when changes are being planned, so we can review and understand considerations for all forms of transportation. Support diverse modes, for example, Norwood Center, and ensure good flow of traffic.
  - Officer Connelly mentioned the state designed 1A and East St intersection back in 1997.
  - Washington St. 4 lane stretches can be considered for a potential future study with a master plan.

Public Works, Planning - No attendance.

Westwood Community Trails

- Steve mentioned this is taking place in 2 Saturdays from now. Westwood Land trust is hosting a walk on Sunday 11/13.

Complete Streets Project

- Dave commented the policy says at the end, we're going to measure everything; metrics are supposed to be reported and tracked. Dave suggested we receive and review a report from DPW. If we can fill out these details, we can go a long way to improving things. There have been several improvements in the past few years and we should generate a report each year that shows our progress, such as a 1 pager.
- Dave mentioned years ago there was a desire for cross-walk blinking lights, with the advent of the solar panels and technology has helped make them more affordable.
- Steve recommended we revisit what departments require input/data provided. We can show how improvements have materialized via the Complete Street Policy.
- The annual report from the town is one document that is prepared.
- Dave recommends we can aggregate the changes and an annual event when the report is released and it serves as an opportunity for the public to provide feedback and digest changes and think about the future. Steve recommended September as a potential date given the close of major construction season.
- Steve recommended folks review the Complete Streets Requirements. Several grants have been received.

**Next Meeting Date:** November 17

**Meeting Adjourned:** 9:03 PM