

**RYE TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE  
MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2020  
5:30 P.M. TOWN HALL**

**Members Present: Chair Karen Stewart, Vice-Chair Nina Parrott, John Loftus, John Mitchell, Secretary Kaitlyn Coffey, Victor Azzi**

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Stewart called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance at 5:41 p.m.

**II. PR Update**

Chair Stewart gave an update on some of her action items from the last meeting:

- She has contacted Steven Borne and Paula Tsetsilas to see if they had an email list from the charette.
  - Ms. Tsetsilas has an email list and will send it to the Committee.
- She spoke to Administrator Bergeron regarding funding that is needed to print and mail some promotional pieces.
  - If the Committee uses town money to do a mailing, (which includes the Historic District's money that Member Bradshaw offered), there cannot be any campaigning language in the brochure. It can only be an informational and educational article.
- Member Bradshaw spoke to Sal Petralia the Superintendent of the school district.
  - Mr. Petralia offered to send out a blurb to the parents of Rye students about the project. It would be just information and would not advocate for a "yes" vote. It would go out in his monthly update to the parents.

Member Parrott offered to reach out to the PTA and ask them to put out the information.

Chair Stewart also informed the Committee that Administrator Bergeron offered the use of the Town's social media sources.

**III. Schematic Review**

The Committee reviewed the draft schematic as sent by Phil Corbett of CMA.

There was discussion about a short sidewalk across from Lang Road, at the entrance of Parsons field, between the two crosswalks. It was decided that it was there in order to be in compliance with ADA.

Other discussion focused on the crosswalk in front of the Library. It was explained that there are buses and parents that pick up and drop off kids at the church who attend private schools.

The design shows two trees at the corner of Lang Road. Member Coffey had concerns about putting the trees in that location because of visibility issues.

The Committee agreed that the two crosswalks across Washington Road are too close together. The discussion included possibly moving the entrance to Parsons field closer to the school (left of Parsons field). Chair Stewart will ask Mr. Corbett if the crosswalk on the right of Parsons field could be removed.

Member Mitchell referred to the sidewalk in front of the ballfield and in front of the lamp post at Grange Park. He felt that it was not necessary if the intersection at Wallis Road is going to eventually be reconfigured into a "T". He pointed out that the sidewalks would have to be removed.

Chair Stewart pointed out that this schematic design will be what the Committee will be sharing with the voters and it needs to be the best representation of the Committee's thought process as possible. She added that it is reasonable to say that it is the intention of the Committee that this is phase one of a multi-phase process, which will potentially result in re-engineered intersections and building use changes. The Committee does not know all of what those things will look like at this time.

Member Mitchell recommended removing any plans for construction north of the Rye Junior High School. He suggested focusing on upgrading the Center of Town to make it look more like a town center, make it safer and more accessible. So, when entering town from either side, there is that nice small-town feel, with the bike lanes, sidewalks, lamp post and trees.

After further discussion, it was recognized that there is a reason for all the placements of crosswalks and sidewalks, which have to do with traffic calming and pedestrian safety.

Questions for Mr. Corbett:

- What is the purpose of the short sidewalk in front of Parsons field?
- Does changing the location of the entrance to Parsons field take away the necessity for that sidewalk?

Member Loftus suggested that while marketing the plan they should let people know that this is the base plan with the budget of \$ 800,000 and there may be some changes. He added that is reasonable.

Member Azzi recommended that the Committee needs to agree on a plan that the Town wants, whether or not the Town receives the funding from the grant application. One way or another, the Committee should want to accomplish this project.

There was further discussion regarding the proposed usage of the buildings, as it will impact the design needs.

The Committee agreed that they will not have those answers until after the vote. They are doing the best that they can with the charge that they have been given. As soon as they know what happens with the vote, they will have the information that they need to move forward with the plan. The focus at this time is to get the warrant and the TAP application ready because of

timing and constraints of the two-year window with the TAP application availability. All agreed that the scope of the project is going to be much bigger.

Member Azzi stated that while the TAP Grant application was important, it was a distraction that consumed all of the Committee's time and energy. In the meantime, other decisions were being made about the Town Hall, trolley barn, Parsonage and TD Bank.

Other members disagreed that working on the TAP application was a distraction.

Member Loftus felt that the TAP work was not a distraction. It just limited the Committee's focus. He added that he believes the intention of the Committee is to go back and start focusing on the other items.

Member Mitchell felt that it was a distraction to the extent that the Committee is trying to define what this project is and they have lost the sense of what the bigger picture is.

Chair Stewart stated that they are dealing with the hand that they were dealt. It was not in this Committee's ability to create an immediate plan related to the TAP funding that addresses what to do with the TD Bank building and that intersection, because they don't know the fate of that building. She added that she felt that they have done absolutely the best that they could in developing a decent plan with what they know and they recognize what they don't know is fairly significant.

Member Loftus stated that additionally he believes that if they can get this part of the project nailed down percentage wise, if something has to be removed later, it would be a very small percentage. The bigger issues are the intersections at each end of the area. He stated that to try to get the funds from the Town to reconfigure those intersections is going to be a hard thing to do and may take years.

Member Coffey pointed out that there may be other grants to explore to take the project further.

Member Loftus added that he doesn't believe that because they have focused on the area that they have worked on that it will precluded them from working on the two ends (intersections) and having a further discussion on the buildings.

Member Coffey reminded the members that the trolley barn was already voted on last year to be sold. The warrant article this year is just to state where the funds can be used, so the trolley barn was off the table from the beginning.

Member Parrot felt that the Committee will actually be in a much better situation in order to come up with the final plan once the vote is done and they have all the information regarding what they are actually working with.

Chair Stewart summarized by suggesting that they are not going to ask Mr. Corbett to change anything on the schematic. However, they are asking for clarification around the Lang Road intersection on whether or not they can eliminate the crosswalk on the northern end and whether or not they can remove the sidewalk in front of Parsons field.

Member Mitchell suggested asking for the cost for the sidewalk at the ballfield and Parsons Field.

Member Loftus pointed out that they haven't developed the criteria for traffic calming.

Member Coffey suggested asking for the cost of ripple strips.

Member Loftus agreed and suggested that there may be other alternatives.

Member Parrot reminded the members that Mr. Corbett and Mr. Bogle felt that narrowing the road would slow the traffic.

There was further discussion regarding traffic calming and it was noted that the schematic showed alterations at the Lang Road intersection. It seemed that it eliminated the right lane. The Committee agreed that would have a big effect on traffic calming.

#### **IV. Other Business - None**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Karen Stewart to adjourn at 6:53 p.m. Seconded by Nina Parrott. All in Favor.**

Respectfully Submitted.  
Dyana F. Ledger