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Complete Streets Committee Meeting Minutes

MEETING DATE: January 3, 2020
TIME SCHEDULED: 12:00 P.M.
LOCATION: Planning Dept. Office, Town Offices, Room 112
MEMBERS PRESENT: Peter Bloomfield, Chair (At-Large)
Kevin Cafferty, Member (Pathway Committee)
Brendan Sullivan, Member (Planning Board)
Glenn Ferguson, (Highway Surveyor / Tree Warden)
Alison Demong, Member (Board of Selectmen)

MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Ellen Moshier, Vice-Chair (At-Large)
Christopher Madden, Clerk (Recreation Commission)

TOWN EMPLOYEES PRESENT: Kenneth Kirkland, (Town Planner)

Agenda

Chair Bloomfield moved to start the meeting at 12:10 pm. The motion was approved 5-0.

Meeting Minutes

Bills

Discussion

1. MassDOT Complete Streets Grant: Tier 3 – Application Status Update:

Town Planner Kirkland indicated that CS Administrator Gunn provided notice via phone conversation that the Town was not awarded the Tier 3 construction grant. Upon questions from Members Bloomfield and Demong, Town Planner Kirkland stated Administrator Gunn indicated the project type, (single sidewalk with no other complete streets measures) does not seem as competitive as other submissions, which was the previous commentary. Member Cafferty indicated they (Town of Scituate) were similarly declined for a Tier 3 application as well, and further stated that other communities have stronger, vocal political support that can overshadow other communities. Member Cafferty also reminded the Committee that the Town, (long before the Committee was formed) had previously refused MassDOT to construct the sidewalk, and that was not helping as well.

Chair Bloomfield led a lengthy discussion regarding the next steps, and the plausibility of receiving funds for incremental construction projects. It was suggested that the Committee should continue to ask Town Meeting for construction funds, which would keep construction activity remain visible and build rolling support amongst residents.

2. Main Street Pedestrian Improvement Project:

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- a. Phase 3A (Circuit St. to Lincoln St.) – Given the Town was declined the construction grant, the Committee reaffirmed its decision to build a complete sidewalk to Paradise Drive, which was the point where Highway Surveyor Ferguson felt he could construct a complete sidewalk.
- b. Phase 3B (Lincoln St. to Town Center) – There was discussion on how to proceed with the Main Street Pedestrian Improvement Project given the decline of construction grants. This was discussed in detail as part of Town Center Planning.

3. **Town Center Planning – Discussion & Earmark Funding:**

The Committee held a lengthy discussion regarding the future of the Main Street Pedestrian Improvement Project as part of Town Center Planning. Member Cafferty suggested the Committee could, in the future, request a bond for including the Main Street Pedestrian Improvement Project along with complete Town Center Planning as one large, bond package. He mentioned that many communities are bonding for large-scale improvements to important public service items such as schools (as Norwell did in the past), libraries, senior centers, and Town Halls, and that perhaps the Town should look to its infrastructure in a similar fashion, especially given the espoused importance of reinvigorating Town Center. A bond request that collectively includes all of these improvements would enable the Town to make a tangible decision regarding the importance of these improvements and their connection to Town Center.

Selectmen Demong indicated that this type of financial discussion was best held with Town Administrator Morin, the Selectmen, and perhaps Town Accountant Mangan as well. The timeline for Town Center Planning was discussed, and it was agreed that May Town Meeting was implausible, given the remaining work and wish to create appealing and complete Plans.

- a. Request for Proposals (RFP): Town Center Public Space Design – The Committee discussed the RFP tasks for the design professional, keeping note of the low budget. Selectmen Demong felt the design professional having two (2) meetings with Town Center business owners would be repetitive, as the Committee is aware of their concerns, but Members Cafferty and Bloomfield felt that it wouldn't garner support if Plans were updated without the design professional meeting with them first. It was agreed that the design professional would update Main Street portions of the existing Concept Plans, create a few visuals for Town Meeting of the chosen neighborhood design concepts, and draft a short narrative to accompany those visuals.

Member Cafferty and Highway Surveyor Ferguson noted that the RFP could be sent to a registered landscape architect (RLA). Chair Bloomfield asked whether the existing 2015 Concept Plans would be included as part of the RFP, which Town Planner Kirkland indicated they would.

Miscellaneous

Adjournment

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Member Cafferty moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:27 pm. The motion was approved 5-0.

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING: January 24, 2020 at 12:00 pm

These minutes have been approved with reading of the minutes by the Norwell Complete Streets Committee at a public meeting duly noticed and held on January 24, 2020, in accordance with the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.

Signed:  Date: 1/24/2020
Committee Clerk

Copy filed with: Office of Town Clerk
Complete Streets File

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