

## Town of Bethlehem Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee

### Meeting Summary August 25, 2020

Attendees: Sgt Mike Whitley, Nate Owens ,Anne Benaware, Erin Rightmeyer, Steve LeBoyer, Laura DiBetta, Oliver Holmes, Erin Savre, Henry Peyrebrune(Recorder), Connie Kontogiannis (Chair)

Public Comments: there were no public comments

Approval of July Meeting Summary: The summary was approved

### Department Updates

- Police:
- Most helmets and Ice Cream certificates have been handed out.
  - There were 2 alcohol related crashes last week.
  - Rail Trail work on Bridge is continuing with some rail trail traffic management required. August 31 will be dawn to dusk working day.
  - Slingerlands roundabout markings will be updated.
  - Bike accident on 8/25. Truck backing out of driveway hit bicyclist. No serious injury.
  - Connie/Skip want to follow up with Police on July 9 bike accident. Sgt Whitley will follow up with Commander Hornick.
  - Police are cooperating with School District on handling increased pedestrian bicycle and auto traffic when schools open in September. See the education section of these minutes for a larger discussion of this issue.

Highway - There was no highway update.

Planning – The proposed meeting with the Supervisor, Department Heads and staff on funding for sidewalks has been delayed while internal meetings are being held.

- Nate has been asked to develop a sidewalk web page which will be posted soon.
- There is a vacancy on the Committee due to the resignation of Mark Wahl. The members suggested delaying the selection but suggested

that the Town should consider the need for more diversity in new members. They should also consider geographical representation, people with disabilities, people new to the community, and other people with mobility concerns. Nate will circulate the announcement for candidates.

- Nate is updating the sidewalk evaluations based on comments from the committee. He will look at the cost differences between in house vs contractors.
- Street Tree management public outreach will start soon with a public meeting in Oct/Nov.
- Nate will circulate 2 pending projects which have pedestrian/bicycle consequences.
- Nate is working on a 30 page population/demographics report for the Comprehensive Plan process which will also be useful for this committee.

Town Code Update. The Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the Town repeal the out dated code on bicycles and rely on State law to regulate bicycles. Nate will figure out how to accomplish this.

Road Maintenance Update. Connie again had a close call due to the lack of shoulder maintenance on Rt 144. Nate is working on a letter to NYSDOT documenting the conditions and Rob will send the letter to NYSDOT. Erin Rightmeyer suggested adding concerns of runners using the shoulders. Anne Benaware suggested that biking and running needs should be coordinated with the resurfacing program.

There was a discussion on the need for flashing stop signs (RFB's) at Fisher Blvd/Delaware crosswalk and other locations. DOT will evaluate the need for these signs at high use locations.

Sidewalk Update. While the meeting with Department heads is delayed, the Committee decided to have a sub-committee develop an evaluation process for determining which sidewalks require maintenance. There was agreement that the current evaluation model is not appropriate for sidewalk maintenance projects. In the interim, the highway department can use the list of 6-10 projects developed

by the committee as a guide if money is found for sidewalk maintenance. Henry will chair the sub-committee with help from Anne, Skip, Connie and Nate.

### Subcommittee Updates

- Bike/Ped network Covered during meeting
- Education and Awareness. Throughout the meeting there was discussion on the issues with the school opening in September and the anticipation that there will be more walking and biking to school due to the virus. The committee did develop a one pager on safety tips for walkers, bikers and drivers which will broadly disseminated. The Town police are working with the District and members of the committee are willing to help if a need is determined. Among suggestions were:
  - Modify P.E. classes to teach and practice safe walking and biking.
  - Use local media like the Spotlight and Our Towne to show safety practices
  - Use variable message signs to warn motorists of increased school traffic.
  - Identify unsafe sidewalks that need repair.
  - Put messages on the Town website.
  - Coordinate efforts between school district, police, town and committee to avoid different messages.

Next meeting 9/22/20 Chair: Henry Recorder: Erin R.