

Town of Middlebury
Public Health and Safety Committee
Meeting –Monday, February 28, 2022
Recorded Zoom

Present: Committee Members: Chair- Chief Thomas Hanley, Dave Shaw - Fire Chief, Dan Brown - Select Board, SB- Alternate Nick Artim, At Large - Laura Asermily, Tom Scanlon - Town Health Officer, Bill Kernan – Director of Dept of Public Works, At-Large Andrew L’Roe

Absent:, At-Large Gary Baker, Porter Medical Rep Mike Leyden

Public: Dylan Montagu, missing but had sent previous comments.

4:00 PM Chair called meeting to order and requested a motion to approve the agenda.

Motion to approve agenda: Tom S

Second - Dan B

Motion carried on unanimous voice vote

Chair requested a motion to accept minutes of January 2022

Motion to approve January 2022 meeting minutes: Laura A

Second: Dan B

Motion carried on unanimous voice vote

Chair provided an update on three items from previous/January 2022 meeting:

Update: MOU with Bird Scooters – Chair

Memorandum of Understanding with Bird Scooters was approved and signed by both parties. Chair reported that he has spoken with Matt Curran from Middlebury College and that the college had not yet approved use on campus. Chair reported that as of this time, Bird had not yet identified a Fleet Manager/staffing.

Laura A reported that she had spoken with Frog Alley Bicycles and they were not interested in taking on this role.

No further action required by this committee at this time.

Update: Retail Cannabis – Chair

Retail Cannabis Board has taken over. Town has no obligations regarding restrictions or enforcement other than existing zoning ordinances. No further action required by the Town or this committee at this time.

Update: Public Restroom Facilities – Chair

Regarding the Public restroom initiative, there is no further action required of this committee at this time.

Laura A asked to talk about the earlier agreed to signage. Specifically, where do we want signs located?

Discussion ensued:

Laura A suggested ideal location would be in front of town office and would direct towards the municipal lot.

Chair suggested Bill K and Laura A make arrangements for signage off-line.

Agenda Item 1: All night parking vs winter parking ban

Chair turned conversation over to Bill K for any suggestions on available spaces that could be potentially considered for additional spaces.

Bill K – Suggested from a snow removal standpoint, DPW is, in general, not in favor of it adding overnight parking spaces. He went on to suggest possible locations could include an overflow option

within the Mary Hogan parking lot and that DPW could identify up to 4 more spaces in the lower municipal lot. Neither are ideal due to constraints around snow removal. He noted that these spaces are typically allowed for up to 72 hours which also could cause issues with snow buildup.

Chair reported: Current overnight parking spaces available:

33 all night, marked spaces between Mill St and Lower Municipal Lot

8-10, unmarked spaces on N Pleasant St between Methodist Lane and Congregational Church. They are unmarked because there is an agreement with the landlords of the abutting properties for winter maintenance and the Town is not responsible for maintenance.

18 additional spaces on Mill St owned by the town yet privately maintained by Community Barn Ventures per their agreement with the town in 2020 to accommodate guests at their hostel; these spaces can be used for overnight parking but are marked as 2 Hour spaces during the day. The Town is not responsible for maintenance and therefore the police do not enforce the winter parking ban.

Public guest speaker:

Dylan Montagu provided a brief overview of his own experience as someone who rents in Middlebury and often finds himself with no parking options when the winter ban is in effect. Reported 5-6 instances with no space available in what he referred to as the Bakery Ln or and Mill St area. Noted that capacity is a real issue for tenants with no parking included in their lease/rental agreements.

Chair reported that Ned from Otter Creek had voiced this concern regarding newly acquired rental properties. Where are his tenants to park?

Comment by Tom S: he had witnessed campers/RV's using the overnight lots most of last summer. Chief Hanley agreed there is some vehicle storage that goes on and went on to add that enforcement of the 72hour limit is challenging.

Laura asked Dylan M – was he aware of the two additional areas. He had not been and agreed it is helpful to have this new information. Dylan suggested/asked of the board that the information be made more public. Chair confirmed signage is present but that Mill St at the Creek does have a time limit. Dylan M agreed.

Chair noted: There are 31 days left in the winter ban.

Concern: Major concerns involving increased overnight parking include the addition may create too many spaces to work around in storms, snow removal challenges, enforcement constraints.

Chair asked for a motion with a recommendation.

Motion to recommend no additional overnight parking spaces be identified at this time and to send this recommendation to the infrastructure committee. - Laura A

Second: Bill K

Motion carried by unanimous voice vote

David S asked if a car is noted longer than 72 hours if they are removed. Noted that the lack of overnight parking that Dylan brought up could see some resolve if so. Chair Hanley agreed and noted that removal does occur, but that enforcement of the 72 hours is limited by staffing, consistency of monitoring being interrupted due to other calls to service.

Chair asked for a motion to end the meeting if there was nothing more to discuss.

Motion by: Tom S

Second: Nick A

Meeting adjourned at 4:15pm