

Milton Traffic Calming Advisory AD HOC Committee
Cannery Village Clubhouse
Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 24, 2021, 6:30 pm

Attendees: Randi Meredith, Councilwoman (Chairperson)

Susan Fewell, Mary Quigley, Bonnie Bloomquist (scribe)

Absent: Lisa Falzarano, Hunter Willis, George Cardwell

Liaison Non-voting members: Derrick Harvey, Chief of Police; Greg Wingo, Public Works Supervisor

Public Participants: Eban Brittingham, John Collier, Greg Hitz, PD Camenisch

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call to Order

2. Roll Call

3. Additions or Corrections to the Agenda, #6b postponed, Hunter unable to attend

4. Agenda Approved as Amended. PASSED

5. Minutes of February 24, 2021. PASSED

6. Unfinished Business: Discussion and possible vote on the following:

a. *AGENDA ITEM:* Potential approaches to accomplishing the responsibilities of this Ad-Hoc Committee; comprehensive plan/report, newsletter, survey, research, etc.

1. Councilwoman Meredith reported starting a list of potential items to focus on for the Committee's Advisory Report to the Mayor and Town Council:

- Recommended splitting the report into phases: easiest/quickest to implement to hardest/most planning required to implement
- Listing intersections that are called out in the survey repeatedly, with specified issues
- Adding areas in need of improvements for pedestrians
- Identifying ways of reducing speed without impacting the overall flow of traffic
- Provide grant opportunities and areas that specific grants could help with:
 - Heritage Creek is not easily accessible by pedestrian traffic
 - Part of Chestnut Street is not within the town limits and doesn't have sidewalks, there may be grants that are available to the county that aren't available in-town to address this problem;
 - Shipbuilders doesn't have sidewalks
- Recommend updates to Town Code Section 209 Vehicles & Traffic (50 pages)

ACTION ITEM: Randi to Email Section 209 to Committee Members

b. *AGENDA ITEM:* Review traffic measures already in place and future plans in motion; law enforcement, signage, intersection improvements, others

1. Jim Meek from RadarSigns said they haven't received the sign yet for repair
 - Chief Harvey reported the sign is still in transit
2. Two RadarSigns are not out for service. Can they be put back up?

- Chief Harvey discussed with the Mayor.... the batteries from the other two signs have been discontinued and so he wants to use those batteries for the sign that is out for service.
3. Citizen reports about excessive speeding on Federal has not changed.
 - It was requested to have the two radar signs placed on both sides of Federal

~~c. AGENDA ITEM: Research on traffic management; Vision Zero~~ POSTPONED

d. AGENDA ITEM: Research on AARP Community Challenge Grants

1. Mary Quigley provided specifics about the Program grants
 - Grants for community improvement are available to “fund quick-action projects that can help communities become more livable for people of all ages.” Examples include safety, walkability, roadways, mobility options for elderly.
 - Grants can range from several hundred dollars for smaller, short-term activities to several thousand or tens of thousands of dollars for larger projects.
 - Last year AARP distributed more than \$2.4 million among 184 grant winners across all states, Wash DC, PR and Virgin Islands
 - The guidelines are clear to provide specific requests (e.g., adding sidewalks, signs to avoid busy intersections, new crosswalks and crosswalks w/flashing lights);
 - The application deadline for this year is April 15th, since this Committee cannot apply for grants the Program opportunity will be included in the Traffic Advisory Report
 - A Handout was provided of projects that were funded by the Grants

e. AGENDA ITEM: Parks, Streets and Sidewalks (PS&S) Committee; Chestnut & Wharton History Request

1. At the March Town Council meeting Mayor and Town Council (M&TC) voted to have this Ad Hoc Committee include the intersection of Chestnut & Wharton/Atlantic in the Advisory Report. More input was requested before voting to install 4-way stop signs. Specifically, this Committee was asked to contact the PS&S committee about their past actions and the Fire Department to get their input on pedestrian safety improvements.
2. Councilwoman Meredith contacted Mr. West, Chair of the Parks, Streets and sidewalks committee (PS&S).
He said converting the intersection to a 4-way stop with crosswalks was approved about 2 years ago and it just hasn’t been done. He cast blame upon town staff. PS&S committee takes abysmal minutes when they even bother to take them. They’ve also had very few meetings, so there won’t be much to review.

