

Approved: April 22, 2016

**Town Center Committee
Minutes of March 25, 2016**

The meeting was called to order at 12:00.

Present: Nelson Disco, Peter Flood, Dawn Cote, Karen Freed, Jackie Flood, Mary Hendricks and Finlay Rothhaus. **Excused:** Bill Wilkes.

Minutes: Approval of the minutes motioned by Karen, seconded by Dawn, votes were in favor except Mary abstained.

Old Business:

Mitigation money put away by the Planning Board to use for a future, as yet unplanned, sidewalk project has expired and was given back to the donor.

Status of TAP Award: The TAP Award is still at the state level, waiting for the plan to go forward. Joe Herlihy is working on the bracket used to hang the sign.

Safe Routes to School: Dawn asked 3 questions at the school about the program:

#1. Is the cost of the sidewalks on O’Gara Drive included in the estimate to redo O’Gara Drive? No, the sidewalks would be \$80,000 - \$100,000 extra, and could still be added. The total budget can be revised in quarter 2 and quarter 3, revisiting the capital improvement. Dawn believes that would be in 2017.

#2. Which parking spots belong to the Catholic Church? The spots in the back of the church belong to the church; the spots on the right are the school’s; the town owns School St. The relationship is cooperative, and we should know for sure before we plan a sidewalk.

#3. The Committee had requested Mary ask about the SRTS committee. Nelson remembers that we turned the SRTS Program over to the school, and Peter was going to be our representative. It met for awhile; cards went out to parents, and there was a Bicycle Day. The final minutes explained that since the school-based committee had identified areas of concern, the town committees could take them over. Nelson several members had understood that SRTS would take over O’Gara Dr. The program is paid for by the State, from the Federal Government. We had received \$13,000 for various planning activities. Dawn said that she will find more out about the Committee. Peter pointed out that we put in years of planning sidewalks, and don’t want to drop it. He thinks there should be some sort of entrance to the school area to indicate its importance.

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New member: Bill Wilkes is working on a friend to join our committee.

Chamber Small Business Award: We're still in the running for a \$250,000 grant, which would pay for a Woodbury St. sidewalk.

Status of Wire Road Intersection Design:

Kyle Fox was our guest. He reported that there is nothing new about the Wire Rd. intersection. A consultant did a study on the Front St. area, then the Wire Rd. area. This study resulted in new lights at Front St., coordinated with the Baboosic Lake Rd. lights to keep the traffic moving. For the benefit of town traffic and the Fire Department, the CVS lights and Baboosic Lake Rd. lights are now in sync. The DPW thinks that Wire Rd. and the bridge project on DW highway should be done at the same time. The bridge was recently put on the red list, which triggers annual checks. We'll get the plan, study it, and send it to the state for approval and funding. All this takes time. The state has done traffic numbers, and said that a single lane through a roundabout wouldn't work. A double lane or traffic signal would, though. The 4 signals could then be synced.

Peter spoke well of roundabouts around the world keeping traffic moving. The use of cobblestones on the center accommodates emergency vehicles which need more room. Kyle said that Mythbusters did a study on roundabouts vs. lights and it found that the capacity of roundabouts was greater. He pointed out that additional capacity didn't do any good if the traffic is going to be held up at the next light. Also, if traffic never stops, what about the pedestrians? That has to be considered. Nelson: how does the decision need to be made? The decision will be according to who pays. The Feds give it to the State, the State gives it to the town. We hire a consultant and make a recommendation. Karen said that the dates given of 2018 - 2019 gives an understanding of timing, and of the money involved: \$2,000,000 for the DW bridge, \$6,000,000 total for the funding.

Additionally, sidewalks would be included in the Wire Rd. Plan, either on the east side or the west side. Kyle reminded us that there are many "moving parts" to plans. We could look for stakeholders to work it out. Kyle said there are pros and cons to any solution. The Flatley property will have some importance in the project. Kyle told Dawn that the study had been done in 2012, and she questioned whether the traffic is less with the tolls gone.

Nelson reported that we could set up our table at the polls only after 3, so suggested that we not try to do it this time. It was agreed. We suggested April 29 as our next meeting, but wanted to put it out to the other members to help decide. We adjourned at 1:10.