Minutes of the

Montpelier Pedestrian Committee

Meeting of October 27, 2015

Members Present: Eve Jacobs-Carnahan, Chair; Erin Aguayo, Tom Aloisi, Anne Ferguson, Erica Garfin, Jim McQueston, Mike Philbrick, Mark Provost, John Snell and Harris Webster

Others Present: Laura Biren

Public Comments

There were no comments from the general public.

Agenda

The members discussed and approved an agenda for the meeting.

Minutes

The members approved the minutes of the meeting of September 29, 2015.

We Walk Week

The members discussed the attendance for the various 2015 We Walk Week guided walks. The average attendance was between 6 and 7 people per walk, although actual attendance varied greatly. Approximately 20 people participated in the Montpelier Architecture walk.

It was noted that the average was slightly lower than that for the 2014 We Walk Week event. Discussion followed about what might have contributed to the decline. Suggestions that were made for enhancing participation in future guided walks included partnering with other institutions in order to broaden the distribution of information about the walks, holding fewer walks, and providing walks focused on topics not previously covered.

Winter Safety

The members discussed what the Committee could do promote pedestrian safety with winter's shorter daylight hours. The discussion included the development and distribution of educational material, and the distribution of clip-on lights or reflective bands, and how the Committee could fund the purchase of either item. The Committee asked Tom Aloisi and Erin Aguayo to research the cost of clip-on lights and of reflective bands, and to report back to the Committee at the November meeting.

Reporting Icy Walking Conditions

The members discussed the benefits of having a method for pedestrians to alert the Department of Public Works about icy sidewalk conditions in specific locations. Laura Biren will contact

Corey Line for information about the best way for pedestrians to contact the DPW to report icy sidewalk conditions.

Public Outreach Ideas

The members discussed how the Committee can best get any educational material it develops, and any winter safety items it has to distribute, into the hands of the members of the public who will benefit from those items. Among the approaches discussed were a table at one of the Farmer's Markets and a letter to the editor of the Bridge and/or the Times-Argus. There was also discussion of the advisability of coordinating with the other members of the Alternative Transportation Committee.

Business Signs on the Sidewalk

A question was raised about what sort of requirements applied to keeping a clear sidewalk space given the proliferation of signboards, benches, tables and chairs on the sidewalk area. Mike Philbrick indicated that there were City guidelines for signs, and that permits were required for a sidewalk seating area. Harris Webster will talk to the responsible City officials to obtain more information.

Capital Projects Budget

In response to a request from Corey Line of the DPW, the members discussed the Committee's priorities for the Montpelier in Motion proposed pedestrian projects. After discussion, the Committee identified its priorities as a specified group of sidewalk gap projects, additional traffic feedback signs, and interactive crosswalk signs.

Funding for Committee Projects

The members returned to the issue of how the Committee could pay for projects that it wanted to accomplish, such the public outreach on winter safety. Approaches identified as possibilities included an item in the annual City budget and an allocation from the alternative transportation fund. The members felt that they would benefit from more information on this topic, and Laura Biren indicated that she would ask for someone in City government to assist the Committee in this area.

Meeting Schedule

The Chair noted that meetings have been habitually running longer than the scheduled hour. It was agreed to change the starting time from 5:30 to 5:15 in order to provide more time for discussion.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for November 24 at 5:15 p.m.