

TOWN OF STOW  
COMPLETE STREETS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the February 15, 2018 Complete Streets Committee Meeting

Members Present: Karen Kelleher, Bill Bosworth, Mike Clayton, Kathy Sferra, Jesse Steadman, Margie Lynch (via phone), Jim Salvie (via phone)

**Discussion with Howard Stein Hudson: Draft Prioritization Criteria, Prioritization Plan Approval Process, and Public Meeting Planning**

*Present (via Phone):*

Elizabeth Flanagan, Transportation Planner  
Lou Rabito, Manager of Complete Streets  
Casey Uy, Transportation Planner

Staff from Howard Stein Hudson (HSH) described how the prioritization criteria are operationalized, and responded to questions the Committee formed during their meeting of January 31, 2018.

Regarding the inclusion of outlier comments, Elizabeth Flanagan said that comments related to projects that are not within the scope of Complete Streets are not included, and that comments related to behavior or use changes are not seen as relevant. Elizabeth Flanagan said that these may be noted in the final report.

Regarding the use of a latent demand metric, Elizabeth Flanagan said that HSH has moved away from use of this criteria, though it mainly includes points of interest and therefore would not give preference to cul-de-sac roads. Jim Salvie suggested including a criteria for existing bicycle use, utilizing data from Strava heatmaps. Jim Salvie noted that points of interest are not always the best indicators for bicycle demand, as recreational rides are not point a to point b. The Committee agreed that this would also allow for comfort of regional cyclists to be taken into consideration.

Regarding one Town's use of three categories of pedestrian level of comfort, Elizabeth Flanagan said that HSH has found that separating this criteria into categories has not provided much nuance, and that they are now looking to use one comprehensive pedestrian level of comfort criteria titled 'sidewalk facilities'. Elizabeth Flanagan said that this criteria would consider the geometry of the road, ADA accessibility, speeds, lanes of traffic, and gaps in service. Elizabeth Flanagan said that this criteria, and others, will generate the list of projects, though it still needs qualitative analysis; the prioritization criteria will produce data-driven results, which then will need further scrutiny.

Elizabeth Flanagan said that their pedestrian level of comfort methodology does not analyze road segments that currently have no sidewalks. The Committee discussed this further, wondering how to create criteria to analyze areas without sidewalks. Elizabeth

Flanagan noted that their methodology aligns with justification needed for MassDOT funding, though how the list is ranked can be more qualitative.

Regarding how different design interventions are considered on the plan, Elizabeth Flanagan said that the projects submitted to MassDOT would include cost estimates, and the project descriptions would include specific interventions. Elizabeth Flanagan said that the draft plan may include options of interventions. Lou Rabito said that this is another area where local knowledge would help make the plan as accurate as possible. For example, Lou Rabito said that other towns have needed to consider utility pole replacement when looking to fund sidewalk installations.

Elizabeth Flanagan confirmed the Committee's understanding of the New Network Connection categories 'full', 'partial', and 'none'.

The Committee discussed the restrictions criteria, understanding that the application of these criteria is out of scope for the Prioritization Plan, and is not data-driven. Elizabeth Flanagan suggested that the Committee evaluate projects based on restrictions criteria once the initial list of projects is drafted, as this would factor into justification for the construction schedule. Elizabeth Flanagan said that the final report could include an appendix of the restrictions criteria.

The Committee discussed the timeline moving forward with HSH, agreeing that if the draft plan is provided to the Committee around February 21, feedback would be submitted to HSH by March 7, though ideally earlier. The Committee and HSH agreed that a public meeting should be scheduled for the week of March 12<sup>th</sup>, so that the draft prioritization plan can be discussed with residents prior to any restrictions criteria being applied.

Staff from Howard Stein Hudson and Margie Lynch left the meeting.

### **MassBike Advocacy and Complete Streets**

Jim Salvie said that he recently attended a MassBike Advocacy seminar, which featured a panel on Complete Streets. Jim Salvie said that this provided the opportunity to discuss with MassDOT employees how the Complete Streets program fits within the context of smaller towns.

### **Meeting Adjourned.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Valerie Oorthuys