

Newburyport Livable Streets  
March 5, 2019 – 7:00-8:30 PM  
Newburyport Public Library – Children’s Activity Room

Meeting Notes

Attendance

Juliet Walker, Rick Taintor, Sheila Taintor, Conrad Willeman, Elizabeth Marcus, Christine Wallace, Kitty Krajci, Judy Tymon (by phone), Alden Clark, Ben Iacono, Theresa Davis, Sharon Wintner

Open Discussion

- We welcomed new attendees Theresa and Sharon.
- Sharon lives at the corner of State and High. She discussed the problems with winter maintenance around the former Mobil station because it is vacant and there is no one there to clear the sidewalks.
- Theresa would like Hale Street to be a safer route for school kids to walk and bike from the Turkey Hill Road area. There was discussion about the Hale Street Task Force.

Winter Sidewalk Clearing

- Juliet passed out updated copies of the Google Docs spreadsheet that we are using to record areas where sidewalks and intersections are not cleared after snow storms.
- We discussed various options for following up on this information.
  - Identify key walking routes and request that the City take on responsibility for maintaining sidewalks on these routes. Examples include Storey Avenue, High Street, Low Street, Merrimac Street.
  - Advocate during the upcoming budget process for the City to invest in sidewalk clearing equipment.
  - Advocate for enforcement of the existing requirements that property owners clear the sidewalks adjoining their properties:
    - Ward Councilors would be good contacts. Christine will contact Larry Giunta about Storey Avenue; Sharon will contact Jared Eigerman about the State/ High area.
    - We could help Councilors by providing the contact information for key property owners.
- It was noted that the Amesbury has a sidewalk plow and maintains a walking route to school.
- Rick, Christine and Alden volunteered to be on a working group to propose action items for the next meeting.

## Open Streets

- The Open Streets event has been scheduled for Sunday, June 23, from 1 to 4 pm. Juliet passed out a map and described the route and the intent.
- Rick and Sheila have been walking the event application around to City departments, and the hope is to get this done for presentation at the next City Council meeting.
- We have some funding for this event from the Grassroots Fund grant [note: grant allocation is \$400 for police detail]. Additional funds may be needed for materials depending on the specific activities.
- Volunteers will be needed for activities and for intersections. Judy noted that there are 22 intersections along the route, and we would prefer not to assign volunteers for the full three hours, so we need many volunteers.
  - It would be great if we could recruit some people from the neighborhood as volunteers. Alden has discussed the event with some of his neighbors and thought that some might be interested.
  - It was suggested that the Joppa Flats Running Club might also be a source of volunteers.
- Outreach to the neighborhood is critical – including those neighbors not directly on the route but whose access will be affected.
- We discussed incorporating other planned activities into the Open Streets event:
  - Bike rodeo at the Brown School
  - Tactical urbanism project at Emma Andrews on Marlboro Street (e.g., chalk street mural and/or curb extension with planters)
- Christine recommended that we find out if any baseball/T-ball games are scheduled at Perkins Park on that date, and suggested that the Pioneer League might be interested in participating.
- Elizabeth noted that Anna Jaques Hospital is planning an event on the rail trail at Washington Street in the same general time frame – perhaps the previous weekend. We should be in touch to coordinate on this.

## Project Updates

- Juliet passed out the updated list of planned activities and events, including Livable Streets members who are working on each item.
- Film “Series”:
  - Sheila has contacted the Firehouse again about their grant. Their schedule is mostly open for Monday/Tuesday/Wednesdays in April and May. Elizabeth noted that the Earthport festival is scheduled for April 28, so we agreed to do our film in May.
  - It was suggested that we look at the People’s Methodist Church as another possible venue, as well as the Senior/Community Center.
  - Rick and Sheila have viewed another Dutch film but haven’t yet found a version with English subtitles (the trailer is subtitled, so we assume that there is a subtitled version of the full film).

- High Street Safe Routes project: It is taking longer than anticipated to secure all necessary temporary construction easements, so the project may not be ready for the 2019 construction season.
- Complete Streets:
  - It is not clear when the City’s Prioritization Plan will be finalized, and what project the City will submit for construction funding.
  - Christine has provided schematic designs for Merrimac Street at Pioneer Field, and Charlie Tontar is supportive of moving this forward.
  - Juliet will send our prioritization list to Betsy Goodrich at Merrimack Valley Planning Commission for her input on the format for submitting projects for federal funding.
- Traffic Safety Advisory Committee:
  - We will request to have a representative of Newburyport Livable Streets on TSAC.
  - Rick will monitor the City calendar for scheduling of TSAC meetings and will post TSAC agendas on the NLS Facebook page.
- There was discussion about video recording of City public meetings. Juliet has had email exchanges with the Mayor, who is open to looking at ways to expand this beyond the City Council and School Committee. Elizabeth noted that Newburyport Community Media has equipment that could be available for this purpose. Facebook Live and YouTube might also be lower-tech options.
- Safe Routes to School: Judy Crocker has shared information about the SRTS poster and yard sign contests. An event can be scheduled for Bike/Walk to School Day in May.
- Green Expo: We have been invited to have a table at the Green Expo, which takes place at the Nock Middle School on Thursday, April 11, from 4:00 to 8:00 PM. We agreed that this would be a good idea. We can provide information about Complete Streets, the Open Streets event, the film presentation, and other projects. Rick volunteered to staff a table for at least part of the time.
- A future project could be to do our own inventory of sidewalk conditions, similar to the winter clearing inventory.

Next Meetings

- It was agreed to have only one summer meeting (mid-July; no meeting in August), and to meet on the second Tuesday in September because the first Tuesday is immediately after Labor Day.
- The meeting dates through September are as follows:
 

○ March 5	○ May 7	○ July <u>16</u>
○ April 2	○ June 4	○ September <u>10</u>

Adjourn at 8:25 PM