

Newburyport Livable Streets

Meet-Up / Discussion

March 22, 2018

7pm to 8:45pm, Newburyport Public Library - Children's Activity Room

I. Attendance: Christine Wallace, Conrad Willeman, Elizabeth Marcus, Jennie Donohue, Mary McDonald, Rick Taintor, Sheila Taintor, Fred Thurlow, Kathleen Seekamp, Kitty Krajci

II. Welcome to new attendees Fred, Kitty and Kathleen!

III. Fred Thurlow, from Newbury, raised two concerns about sidewalks on streets shared by Newbury and Newburyport. First, there is not a continuous safe pedestrian connection on Parker Street between the end of the new rail trail and the traffic circle. He noted the possibility of elevating a sidewalk over the wetlands as has been done in Cape Elizabeth. Second, the sidewalk on Rolfe's Lane in Newbury ends at the senior development, almost at the Newburyport city line. There are lots of walkers along Rolfe's Lane/Ocean Avenue, and there should be a sidewalk on the Newburyport portion of the road. (Fred mentioned that David Hall had talked to someone in the City about safety at the intersection of Ocean Ave. and Water St.)

IV. Outreach / Publicity

- A. Press release – The Newburyport News ran an article based on the press release. All three new attendees noted that they learned about the group and this meeting from the News article. [Note: The Current also has an article about NLS based on the press release, which is posted on the Wicked Local website.] Jennie will share the press release on the Newburyport Commons page. Sheila will email it to all the City Councilors.
- B. Social media updates – Christine will post the press release on Newburyport NextDoor. We are all encouraged to invite our friends to like the Facebook page. [Note: The FB page currently has 94 likes.] Mary will set up an Instagram account (and coordinate with Juliet).
- C. Web page status – Conrad and Alex have not had a chance to get together about this yet. We agreed to pay to have a clean URL, i.e., NewburyportLivableStreets.org (or NbptLivableStreets.org).
- D. Other connections – Rick and Judy met with Greg Jones to introduce NLS and offer our assistance with Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, etc. Sheila met with Wayne Amaral to discuss implementing tactical urbanism projects.

V. Grants / Projects

- A. We discussed the AARP grant announcement. Jennie said that the Senior Community Center would be interested in this grant as well as our Livable Streets initiative, and we should communicate with Roseann Robillard.

- B. Jennie also discussed a Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) ADA grant that was instituted last year. The Council on Disabilities received funding last year to improve the sound system in the City Hall auditorium, but was unsuccessful in its application for funding to install APS units at the crosswalks at the Firehouse and Souffle's.
- C. Elizabeth reminded us of the New England Grassroots Environment Fund which provides seed grants for projects in the range of \$250 to \$1000. We discussed applying for a grant for an initial project.
- D. Rick will prepare a list of grant opportunities and deadlines for possible projects.

VI. Ongoing Initiatives (Report Backs)

- A. Complete Streets – October 1 is the deadline for completing the prioritization. Rick will follow up with Andy on the hiring of a consultant. Christine will call Wayne.
- B. Library Bike Racks – We discussed two options for locating a new bike rack: (1) on the Harris Street side, along a walkway between the patio and the transformer, and (2) at the front of the Library along the ramp from the sidewalk to the front door. There was also discussion of locating a bike rack or corral on the street, either by converting a parking space in front of the Library or by using the triangular no-parking area at the corner of Prince Place (the hydrant may preclude this).
- C. High Street Safe Routes to School project – A site walk by staff will be held soon. Greg Jones will invite Rick and Judy to join the staff on this walk.
- D. Merrimac St Safety Initiative – Christine reported that the Parks Department has submitted a request for \$25,000 to the Community Preservation Committee for a master plan for lower Atkinson. There is a public hearing next week for CPA funding. This could be coordinated with the Complete Streets project. We should also think about other uses for CPA funding.
- E. Hale Street Task Force. The ad hoc committee meeting has been rescheduled for the 3rd time to Thursday, March 29.

VII. Other

- A. There was a discussion about the need for sidewalks in front of businesses – the hardware store parking lot on State Street is a prime example of an unsafe condition.
- B. Continued discussion about winter maintenance of sidewalks. We need to step up our communication to the Mayor and appropriate City Councilors.
- C. Sheila shared a set of sidewalk inventory maps provided by Wayne Amaral. Conrad and Elizabeth have them until the next meeting. Sheila will ask Wayne for a PDF of the maps.

VIII. Next meeting – Monday, April 2 (place to be determined), to continue this month's agenda