

RYE TOWN CENTER COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 3, 2023

5:30 p.m.

Rye Town Hall

Present: *Chair John Loftus, Victor Azzi, Lindsay Gray, Jenn Thompson, and John Mitchell*

I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Loftus called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Review and approve meeting minutes

- February 1st

The following corrections were noted:

Page 2, paragraph 3, 1st and 2nd sentence should read: *There was discussion about the TAP Grant that was awarded for improvements to the Town Center; including, bike lanes, sidewalks, walkways, lighting, crossways, and other amenities. There was also discussion about the TAP Grant Implementation Committee which was specifically set up to oversee design and construction covered under the grant.*

Motion by Lindsay Gray to approve the minutes of February 1, 2023 as amended.

Seconded by Victor Azzi. All in favor.

- March 1st

The following correction was noted:

Page 2, paragraph 2, 2nd sentence should read: *At this time, the survey of the Town Center has not been completed, so it's unsure where the Washington Road is in terms of the easement.*

Motion by John Loftus to approve the minutes of March 1, 2023 as amended.

Seconded by Victor Azzi. All in favor.

- April 4th

The following corrections were noted:

Page 2, 1st paragraph, last sentence should read: *It took 4 seconds longer going 20-mph than it did 25-mph because the distance is so short.*

Page 2, 4th paragraph, 4th sentence should read: *Also, it's difficult to see the oncoming traffic to make a turn from Lang Road onto Washington Road with another car pulled up in the other lane.*

Page 2, 4th paragraph, 5th sentence should read: *It was pointed out by Chair Loftus that if every vehicle had to stop at Lang Road, everyone would know who had the right of way and cars at the end of the road could turn with good visibility and knowledge that the oncoming traffic would have to stop.*

Page 3, under 'Review of Town Maps': Range Park should be Grange Park.

**Motion by John Loftus to approve the minutes of April 5, 2023 as amended.
Seconded by Lindsay Gray. All in favor.**

III. Review in general the overall layout, and specifically options discussed in prior years:

- a. Crosswalks using brick pavers vs. asphalt (or other materials)
- b. Benches (Park Benches) and locations
- c. Pocket parks
- d. Landscape plantings
- e. Additional street lighting
- f. Style of street lighting
- g. Signage – style and color

Chair Loftus noted that the above (a thru g) is for forward thinking. This will not all be resolved in one discussion. Once the engineering firm is contracted, and they designate the landscape architect, the Committee will be able to inject their thoughts. Chair Loftus continued that he reviewed some of the old estimates for the project from CMA Engineering. The last one was estimated at \$925,000 for the project, which included escalations costs due to inflation up to the year 2025. There is also the possibility for additional money from the State for inflation for material costs. He pointed out that the agreement that has been signed with the State is for a project that has been budgeted through the year 2027. The State will pay \$813,000 and the Town will pay \$203,000. The Town has budgeted \$300,000 for the project, so there is an additional \$100,000 to cover any unexpected expenses caused by escalation costs and/or delays.

Member Azzi pointed out that a lot has happened since the proposal was written and finally granted. Even more is going to happen in the next three to four years waiting for construction, which will result only when the design is completed. It's such a passage of time that all the numbers that were agreed upon three to four years ago is likely to be way off from what the project is finally going to cost. The real numbers won't be known for several years from now.

Chair Loftus agreed. He noted that the update from CMA Engineering is dated 2021, which is more recent than the original from four years ago. It should be a little more accurate. He reiterated that they came up with \$925,00 for the whole project. This included six alternatives and some of that has been ruled out by the Committee; such as, raised cross walks (speed humps at 6' wide). It was felt those wouldn't work because of snowplows, and drainage, so the amount of \$70,000 can be taken out and replaced with something else. The base price included ten lights at \$8,400 each, which also covers electrical work. Cobra head lighting is also required for the

street intersections. Chair Loftus pointed out that the money that was taken out for the speed humps could be used towards extra lighting.

Member Azzi asked if the estimate included the rebuilding or paving of Washington Road.

Chair Loftus noted that he believes it covers some minor paving. He pointed out it was unsure, at the time of the estimate, where the road was in relation to the right-of-way. That information is known now because there is a drawing.

Member Azzi commented there's going to be a lot of work done on the existing pavement related to the alignment, as well as defining the vehicular lanes, bike lanes, and walkways.

Chair Loftus replied that anything on the library side of the road is going to be torn up for electrical conduit digging, the foundation for the lights, and sidewalk, which seems to be figured into the estimate. Any additional paving will require additional funds.

Member Azzi pointed out the survey has not been completed, so some of the property lines are not certain.

Chair Loftus agreed. He commented that from the drawings, everything looks to be pretty good. When the engineering firm is hired, they will make a final determination.

Member Azzi noted that the engineering firm will be hired and they will hire a survey firm. The survey firm may or may not already be familiar with this project. Once the final survey is done, the engineering firm will delineate where the bike lanes, sidewalks, and vehicular lanes will be located. It's only then that everyone will know where the roadway needs to be. At that time, a decision will need to be made on whether to keep, or preserve pieces of the existing roadway, or if there will be a new roadway, or at least a new roadway surface, to make the final product look nice. It's hard for him to imagine that they will want to claim victory on the project if it includes existing pavement that is all broken up from the construction activity that is going to occur.

Chair Loftus agreed; however, he's not sure it's within the project scope.

There was some discussion on whether the Town will be repaving that area and whether it's included in an upcoming paving schedule. The Committee agreed to ask the Town about the paving schedule.

Member Mitchell asked if the items listed on the agenda are ideas for the future or items to add to this plan.

Member Azzi noted the items are ideas that the Committee came up with that can be added to the plan, to the extent that they can be afforded. They should be included in the design and may be withheld, as deemed necessary for the construction phase, with some being included in the alternates in the bidding for the construction of the project. For instance, building the sidewalks,

bike lanes, and roads are basic items with some of the landscaping elements, benches, and lighting fixtures being included if it can be afforded at that time.

Member Gray pointed out that the Committee should invite other stakeholders of other committees or entities, who deal with the Town Center, to meet and discuss their thoughts in order to come up with a conceptual plan. The Committee can then give some direction to the engineering firm.

Chair Loftus noted that there will be further general review and discussion in regards to items such as, pavers or asphalt crosswalks, park benches, lighting, and location of crosswalks. Some items will be easy to add on at a future date. He also noted that the more consensus the Committee can make on decisions, the more it will help everyone and the whole process.

Member Azzi pointed out that the charge of this committee is to determine what the Town Center is going to look and feel like. The implementation of the TAP Grant may not include everything. The TAP Grant implementation is just a narrow corridor of that segment of Washington Road. The Committee should think in a longer term of what they want each end of Washington Road to look like (intersection of Central Road/Washington and Washington Road at Grange Park). The Committee should offer their thoughts to the public on where they'd like to see the Town Center to go in the future. There should be a bigger picture in mind, even as the narrower Washington Road project is implemented.

The Committee agreed. Chair Loftus submitted a memo to the Committee for their review from 2018 which listed his thoughts on the Town Center.

IV. Next Steps

- Contact stakeholders to invite them to meet with the Committee.
- Further general review discussion: pavers or asphalt crosswalks; park benches (easy to add on later); lighting (easy to add on later); location of crosswalks; and traffic calming.
- Members to look at the drawings, charrette information, and come up with some ideas for discussion at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Motion by John Mitchell to adjourn at 6:46 p.m. Seconded by Lindsay Gray. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dyana F. Ledger