

Dedham Sustainability Advisory Committee

January 9, 2012

Present: Jon Briggs (JB), Carol Hills (CH), Steve MacAusland (SM), Liz O'Donnell (LOD), Joanna Hamblin (JH), Deb Harrison (DH), Carmen Dellolacono (CD)

Guests: Linda Wilkins and Denis Wilkins, Joe Flanagan, Mark Maclean, Nancy Stolarz

Discussion with DPW Director, Joe Flanagan about Alternative Transportation in Dedham

JB opened the meeting of January 9, 2012 and introduced the Director of the DPW, Joe Flanagan who will be discussing with the Committee sidewalk and roadway regulations and practices. JB asked J. Flanagan how the Committee could help advance his Department's goals.

J. Flanagan responded that the pavement management budget is \$1.5 million, funded from state. This is strictly for roads, not sidewalks. Many residents would like to see more sidewalks or improvements to existing sidewalks, but with funding reduced \$500,000, this year they only have \$235,000 combined for sidewalks and misc work. There is no designated line item for sidewalks; it was taken out two years ago. However, this line item was not for new sidewalks, only maintenance to existing sidewalks. CH asked about Rustcraft Road and the proposed sidewalk. J. Flanagan responded that Rustraft has been in the capital budget for some time.

J. Flanagan would like to purchase a sidewalk paver, which would save the Town money since his crew could do the work for less money than a private contractor. The sidewalk paver would cost \$28,000 - \$60,000, but he would also like 4 more employees.

As far as regulations for a sidewalk they have to be handicapped accessible he stated. The typical width of a concrete sidewalk is 5 feet and if it's narrower you would widen it where you can. He explained that there is a "Concrete and granite corridor" in Dedham that is mostly composed of the squares and where asphalt exists currently they put asphalt back, but in these areas of Town they replace with concrete or granite.

CH asked if they would ever separate out the sidewalk budget from the roads budget? J. Flanagan said no. He stated that the priorities for sidewalks are areas around schools or if they were reclaiming a road they would do the sidewalk at the same time. JB said that the Committee would like to promote Safe Routes to schools. Is there something we could be doing to help move that along from your side? Promote more money for sidewalks said J. Flanagan and that can be done by working with the PTOs.

SM asked for a rough estimate of dollar per square foot for sidewalks. J. Flanagan said it depends on the sidewalk, material underneath and surrounding asphalt. It is less expensive if the DPW can remove the old asphalt, compact it and then have the contractor pave.

JB asked when the DPW repaves a road how do you work around the trees? Who makes call on whether the loom strip exists or goes? J. Flanagan said that it is a Board of Selectmen decision, but that in some neighborhoods it's hard to have a grass strip because it doesn't grow. These areas are not ideal for planting trees since people park their cars on these strips. JB stated the value of permeability to a neighborhood to reduce flooding. L. Wilkins asked if there were other items available that could be

installed. Permeable asphalt, but we don't install that. JB suggested developing a list of permeable options for homeowners to choose from besides the grass strip. He asked that the DPW give homeowners a choice of what else they could have that would be permeable.

LOD questioned the transparency in determining sidewalks? He has a list of existing sidewalks that need repair and prioritizes the ones near schools. He re-stated that there are no plans for construction of new sidewalk, only repair of existing. If there was money there could be a separate sidewalk budget and this would allow for connections where sidewalks currently don't exist. SM asked if we save money this winter on snow removal what happens to that money. It goes back to general operating fund said J. Flanagan.

The topic turned from sidewalks to bike lanes and JB asked where would appropriate bike lanes be in Dedham? J. Flanagan stated that Dedham has narrow roads and that only a portion of East St had room for a bike lane. There is not enough room to continue bike lanes past the Endicott estate or onto Eastern Ave. The minimum for bike lanes is 4ft with an 11 ft travel lane required for cars. JB wondered about connecting to Boston via Sprague Street, which would create a more complete bike lane for East Street.

JH asked about moving the sidewalk to allow for bike lanes. J Flanagan said to do that you have to take into consideration utilities and if the area is wide enough to fit a bike lane and sidewalks. Linda Wilkins wondered if you could make it dual purpose for riders and walkers with two lanes of traffic on one side. J Flanagan said he would have to look into that.

JB mentioned the Transportation Advisory Committee that will be before the BOS. That group will review projects and a member from DSAC will advise to that Committee.

Denis Wilkins asked what it would take to flip priorities and say that we are not doing anything to the streets until sidewalks are repaired and bike lanes are established. J. Flanagan said he did not see it happening in Dedham because of potholes and other issues with winter. LOD stated that really it's a Catch 22 in that people don't walk, because they can't get around safely with the current sidewalks or lack thereof. Denis Wilkins said that in Oregon they designated a percentage of all new construction budgets to bike lanes. This was 40 years ago.

Aldo Leopold Discussion

Nancy Stolarz presented to the Committee the film about Aldo Leopold's life and asked if the Committee would consider sponsoring the showing of it. D. Harrison offered Nobles, other locations for possible viewing are the library, Middle School, or churches. SM thought about the movie was that it is long, 70 minutes and may not hold everyone's attention.

ARTICLES FOR PAPER

Anti-Idling - LOD is waiting to hear from Dedham Cable when they are planning to show the PSA? She asked for support to attend the morning PTO meetings. The anti-idling campaign would involve the PSA for TV, radio and contracts for reprint. The contracts Liz would like us to reprint. Her timeline for this is January.

JH offered to get air testing equipment and talk to her professor about a student helping with this project. DH is working on this very subject at Nobles and is having the parents committee chairs ask other parents to not idle.

Renewables – JH volunteered to do an article on the Dedham Municipal Solar project, specifically dollars saved, and kWh. The timing for this is the end of February.

COMMUNITY/MEMBER UPDATES

State Rep. meeting on 109 project Bridge. It's a state road so we do not have jurisdiction. Rep. is going to do a meeting.

March 31st 8:30 pm is Earth Hour and VL wondered if the Committee would like to do something to mark this event, such as ask the BOS to endorse it and to have non-essential, non-emergency lights turned off. LOD thought this would be a good March article.

Meeting minutes of December 12, 2011 Liz made a motion to approve, Sm second. All in favor.

Next Meeting February 6, 2012

ADJOURN

CD made a motion to adjourn. CH second. All in favor.