



In Attendance

Committee Members: Kenneth Kovalchik, Henry Peyrebrune, Oliver Holmes, Ann Mullaly, Jen Spore, Anne Benware.

Parks and Recreation Department: Jason Gallo

The following is a summary from our January 26, 2016 Committee meeting:

Traffic Safety Updates

- Police Department – Ken K., on behalf of Commander Adam Hornick, provided an update. In 2015 the Bethlehem Police Department had 70 DWI arrests, 21 of these (30%), were due to crashes.
- On January 21 there was a serious personal injury vehicle/pedestrian accident in front of TD Bank on Delaware Avenue. The victim had just exited a CDTA bus, as the bus was pulling away the victim was attempting to cross Delaware Avenue from behind the CDTA bus and was struck by a westbound vehicle. To some extent the bus was blocking the view of the pedestrian. The police department is still investigating whether speed was a factor in the accident.

Committee Member Terms/Expirations

- Ken K. provided an update the Cory Engel and Joe Pasquini are resigning from the Committee.
- A vacancy announcement had been advertised on the Town website and the Town received multiple resumes from interested Town residents.
- Appointment of new members will be made at the February 9, 2016 Town Board meeting.
- Existing members will be reappointed for 2 year terms at the February 9, 2016 Town Board meeting.
- Jen Spore announced she will be resigning from the Committee.

Project Updates

- Albany County Helderberg Hudson Rail Trail Public Meeting Summary – Ken K. provided an update on the January 12 public meeting at the Cornell Cooperative Extension in Voorheesville, hosted by Albany County. Summary is as follows:
 1. Ribbon cutting ceremony will take place sometime in the Spring.
 2. Minor construction still needs to be completed, such as drainage and fencing, etc.
 3. County's 2016 budget includes \$75,000 for engineering design options surrounding New Scotland Avenue bridge, trail head parking lot and access for New Village Deli. County will seek assistance from an engineering consultant to assist in preparing a design for the area behind New Village Deli and Firehouse.
 4. County has earmarked \$600,000 for 2017 construction of improvements behind New Village Deli and Slingerlands Firehouse.
 5. County has \$1M federal grant to pave the trail from Voorheesville to Font Grove Road. Expected to be completed in 2017.
 6. County announced the Town of Bethlehem and County Forces will partner to pave the section of trail from Veterans Memorial Park to Slingerlands.
 7. Public comments included locations for emergency access. The County announced emergency access for the paved section will be at Booth Road. Bollards would be installed to restrict motor vehicle access.

8. Public commented about providing parking areas for those who will drive to the trail rather than walk or bike from their homes. County acknowledged they have not planned for parking areas.
 9. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting.
- Delaware Avenue Hamlet Streetscape Enhancement Project – Ken K. provided an update to the Committee that a business owner meeting will be held on Monday, February 1 at 5:00PM in the Town Hall Auditorium.
 1. A public informational meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 9 at 7:00PM in the Town Hall Auditorium.
 2. The survey has been completed and this section of Delaware Avenue, Kenwood Avenue to Elsmere Avenue, is a 4 rod highway (66ft wide right-of-way). The width of right-of-way will allow for on-street parking on both sides of Delaware Avenue.
 - Sidewalk Maintenance Project – Henry P. provided the following report to the Committee: Sidewalk Maintenance Program - First Preliminary Report 1/24/2016

Introduction and Assumptions

The Town of Bethlehem conducted a sidewalk Inventory in the Spring of 2014 and plans to repeat this survey every 2 years. Time series data is very important for these kinds of analyses and the information will improve over time. However at this time we have the 2014 inventory results. The data for the 55.14 miles of sidewalk is broken up into 518 sections, usually a block or a point where the characteristics of the sidewalk change. For each segment, there is the following data:

- Street name
- Side of street
- Material
- Width
- Owner
- Rating on a scale of 1 to 10
- Odd/even?
- Length of section in meters, feet and miles.

From our meeting with the Highway Superintendent and other Town officials, they said that the current standard for new sidewalks is a concrete sidewalk, 5 ft wide and 4 inches deep. They estimate that the costs for new or replacing sidewalks to this standard are about \$ 75/ft or \$396,000 per mile if the work is done by outside contractors and \$48/ ft or \$253,440 per mile if done by Town forces and concrete provided under a term agreement. These costs do not include compliance with ADA requirements (about \$10,000 per intersection). Also costs will increase over time due to inflation and continued deterioration.

