

TOWN OF STOW
COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the December 14, 2021 Complete Streets Committee Meeting

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

Members absent: Brian Hatch, Daren Thraen

Karen Kelleher called the meeting to order at 2:00PM

Kathy Moved to accept the minutes of August 26, 2021 as written

Jim Salvie Seconded

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

Correspondence

Committee members noted that correspondence regarding traffic safety concerns is now directed to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee, which is better suited to respond to such comments.

Budget Discussion

The Committee reviewed a draft FY2023 budget proposal prepared by Town Planner Jesse Steadman. Jesse Steadman reported the current balance of the Committee's account is roughly \$17k. Jesse Steadman said the Complete Streets Committee moved action on all priorities identified in the last budget cycle. Jesse Steadman said that federal funding for Track Road improvements was not contained in the federal infrastructure bill or the larger social spending package and is instead marked for a later appropriations bill. Jesse Steadman said procurement is moving forward on numerous signs identified in the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, as well as for Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons for crossings in Town Center and Lower Village funded by a state Shared Streets & Spaces grant.

Jesse Steadman said he is holding off on issuing a Request for Proposals for Town Center transportation concept plans to allow time for the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to complete a study for the main intersection. Jesse Steadman said the data collected for that MPO study can be utilized by whoever is contracted for the concept plans.

The Committee discussed funding proposals for FY2023. The proposal included \$35k for Crescent Street sidewalk design, and \$100,000 for Hudson Rd/Route 117 intersection design. Jesse Steadman reported that a sidewalk gap along Crescent Street is #7 in Stow's Complete Streets prioritization plan. Jesse Steadman said the \$17k still in the Complete Streets account could be applied toward the sidewalk engineering.

Kathy Sferra asked if it would be possible to include a crosswalk across Crescent Street to access to Town Center Park. Highway Superintendent Steve Nadeau said that engineering standards require a safe waiting area that meets ADA requirements if a crosswalk were to be studied at that location. Jesse Steadman said studying addition of crosswalk is a small item to add to the engineering proposal and could be addressed.

Jim Salvie asked if Jesse Steadman had coordinated with the Town Administrator on the Hudson Rd/Route 117 and Crescent Street budget proposals. Jesse Steadman said he is getting input from Boards before raising the topic with the Town Administrator and the Select Board.

Turning to the Hudson Road/Route 117 intersection proposal, Jesse Steadman said several town employees are scheduled to meet with the project team for the Masters Academy, expected to occupy the former Bose property. Kathy Sferra said the town should control funding and design for signalization of the intersection and then seek cooperation with the Masters Academy during later permitting to help pay for construction.

Jim Salvie said the Select Board's preference is that the Town secures engineering for the signalization and Masters Academy can then provide some funding for construction. Jesse Steadman said he will talk with the Town Administrator further to coordinate the proposal between boards. Steve Nadeau said the town has a better chance of securing MassWorks grants for the Hudson Road intersection if the developers of Masters Academy and the anticipated Athens Lane Active Adult Neighborhood are supportive and engineering work has already begun.

JP Benoit asked when the traffic study for Athens Lane will be complete. Jesse Steadman said he is unsure, and that the Planning Board will likely see a complete traffic study shortly before a similar study is completed for the Stow Acres project.

Karen Kelleher summarized that the Complete Streets Committee is supportive of the proposals for Crescent Street sidewalk engineering and also for continuing discussions with relevant boards and committees for Hudson Road/Route 117 intersection improvements.

Jim Salvie moved to support the two funding proposals with the understanding that there will be further coordination with the Town Administrator and Select Board on Hudson Road improvements

Karen Kelleher seconded

Roll call vote: Karen Kelleher -**Yea**; JP Benoit -**Yea**; Kathy Sferra -**Yea**; Jim Salvie -**Yea**;
Eve Fischer -**Yea**

Track Road Committee Recommendation

Jesse Steadman requested a formal recommendation from the Committee for composition of a Track Road project committee. Kathy Sferra said the Town Administrator should be engaged before the Complete Streets committee sends any formal recommendations. Jim Salvie suggested just reminding the Town Administrator that the Complete Streets Committee would like the opportunity to make some suggestions about the charge and composition of a Track Road committee. Member of the committee requested that Planning staff move those staff-level discussions forward.

Jim Salvie mentioned his involvement with Nashoba Regional Greenways and recapped the work that has been done to identify good routes for bike travel and safe connections to existing rail trails. Jim Salvie said that Nashoba Greenways toured possible connections between Track Road and the forthcoming Mass Central Rail Trail, finding several issues with the available connections. Jim Salvie said he would like the Complete Streets committee to discuss this connection in the future, potentially along Sudbury Rd through Gleasondale. The Committee discussed the possibility of continuing the Assabet River Rail Trail

(ARRT) along its old right-of-way through Honey Pot Hill Orchards. Several members stated that the owners are not interested in the rail trail passing through their land.

Jim Salvie said that the development of the Mass Central rail trail makes connections to the rest of the ARRT newly possible for the Town. The committee touched on the issues that have so far prevented Honeypot Orchards from having any interest in continuing the rail trail through their portion of the old rail right-of-way. Kathy Sferra mentioned that there had been a feasibility study to cross the Assabet at Joanne Drive, with unfavorable findings.

The committee agreed to return to their usual meeting schedule in January 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Malcolm Ragan