

Complete Streets Committee – Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2016 @ 10:00 a.m. in the Town Board Conference Room

Attendees:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
Joe Emminger	Town Supervisor
Jim Jones	Technical Support - Town Engineer
Chris Bushover	Handlebars Cycle Co.
Greg Szewczyk	NYSDOT
Jim Cuzzo	NYSDOT
Lt. Nicholas Bado	Town Police Department
Kathleen Johnson	Village of Kenmore
Jim Hartz	Town Planning and Development
Ken Swanekamp	Town Planning Board – Chairman
Tom Jones	Town Highway Department
Fred Frank	Town Planning Board – Vice Chairman
Peter Breitnauer	Village of Kenmore – Police Chief
David Stinner	Resident/Owner – USitek
Wayne Scibor	Erie County DPW
Angie Robinson	National Federation of the Blind-NY

1. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

There was one addition made to the previous meeting minutes by Kathleen Johnson who discussed the narrow width of Delaware Avenue within the Village. Motion to approve the Minutes of the March 15th, 2016 Meeting. Motion: Jim Jones Second: David Stinner.

Voting: Ayes - All Nays- None Motion Approved.

2. Public Information Meeting – Format and Marketing

Jim Hartz handed out a copy of a map showing some options for the proposed local complete streets network. This is a first draft of the local network map and it will be amended as the public outreach effort moves forward. The map has been categorized into jurisdictional area and existing or proposed off-street trails. The map also shows public parks and schools. Fred Frank asked if we will be designating these streets by type of facility. The map may eventually evolve into a more advanced display of facilities, but for now. We are just showing proposed routes. The objective of the map exercise is to help us think about the wording of our policy statement and also plan for proposed implementation projects if the Town Board does adopt a Complete Streets Policy. We should be able to plug some projects into the Capital Improvement Plan.

Fred Frank said that we should be able to show people several design options at the public information meeting. Jim Hartz said that he will be using some of the images he gathered for the last meeting and any others he can gather before the meeting. Jim will provide a very basic overview of the Complete Streets effort to date and show some basic design alternatives. After the brief presentation, it would move to an open house format where there would be some discussion tables to gather the public's

feedback. Kathleen Johnson mentioned that we might want to consider what types of facilities we show the public because of the economics for these types of projects. Kathleen said that it would be good to present some information on the HAWK signal.

Greg Szewczyk mentioned that the UB study contained flawed information regarding the Delaware Ave width and various design options. Jim Hartz mentioned that there would be no specific design recommendations put forth as part of this public information meeting.

Angie Robinson asked if any of the proposed projects would be designed to meet ADA guidelines. Jim Hartz mentioned that the Town's draft policy does include language that uses design guidelines as outlined in the NACTO or AASHTO design manuals. Those manuals all use the latest standards for ADA compliance. Angie said that whoever designed the intersection at Colvin and Highland completely got it wrong. The ADA ramps lead you diagonally into Colvin Blvd. She wanted to know who reviews these designs before they are built.

Greg stated that these types of issues are those normally brought up at a public information meeting. Jim Jones said that the NYSDOT uses the latest guidelines that incorporate all of the ADA recommendations.

Fred Frank suggested that the public information meeting focus on the local network options and the comfortability options regarding facilities. Jim Hartz said that there will be handout maps as well as large blank maps for people to suggest various locations. The other area of focus will be the types of facilities that could be used in a proposed design. We may breakout the discussion tables into jurisdictional area or allow Town-wide network discussions at each table. Jim mentioned that the costs of these facilities will be discussed and how difficult it can be to implement within the constrained budgets.

Chief Brietnauer mentioned that Crosby Avenue is too narrow to support CS facilities. There is also no way to eliminate resident parking on the street. Fred Frank suggested that bicycle boulevards be an option on Crosby. The vehicle traffic speed would have to slow to 20 mph, but that would accommodate a more comfortable bike route. Jim Jones said that each municipality is legally responsible for designing a roadway that includes bicyclists and all pedestrians. The driving public is going to have to go through a culture change. Many other areas of the country are already going through this, it just hasn't caught on in WNY yet. People want to live in neighborhood that promote pedestrian friendly design.

Chief Breitnauer asked who is going to flip the bill for increased municipal liability insurance when these things are put on our streets. Jim Jones suggested that a municipality is more liable if they do not design their streets to accommodate all users. Joe Emminger mentioned that for 4-6 weeks during the Fall, Crosby is incredibly busy with football games and he would avoid the area completely if he could. Kathleen Johnson said that Crosby field is utilized all throughout the year. She is concerned about designating any streets that would encourage more bicycle traffic. She said vehicle traffic whips down Crosby now. A different street that has slower traffic would be better. Fred Frank suggested that by implementing complete streets design, it would slow down the speed of automobile traffic.

