

Town of Middlebury  
Public Health and Safety Committee  
Meeting Minutes, May 23, 2022  
Recorded Zoom --DRAFT

Present: Committee Members: Chair – Chief Hanley, Dave Shaw – Fire Chief, Andy Hooper Selectboard, Dan Brown – alternate, at Large – Laura Asermily, Tom Scanlon – Town Health Officer, At-Large Andrew L’Roe

Absent: Bill Kernan – Director of Public Works, At-Large Gary Baker, Mike Leyden – Porter Medical Rep

Public:

Written comments: Laura Asermily, Bobbie Putnam comment on Crosswalk Safety and by Tim Wickman of Weybridge regarding long term parking at the train station.

4:22 Chair called the meeting to order

Approve the agenda – deletions/additions

Motion to approve agenda: Chief Shaw

Second: Dan B

Review and act on the minutes of February 28 (attached)

Motion to approve the 2/28/22 minutes: Laura A

Second: Dan

Motion carried by unanimous vote

### **1. Elect Chair and Vice Chair of PHSC**

Chief Hanley announced it was time for annual elect of a PHSC chair and asked to identify a vice-chair of the committee.

Dan B: Motion to elect Chief Hanley as PHSC Chair

Second: Andy H

Dan B: Motion to elect Chief Shaw as Vice Chair of the committee

Second: Andrew L

### **2. Recommendation to the Selectboard- what, if any, regulations should be added to the parking ordinance for management of the Amtrack rail station parking lot. (time limits? Duration? Winter ban?)**

Chair shared written comment from Weybridge resident about inquiry of long-term parking availability at the train station. Conversation noted that Castleton station simply states Parking and there do not seem to be any issues or concerns. Chair noted there are 13 spaces plus 2 handicap spaces available. L.A. noted that there is also overnight parking available between the fire department and Fire and Ice on Seymour Street that could be used. Committee will recommend that this topic be reviewed in 12 months.

**3. Downtown crosswalk safety.** Laura will address **crosswalk safety** at the May 23 meeting, including how we feel about the existing crosswalk safety flags (transition from large yellow ones to smaller pink ones) and rapid flashing beacon lights and how lights are performing in the school corridor along Rt 7.

Laura A noted a recent incident involving a pedestrian and motor vehicle at the Cross Street crosswalk. Asked if the group had opinion about the color/size of the flags – current are pink, smaller and replaced a larger model which was yellow, the color of caution.

Chair noted that there needs to be education around pedestrian rights and responsibilities citing that a pedestrian needs to await traffic flow in the area of the cross walk *before* proceeding onto the walk. Others noted their observations of pedestrians using cell phones and not being vigilant of oncoming traffic or relying on pushing the button to stop all traffic in the immediate vicinity. Pedestrians assume that they have the right of way as they approach the curb which is not accurate. Chair Hanley also noted that the flags promote action/movement for drivers to observe.

A public (written comment) had asked/suggested cameras. Chair Hanley confirmed that Vermont does not have the required laws in place to implement the use of cameras for would be drivers not abiding by crosswalk laws. Vermont law states the driver must be identified rather than just the vehicle for such violations.

Further discussion identified that the crosswalk near the Middlebury Inn could utilize the rapid flashing lights. All agreed that the 3 lanes of traffic in addition to the yield from Washington Street and the entrance to the Middlebury Inn make this particular cross walk more dangerous. Chair Hanley will recommend both an advance rapid flashing light and crosswalk ahead signage at the approach of the crosswalk to the selectboard, proximate to the Inn's driveway so vehicles approaching the curve will have advance notice of pedestrians in the crosswalk.

Laura A confirmed there is a National Regulation for the time frame used with the rapid flashing lights.

All agreed education is needed in terms of pedestrian use of crosswalks. Laura A will work with the school community to begin getting the word out. She will also use Front Porch Forum. Dan B suggested that the education be linked directly to the Pedestrian Rights and Responsibilities that Chair Hanley referred to.

Chair Hanley suggested that future flags be purchased bve the high visibility green that is seen on emergency responder equipment and clothing. Group agreed.

Laura A also suggested that the group revisit creating the "square/box" at the intersection of Rt 7 and Cross Street so that there are crosswalks more appropriately placed. The signal is there but the actual crosswalk is not.

Chief Shaw asked when DPW plans to paint the crosswalks and noted that could make a significant improvement.

Laura A reported that the crosswalk light at Mary Hogan does not work in extreme cold conditions. She did not think this had been previously reported.

Chair Hanley to make recommendations to Selectboard for an additional rapid flashing light at the Middlebury Inn cross walk and to post crosswalk warnings at the approach of the area near the entrance to the Middlebury Inn.

Other Business:

Andrew L: Noted that there are discussions taking place about the Amtrak Crossings. Operation Life Saver documentation and educational material being used. Suggested that clearing of the areas within 20 feet have begun to happen.

Andrew L: Noted that the Town of Middlebury has released a RFP for Hazard Mitigation. The money for this purpose is available but the Hazard Mitigation expired and thus the RFP.

Chair Hanley: Kathleen Ramsey, Town Manager, has asked for the PHSC to draft a permit process for public and or business venues that are seeking use of public sidewalk space for additional seating for their establishments. Chair Hanley and Vice Chair Shaw will use a recent coffee shop draft as a model to create a more standardized format for application. The form will include a space for drawing the proposal and will also address the required insurance binder on the form. There is no timeline on this; the Town Manager would like to see this completed by Fall. Chair Hanley will draft for this committee for a future meeting.

Andrew L: Inquired about any update on Bird Scooters. Chair Hanley noted they had not yet identified a fleet manager. Dan B asked if Middlebury College had yet decided if the scooters would be allowed on campus; Chair Hanley confirmed that no decision had been made at the College as of this meeting.

Heidi L: inquired about the correct committee or business to approach for a bus line shelter for the Rt 7/Sugar House Stop as bus riders are left to the elements and the speed of Rt 7 causes great concern. Chair Hanley confirmed the location is in New Haven. Laura A and others suggested reaching out to Tri-Valley as a place to start. Vice Chair Shaw also noted that perhaps the parking lot of the Home Health and Hospice could be used. Chief's Hanley and Shaw noted that this area is in the Town of New Haven in the State right of way – the Town of New Haven and VTRANS have jurisdiction.

4:51pm Chair Hanley asked for a motion to Adjourn.

Motion to Adjourn: Andy H

Second: Tom S

Meeting ended at 4:52pm