

TOWN OF STOW
COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the August 26, 2021 Complete Streets Committee Meeting

Members present: Karen Kelleher, JP Benoit, Kathy Sferra, Jim Salvie

Karen Kelleher called to order at 2:00 pm

*Kathy Sferra moved to accept the minutes of the July 29, 2021 meeting as written
Jim Salvie seconded*

Roll call vote: Karen Kelleher **-YEA**; JP Benoit **-YEA**; Kathy Sferra **-YEA**; Jim Salvie **-YEA**

Correspondence

Karen Kelleher said Planning Board member Margaret Costello sent her an email from 2020 between the Gleasondale Neighborhood Subcommittee and the Select Board, requesting a truck restriction and weight limit on Marlboro Road. JP Benoit confirmed that email has been provided to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee. Committee members agreed that this request is within the jurisdiction of the TSAC.

Town Center Concept Plan RFP

Town Planner Jesse Steadman said horizontal construction and engineering work is not subject to bidding requirements under MGL Ch 30B. Jesse Steadman said he will solicit competitive bids for the initial concept plans, with the goal of continuing to work with an engineering firm to deliver 25% design plans needed to seek construction funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Jesse Steadman said that the project is broad in scope and the initial concept plans will help narrow down the project for later design engineering.

Kathy Sferra said that the scope is geographically broad, and that this committee should prioritize specific improvements that they know should be addressed rather than designate a large area and ask how complete streets improvements can be made. Jesse Steadman said a more specific issues analysis could be included in the RFP. Jesse Steadman said that funding through the TIP requires demonstration of past studies. Jim Salvie said that past discussions about bike lanes on Great Road were only discussions with state Complete Streets officials and not a complete study.

Kathy Sferra said priorities for Town Center could include closing sidewalk gaps near Pilot Grove and bringing sidewalks toward Circuit Dr. The committee agreed to maintain the geographic scope presented at the previous Town Meeting while adding extra specificity about known connectivity issues to the RFP. Kathy Sferra suggested adding concept plans to allow “off-street” pedestrian amenities in the Town Center area. Resident Katie Fisher suggested that the concept plans include location of a crosswalk for the Plantation Apartments.

Shared Streets Grant | Review of Crosswalk Analysis Quote

Jesse Steadman said the Planning Department has been working with the Highway Department to reposition the crosswalk between Town Building and the Old Town Hall for accessibility and safety reasons. Jesse Steadman said the Town secured a Shared Streets and Spaces grant to purchase new pedestrian crossing lights for the crosswalk. Jesse Steadman said it became clear that the best location for the crossing beacons may not be the location of the existing crosswalk. Jesse Steadman said he reached out to Green Intl. for engineering study to determine the most suitable location for the new crosswalk and warning lights.

The committee agreed that the engineering is necessary to design a suitable crossing between Town Building and Town Hall. Karen Kelleher addressed correspondence in which the engineer from Green Intl. said the cost for the work could be slightly lowered by using data other than traffic counts to determine best sightlines. Jesse Steadman said data from traffic counts could be useful for preparing the later RFP for Town Center concept plans. Jesse Steadman said that the grant requires the pedestrian beacons to be installed during 2021.

Track Road Update

Jesse Steadman said that himself, Kathy Sferra, and Town Administrator Denise Dembkoski met with Crow Island owner Rob Albright regarding Track Road. Jesse Steadman said Rob Albright did not state opposition to any of the current concept plans. Kathy Sferra said Rob Albright had spoken with trail users who did not wish to see the path paved. Jesse Steadman said Rob Albright does not wish to maintain the road, and that recycled asphalt could form a compacted surface that would be easy to keep intact. Kathy Sferra said that Rob Albright is also exploring installing electronic gates at either end of Track Road. Jesse Steadman said Rob Albright occasionally uses the Sudbury Road entrance for trucks, owing to a weight restriction on the White Pond Road bridge.

Jim Salvie said he has suggested to Town Administrator the creation of a dedicated working group to settle Track Road questions. Jim Salvie said he is agnostic about paving the route, as long as accessibility is increased. Kathy Sferra agreed that there should be a dedicated working group that works to build community consensus about the approach to the infrastructure. Jim Salvie said that the working group should be the responsibility of the Town Administrator and the Town Planner, at least to propose the composition of the group. Karen Kelleher said the complete streets committee should make some recommendations about the composition. Kathy Sferra said that clearly defining the role would make it clear who should be included as members.

Jesse Steadman said federal funding for the project will be specifically related to design costs. Jesse Steadman said he will invite the Town Administrator to an upcoming meeting to have a formal brainstorm for the scope of the Track Road project team.

Jim Salvie moved to adjourn
Kathy Sferra seconded

Roll call vote: Karen Kelleher **-YEA**; JP Benoit **-YEA**; Kathy Sferra **-YEA**; Jim Salvie **-YEA**

Respectfully submitted,
Malcolm Ragan