

Minutes, Amherst Transportation Advisory Committee

Wednesday, June 26, 2019

First Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall - 5:00 PM

Members Present: Aaron Hayden, Eve Vogel, Mark Rabinsky, Kimberly Tremblay; Bruce Carson

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Guilford Mooring, Christine Brestrup

Others Present:

Meeting started: 5:00 pm.

1. MassDOT Rt 9 improvement in Hadley
 - a. From malls to Middle St
 - b. Changing from 2 lanes to 2 lanes with center L turn lane
 - c. Have bike path and multi-use path on both sides
 - i. Currently no sidewalks past East St into Amherst on the South side
 - d. Will make Rail Trail connection at Maple & Middle bigger
 - i. Also put Rail Trail access near the former buffalo farm
 - e. DOT acted this way under the assumption that the B43 bus is going to increase its rider usage with its new route, thereby allowing the redesign to handle the amount of traffic
 - f. DOT is adhering to the Complete Streets policy
 - i. Regarding bus stops and crosswalks
 - g. Question posed from the committee member who attended is who is going to clear the sidewalks of snow.
 - i. Hadley stated they are not going to do it. It is a state maintained road.
2. Northampton Rd affordable housing project
 - a. Council made brief mention of it about how there was no sidewalk there
 - i. Sidewalk will be put in later (FY 21?)
 - b. The developer needs to apply to the state for a project eligibility letter, and then they would file the paperwork with the town
 - i. Takes about a month
 - ii. Two to three months after this this issue will come to the TAC
 - c. Finance committee did agree that the project will get \$500,000 of CPAC money
 - d. Location is near Amherst College athletic fields
3. Public Comment
 - a. Citizen request - Wants to consider having the town make a connection from the Rail Trail and downtown
 - i. Discussion about logistics of biking on Rt 116 and in the Amherst College area.
 - ii. Needs to be looked at the bigger context of the Ped-Bike Plan
4. Ped-Bike Plan

- a. Was sent to the EDC and waiting for response
 - b. Map has not moved forward because we are waiting for the data
5. E Pleasant St sidewalk study
 - a. Has been funded
 - b. Will start surveying in the Fall
6. Subcommittee Meetings
 - a. Collecting information to assemble a scoring system for projects
 - b. Researching other scoring systems
 - c. Would like to have things to present to the TAC by early August
 - i. In order for the TAC to have them for a yearly project ranking
 1. List of projects can be pulled together for next meeting
7. Discussion of current projects
 - a. General discussion of projects under consideration
 - b. November is the deadline for project recommendations
 - c.
8. Committee member news
 - a. Still in process of looking at interested parties
 - b. Town Manager still deciding what to do about committee members whose terms are expiring
9. Planning department info
 - a. Changes are looking at being made to 142-143 S East St
 - i. Behind Florence Savings
 - ii. Putting in a bus stop, crosswalk, and a sidewalk.
 1. And pedestrian lights
 - iii. As well as making improvements to the grassy median
 - iv. Will be widening the road there
 - v. Will be in front of Planning Board on July 24th
 1. Can bring plans to TAC before then
 - vi. Unsure what exactly is going to be done with building yet
 - b. Amherst media is withdrawing application and resubmitting it for a building at the corner of Gray St and Main St
 - i. Will be hiring an architect and moving the building East
 1. Hoping to have parking behind building
 2. Will have an access from Gray St
 - ii. Location is in the BID
 1. Another building in that area also bought and will become a mixed use building (18 units approx.)
 - c. Cooley Dickinson project will have to go in front of the Zoning Board of Appeals
 - i. Will have to get a special permit to change their site plan in order to have access from Northampton Rd

1. TAC discussed effects of this entrance
 - ii. TAC is going to write a letter to the MassDOT regarding the issues of this entrance with suggestions and will also be potentially attending the ZBA hearing
 - d. Marijuana shop where the old Rafters is has been approved
 - i. Will be making changes to driveways (closing one off)
10. North Amherst/North Pleasant
 - a. Town has decided they are not going to submit for another MassWorks Grant at this time
 - i. Many factors went into the decision
 - b. TAC can say they want roundabouts anyway, or they can do a signal based intersection with no turn lanes (smart light option)
 - c. Planning has ability to hire a consultant to look at N Amherst, and restart the planning process to remind people of what is going to happen up there
 - i. TAC will be able to contribute to that
 - d. Also as a result of the “Opportunity Zone” created there, there are development opportunities that are starting to be looked at.
 - i. There are also a large quantity of people that are going to be moving into the Mill District
 - e. Discussion held and TAC decided to continue the topic for future meetings
11. Next meetings
 - a. July 17th