Discussion:

- PD Camenish, former member of PS&S, reported that additional crosswalks are needed (e.g, Governor’s Walk continues on Coulter St across Federal St to the Cemetery where the Governors are buried)
- It may be dangerous to put a crosswalk across Federal St due to high speed and traffic volume, he recommended placing a stop sign there.
- Greg Wingo reported he needs a recommendation to start the crosswalk process

- Councilwoman Meredith reported she has corresponded with Virginia Loveland wife to Gary Loveland who was hit at the intersection of Federal & Mulberry while crossing in the crosswalk. From Ms. Loveland's email: *"In... July of 2019 my husband was crossing Federal at Mulberry at 9:30 am. He was walking, he had a bright day glow orange shirt on, he was three quarters of the way across Federal in the crosswalk and was hit by a car going south on Mulberry. I believe that this is indicative of the sense of urgency and impatience that people have at the stop signs on either end of Mulberry and additional waiting with increased traffic will make these intersections even more dangerous and risky. BTW The ambulance took my husband to Bayhealth. It takes 14 minutes to get to Bayhealth Hospital."*

- Unknown if a Police report was filed
- Chief Harvey identified another dangerous intersection, including Warden & Chestnut, Magnolia, Mulberry and Rt.16
- General cross-talk discussion included how historically sidewalks were added in front of houses if the property owner requested them, rather than required by a State, County or Town ordinance

ACTION ITEM: Councilwoman Meredith to review PS&S minutes with the Town Manager

f. **AGENDA ITEM:** Fire Department; Outreach on concerns re: improvements for pedestrian safety

1. Mayor & Town Council have instructed the Committee to contact the Fire Chief about any concerns regarding pedestrian safety improvements at Wharton & Chestnut, specifically for the potential impact on emergency personnel response time
 - Chief Harvey asked that Johnny Hopkins be contacted at the FD

ACTION ITEM: Hunter Wills (*volunteered after the meeting*) to contact Johnny Hopkins at the FD

g. **AGENDA ITEM:** Large Truck Traffic; issues, impacts, solutions

1. Directions for Dogfish Head (DFH) Truck Route are under revision by Councilwoman Meredith
2. Susan Fewell reported on the mileage comparison for DFH Truck route for signage options. She drove the route that would keep the trucks from passing through the Historic Area:
 - a. Trucks leaving from DFH:
 - Turn right onto Cave Neck Road and take immediate right onto Sam Lucas Road.
 - At the stop sign at the end of Sam Lucas Road, turn right again onto Rt. 5.
 - Stay on Rt. 5 past Heritage Creek and Mariner Middle School.
 - Turn left onto Sand Hill Rd., just when Rt 5 becomes Federal Street (across from Brittingham's farm stand) this is ~3 miles.
 - At Sand Hill Rd. and Rt 30 turn right onto Rt. 30, STAYING ON Rt. 30 for 9+ MILES TO Milford Hospital WHERE THE ENTRANCE IS TO Rt. 1 North.

This entire route is slightly less than 14 miles.

b. Trucks traveling South via Rt. 1 onto Rt. 30

- Beginning at Rt 30 at Milford Hospital to Cave Neck Rd is 14 miles.
- The total number of miles to the DFH entrance is 18.5 miles.

She reported that the first route, the "back route," to DFH is better in terms of distance and simplicity, especially in the busy summer season. It gets the drivers off of Rt. 1, which can be congested, and it helps them avoid the unfortunate intersection on Cave

Neck Road, a busy and dangerous traffic spot. Also, the back route helps the trucks avoid driving through Milton's Historic District (Town Center).

c. Trucks traveling West on Rt. 16:

- These trucks will turn right at the stop light on Rt. 16 and Rt. 30.
- From there the directions are THE SAME AS for the trucks coming from Milford on Rt. 30.
- To elaborate, the trucks will travel about one mile on Rt 30 and then turn left at the 4-way stop at the intersection of Rt 30 and Sand Hill Rd.
- They will travel on Sand Hill Rd for about 1 & 1/2 miles to the stop sign at Federal St., where they will turn right onto Rt 5, south.
- Then, having passed both the Mariner Middle School and Heritage Creek, they will turn left onto Sam Lucas Rd.
- At the end of Sam Lucas Rd., they will turn left at the stop sign onto Cave Neck Rd.
- The truck entrance to Dogfish Head will be immediately on their left.

Susan Fewell reported she talked these routes over with Ms. Kathryn Beasley, a Community Relations Officer with DelDOT who took notes on her suggested truck routes. The DelDOT Officer stated that they make traffic decisions based on what the town requests and will follow-up.

Discussion, in response to re-directing trucks coming from the North and from the West:

- Chief Harvey reported that trucks are allowed if they have local deliveries (e.g., restaurants, liquor store)
- Susan suggested that the Town could pass an Ordinance that trucks over a certain pound limit are not allowed to travel thru Town
- It was reported that the Ordinance cannot be enforced if the roads are owned by the State
- Susan reminded everyone that there are people at DelDOT who want to work with us
- A general discussion took place about the costs of improvements and the lengthy process (e.g., initial installation of curb ramps)
- Councilwoman Meredith reminded everyone that the Committee's purpose is to identify problems and that the Committee is tasked with identifying solutions, not figuring out how to pay for improvements
- A participant reported that improvements in the past were preferential-based and noted that this has to change
- A participant comment was made that it is the responsibility of the taxpayers to contribute to safety and improvements
- Susan stated that DelDOT should be concerned about the deteriorating condition of the State-owned streets
- The history of how DE State came to own the streets was asked and was generally discussed but not known for certain

3. Susan suggested each Committee Member have a copy of the Town Code Traffic Laws, it's ~48 pages with lots of white space.

