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Planning Board Meeting Minutes September 26, 2017

7:15 P.M. Call to Order

The September 26, 2017 meeting of the Norton Planning Board was held in the Norton Public Library and was called to order at 7:15 P.M., by Mr. Joseph Fernandes, Chairman. Mr. Edward Beatty, Vice - Chairman. Member(s) present: Mr. Frank Durant, Mr. Timothy Griffin, Mr. Steven Hornsby and Mr. Stephen Jurczyk. Also present was Tabitha Harkin, Planning and Economic Development Director.

A. Planning Board Business & Policies

The Board each signed the mylar to accept the submitted plan of Autumn Lane, to be presented for street acceptance at Town Meeting.

B. Bills and Warrants

Ms. Harkin provided a schedule of Department Bills. Included is payroll from the previous meeting.

MOVED by Mr. Beatty to approve the Bills and Warrants of September 12, 2017 and September 26, 2017 in the amount of \$7,540.89 at 7:17p.m. Seconded by Mr. Hornsby. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES

Public Hearing: Complete Streets/Safe Routes to School

Ms. Harkin introduced Jed Cornock, Principal Comprehensive Planner from SRPEDD who would be presenting information on the Complete Streets program. A handout, "*Town of Norton Complete Streets Policy*" was provided. Ms. Harkin went on to explain Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities. A policy creates local aid eligibility. Norton has signed a Community Compact. Ms. Harkin described what Norton's Community Compact entails, including the following commitments: (i) the municipality will become certified through MassDOT and demonstrate the regular and routine inclusion of complete streets design elements and infrastructure on locally- funded roads; and (ii) the community will show evidence of a comprehensive safe routes to school program. The program will also include student education on pedestrian safety.

Mr. Cornock came before the Board and explained who the Southeastern Regional Planning & Economic Development District (SRPEDD) are and how and why they are helping Norton with Complete Streets. SRPEDD helps municipalities implement best practices and Norton identified Complete Streets as a "Best Practice" in the CCC agreement. A "Complete Street" includes motorists,

bicyclists, pedestrians, public transportation providers and riders, emergency response vehicles, freight operators and school buses. The idea of this program is to accommodate all users and include roadway design features such as ADA Compliant sidewalks and crossings, curb extensions, bicycle lanes, etc.

Mr. Cornock stated if the Town participates, they are able to apply for up to \$400,000 for construction costs. This is the total amount eligible for the life of the program. He then went on to describe how MassDOT scores the policy and the five-year prioritization plan. Mr. Cornock went on to say that the purpose of the meeting is to get as much input from residents as possible to be able to launch this program with the best goals established.

Ms. Harkin then asked for questions and comments from the audience. Multiple audience members gave their input and topics discussed included: including sidewalks on Route 140 from Reservoir Street to downtown Norton; including sidewalks on Bay Road; including more signage regarding the speed limit in areas including RG North and school zones; updated signage on Plain Street, Oak Street, North Ricer, John Scott Blvd and North Worchester Street posting the legal speed limit; including sidewalks in all school zones; working on the sidewalk construction on East Main Street to meet compliance regulations; including better lighting on North Worchester Street; installing blinking lights, sidewalks and signage at the Yell School; and possibly creating different exits for buses and cars at the Yell school because of limited parking. The funds granted are only applicable on locally owned roads. This is to ensure the money goes to the municipalities. The only state owned roads in Norton are Route 123 and Route 140. Mr. Cornock stated if the Town proposed a project and the environmental impact of doing that project are cost prohibited, it may be allowed as an exception.

Then Ms. Nikki Tishler, MassDOT Safe Routes to School Coordinator and Mr. Moss Lynch, School Outreach Coordinator came before the Board. Ms. Tishler gave an overview of the Safe Routes to School program. Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) is a federally-funded initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). Safe Routes to School works with schools, communities, students, and families to increase biking and walking among elementary and middle school students in the Commonwealth. The program focuses on education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation, engineering and equity. Survey results from the Town of Norton have formulated data about how students are currently getting to and from school. This program will encourage more walking and biking, not only to and from school, but in general. Examples of programs that could be implemented are bicycle safety, bike rodeos, walking school buses, walking clubs, helmet giveaways, etc. All programs that get implemented will be Town specific. Ms. Tishler stated the Town should be ready to submit their application for the infrastructure project.

Ms. Harkin stated there is a new transportation planning page on the Town of Norton website and then asked for questions and comments from the audience. An individual asked if there were any conditions regarding the funding to which Ms. Tishler responded this programming is completely free and the Town is responsible for right of way acquisition and costs and also being a partner in this by holding public meetings and being part of the process. MassDOT pays for design and construction of the projects. There were multiple questions from audience members pertaining to functionality of the program. Ms. Tishler explained the current infrastructure would be used to plan for the different programs and infrastructure changes and commented Safe Routes adapts to every community. Mr. Cornock also discussed the timeline and deadlines of submitting an application and the project list. These dates would be public knowledge.

Adjournment

MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to adjourn at 8:39 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Beatty. Vote:
Unanimous MOTION CARRIES

Respectfully Submitted by:

Kayleigh Correia
Recording Secretary

Minutes Approved by Committee

on: 10 / 12 / 17
(Date)


Signature: _____