Chief Brietnauer said that if these facilities are put in place, the bicyclists better observe all of the stop signs along the way because they tend not to observe traffic control devices now. Fred Frank said that an ideal complete streets design would eliminate stop signs all together and include round-a-bouts at any intersection to keep traffic flowing. Chief Brietnauer said that the Village had nothing but problems with traffic circles on Victoria and Hamilton and had them removed years ago. Kathleen Johnson said that there is no money in the budget to be able to build any of these improvements. The Village is saying that Complete Streets design will not work on Crosby Avenue.

Angie Robinson said that drivers need to be more aware of pedestrians, they just don't care about anyone else using the road.

Greg said that he feels the group may be jumping ahead a little bit on the designation of any particular treatment on a roadway. He feels that we should not rule out any roadway at this time. He feels that the Town will want to make sure that they get the local network right first. He said that for any street there is something that can be done to accommodate bikes. It could be as simple as placing "share the road" signs along a street. It doesn't mean that there has to be a designated "bike only" lane on that street. The public will let us know through the public outreach phase of where they want to see these facilities. It's difficult to imagine a network that could accommodate a 7-year old on every street and most families will be looking how to get to an off-street trail. There are going to be several different options for different users.

Jim Hartz has prepared a marketing flyer for the public information meeting that contains the Town's logo with a couple of bike wheels (a graphic arts student and Chris Bushover assisted in the final design). Fred Frank and Kathleen Johnson suggested removing the middle graphic on the flyer so as not to mislead people about a specific design

Supervisor Emminger mentioned that the Colvin-Eggert intersection is very difficult to maneuver now and he doesn't see how CS design can be implemented there. Jim Hartz suggested that they can pull that back to the off-street trail that runs underneath the I-290 to avoid the intersection for now.

Jim Jones asked if the County has made any progress on their Complete Streets Initiative. Wayne Scibor stated that they are now without a traffic engineer and expect that the position will be filled in the near future. The County Executive has been a proponent of implementing Complete Streets.

Angie Robinson suggested that instead of putting a bike path down Delaware Avenue why not look at putting one along Delaware Road. Jim Hartz said that has been suggested and it is currently on the proposed local network map.

3. Public Survey

Jim Hartz discussed expanding the public survey that was put forward by the University at Buffalo that gathered about 120 responses over a 5 day period. Jim suggested keeping the survey open for 2 months during June and July. We would tally the results in August and prepare a report for the Town Board to consider in September. Jim Jones has prepared an online mapping application that can gather people's

input using GIS technology. We can attach this link to our survey to give the public some additional options in choosing locations.

Greg S. mentioned that it is important not to ask people about a specific street in the survey. Sheridan Drive has many challenges and is being studied now from Sheridan Park to Parker Blvd. comprehensively. Jim Cuozzo mentioned that the NYS DOT study was prompted by a request it received from the Town last year. Ken Swanekamp said that Sheridan Drive and Niagara Falls Blvd. have been mentioned in the previous 2 Comprehensive Plans for the Town as areas that require further study. It is completely appropriate to focus on those 2 areas for further study. The 2005 Plan mentioned a Town Center at Sheridan Drive and Delaware Avenue. That has since been removed in the recent comp plan update because that will not happen with 9 lanes of automobile traffic and drive-thru facilities at every corner.

4. Current and Proposed Projects:

Kathleen Johnson updated the Committee on the Elmwood Avenue Streetscape project in the Village. Greg S. explained that the project has been re-scoped as a sidewalk job on the East side of Elmwood Avenue. It will be ADA compliant and include some additional landscaping and pedestrian treatments. The roadway configuration will remain the same for now. They are going to close some of the excess curb cuts on Elmwood to eliminate conflicts.

Jim Jones updated the committee on some progress regarding the Rails to Trails corridor. The completion date is slated for mid-June. The HAWK signal was discussed at the last project meeting. The DOT has a standard protocol for implementing a new signal head, so that was discussed in detail. New signs will be installed soon on Sheridan Drive. Jim discussed the difference between a signal and a beacon. If a signal is dark people must stop like it's a 4-way intersection, but if a beacon is dark, you can proceed through the crossing. Traffic planners are hoping that the one on Kenmore Avenue is up first.

The public information meeting will be held on May 26th. There will be another CS Committee Meeting on Tuesday May 24th to finalize any last minute details.