ACTION ITEMS: Councilwoman Meredith to:

- Review revised DFH directions & map with Susan. Present at another meeting.
- Send Committee Members via email the Town Code Chapter 209-Vehicles and Traffic

POST MEETING UPDATE, Friday, March 26, 2021: A 40-YEAR VETERAN Public Information Officer for DelDOT, called Susan Fewell to follow up on the CONVERSATION she had with Ms. Beasley (as reported above). She reported that the Dogfish Head delivery trucks are NOT considered local delivery trucks and can be required to circumvent the town.

h. *AGENDA ITEM:* Survey; progress report, analyzing data, due date extension

1. Councilwoman Meredith reported most surveys are being returned along with the Property Tax bills since this was one way they were delivered; the Tax bills are due Mar31, 194 Surveys were returned as of 12pm today. She asked the Town Manager about extending the deadline and Mrs. Rogers suggested pushing it out until April 7th to allow for mail delays.

Discussion

- Councilwoman Meredith is sorting 348 comments, coding and ranking them
- Results will be on the Town's website and included in the Committee's Advisory Report

i. *AGENDA ITEM:* Create a digital newsletter; website, post survey results, publicize

1. Bonnie Bloomquist is working on drafting a Press Release (PR) for general awareness of the Committee's work. It was agreed to include the Walk Audit and the Survey activities
2. Councilwoman Meredith is designing graphics with a small amount of accompanying text to present the survey data so it is easy to read for public distribution.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Councilwoman Meredith to ask Town Manager about PR process and distribution methods
- Bonnie to send draft to Councilwoman Meredith and Town Manager for review/edits for presentation at the next Committee Meeting in April

j. *AGENDA ITEM:* DelDOT Traffic Studies; Coastal Corridors Public Workshop

Randi attended the virtual Coastal Corridors Study Workshop for Greenwood and Milton.

DelDOT is studying east-west travel patterns in Sussex County. The corridor is the area between Rt 16 on the North edge & 404 & 9 is the Southern Edge and from Maryland to Rt 1.



- Initial steps in the study will identify those east-west routes/corridors in Sussex County that are currently congested or are at risk for congestion based on anticipated growth.
- Current Study Phase is Data collection / Public Outreach
- Truck Traffic through small towns is a specific issue this study is to address.
- They are asking for comments on Quality of Life, Business Competitiveness, and Safety & Mobility.
- During the presentation they asked for participants to submit Safety Concerns and Traffic Concerns related to Milton.
- She submitted comments but couldn't recall all the comments she sent:
 - Milton has entire neighborhoods that are not accessible by foot traffic. Shipbuilder's Village has no sidewalks within it and Heritage Creek is out in a field with no safe pedestrian access
 - Pedestrians and especially the elderly have a lot of difficulty crossing Rt. 16 on foot to get to the grocery store and the pharmacy
 - Milton has formed the Traffic Calming Ad Hoc Committee that is conducting a survey.
 - Jennifer Cinelli-Miller, DeDOT Transportation Planner, is very interested in seeing the committee's survey results and the Advisory Report

ACTION ITEM:

Councilwoman Meredith to follow-up with the DeDOT Transportation Planner

k. AGENDA ITEM: Conduct Walk Audits / Multi-modal Audits; recruitment

Councilwoman Meredith asked the Committee to start making lists of people who may be interested in helping now that the weather is getting nicer.

ACTION ITEM:

- All Committee Members to identify participants
- Councilwoman Meredith will ask Council Members to participate

7. Public Participation

- Greg Hitz asked about the stop sign cost estimates
- PD Camenisch stated that he does not consider the intersection at Chestnut & Wharton/Atlantic to be dangerous; he recommends putting a crosswalk in place then see how it works, then putting in stop signs if needed. He recommended that the speed limit should be changed to 15 MPH.

- Councilwoman Meredith asked Chief Harvey about the meaning when a Speed limit sign says “strictly enforced,” he said that it doesn’t have much to do w/enforcement but more to do w/deterrent
- Mary Quigley asked about speed cameras, Chief Harvey said it is too costly and not used in DE
- Susan Fewell said that warnings are not an effective deterrent, if people get tickets and have to pay a fine, they will stop speeding; it was agreed that tickets will not stop everyone from speeding
- Chief Harvey reported his force is doing the best they can given the resources
- PD Camenish recommend more enforcement and more funding for police force and to reduce speed to make Milton more safe
- Eban Brittingham asked how is reducing the speed limit less disruptive than installing a stop sign?; adding that gray areas around speeding are incomprehensible and that stop signs will reduce speed as well.
- Greg Hitz asked for public data on traffic stops and related issues, this information is included in the monthly report to the Mayor and Town Council.

8. Requests for agenda items to be included for the next meeting:

- Information from DelDOT regarding their philosophy and enforcement of guidelines

9. Scheduling the next meeting.

- April 28, 2021 @ 6:30pm Cannery Village Clubhouse

10. Adjournment 7:40PM