Preliminary Analysis

From the above it is possible to do an evaluation of the current sidewalk system and to estimate (emphasis on estimate) the cost of making improvements over time.

A. Standards

Almost half of the sidewalks are asphalt or some mix, thus non-standard. To give an order of magnitude, the costs to bring all these sidewalks up to current standard would be \$10,680,000 if done by contractor or \$6,884,160 if done by the Town. Spread out over a 10 year period, this would mean \$1,068,000 in each year budget in current dollar costs for contractors or \$688,400 for Town forces.

An analysis could also be done on substandard width sidewalks, which we haven't done so far. Or we could run combinations or features. But the conclusion is that it is very expensive to bring the current sidewalk system up to standard over a reasonable time period, especially given that the current budget contains \$30,000 for this effort.

B. Condition

The current survey shows that 5% of the sidewalks (2.79 miles) are rated as poor and 25.8% (14.22 miles) are rated as fair.

One program option would be to upgrade all poor and fair sidewalks by replacing them with new full standard sidewalks within the next 10 years. The costs would be \$6,732,237 or \$673,223/year if done by contractor, and \$4,308,720 or \$430,000/year by Town forces. It should be noted that Town forces currently are not sufficient to do this magnitude of program and additional costs would be required to supplement forces.

Another program option would be to fix only poor sidewalks 2.79 miles. At the current budget amount of \$30,000, the Town could do 0.12 miles per year and it would take 23 years to accomplish this goal. To accomplish this goal would cost \$1,062,000 or \$106,000 per year over 10 years by contractor and \$679,680 or \$67,968 over 10 years by town forces.

Another program option would be to consider if the sidewalk is on the priority network and have a goal to do the substandard/poor condition sidewalks first. I know that there is a way to get the priority network status merged with the sidewalk inventory file, but I don't remember how that works.

Any analysis of this nature is broad by definition and would need to include a more detailed evaluation of the individual sections to be upgraded. For example, in the poor condition analysis, there are 15 segments. 2 segments are on Delaware Ave between the 4 corners and Elsmere and will be done by the Town under the Delaware Ave Enhancement program. One segment on Fernbank will be done under the Safe Routes to school grant next year and one segment on Adams Place was done last year. The Highway Department is proposing to do one of the segments on New Scotland this year with the \$30,000.

Conclusions

1. **It is possible to do program analysis with the data on hand**
 2. **The analysis will get better over the years with time series data which will show rate of deterioration and cost increases**
 3. **Any program to more quickly improve the quality of the existing sidewalk network will require significant increases of town funding in future budgets and will require additional resources for the Highway Department or a reallocation of resources.**
 4. **We are missing numbers on the Total highway repaving program to enable a comparison between the highway effort and the sidewalk effort.**
 5. **We should discuss as a Committee some reasonable program options to present to the Town Board.**
 - **Is 10 years a reasonable time frame?**
 - **Should the program be based on non-standard sidewalks, or on condition or both?**
 - **How do you judge equity (Complete Streets resolution) between highways and sidewalks? (ie, do less streets and more sidewalks)**
 - **Should we do the priority network first?**
 6. **Any sidewalk program effort needs to be coordinated with ADA efforts and the transition plan.**
- **CDTC Traffic Safety Ambassador Program Grant Application – Ken K/Jason G provided the following update:**
 1. A grant application was submitted for the 2016 Bike Expo. A combined effort between Jason Gallo, Parks and Recreation Department; Michael Whiteley, Police Department and Ken Kovalchik, Economic Development and Planning Department went into completing the grant application.
 2. The grant was for funding for the 2016 Bike Expo and, if awarded, will be used for items such as gift certificate for Mad Dogs Bikes, ice cream coupons, bicycle helmets and event marketing.
 3. All Applicants will be notified of the status of their application by February 29, 2016.

- Group discussion. The Bike Expo will take place on the same day/location (Middle School) as the Farmers Market. The Committee started discussions related to Committee participation, suitable location at the Middle School to have the Expo, event marketing, group bike rides.
- The Committee agreed that outreach to the Farmers Market Board of Directors should be made in order to better coordinate the Bike Expo.
- The event will be discussed further at the February Committee meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25PM.

Next Meeting Tuesday, February 23, 2016, at 6:30 pm in the **Town Hall Room 101A.**