

April 10 2023 Precinct 17 Caucus Meeting Minutes

Location: Redbrook Trailer

Precinct 17 Member Attendees: Bill Licata, Joseph Hutchinson, Kathy Bell, Al Dinardo, Lori Downs, Lorenzo Pizarro, Susan Arenstam, and Alexis Coon

Absent: Pamela Hastings

Other Attendees: James Downey, Sheila Sgarzi, Kevin Canty, and Ken Stone

Discussion/presentations

- Introduction
- Meeting minutes approved for March 20, and 29, 2023
- A Zoom recording was attempted, but unable to do so.
- Town Meeting: various members spoke on their perceptions of town meeting. May want to invite Lynn or funding sources – help us better understand the different types of funds.
- Future Precinct 17 Discussion Topics:
 - Master plan: fragmentation – different villages have their own master plans; different master plans in town;
 - Zoning plan – periodically reviewed and updated – 3 yrs ago. How do special permits play into zoning?
 - Water Masterplan – 2019 and wells; most acute need in west Plymouth, north secondary; conservation measures have not been implemented – water conservation committee led by Eric Cody presented water conservation to select board with no response from the select board. With future droughts forecasted, 1 aquifer and 2 new town wells needed now, would like discussion on water conservation by town.
 - Affordable housing –
 - Communications: how is this being implemented in master plan and by town departments. Currently town departments and government are siloed, additionally communications poor externally to town residents.

Old Business:

James Downey and Sheila Sgarzi were asked to present update on Wareham Rd/River Run intersection and Wareham Rd.

Wareham Rd Traffic Mitigation Update: James, town transportation engineer since 2006, presented updates on road safety improvements subsequent to Precinct 17 and town discussions, to date:

- Identified part of Wareham rd as thickly settled, 30 mph signage added
- Pedestrian signage has been added, as appropriate (near YMCA and 2-way stop intersections).
- Sidewalks and crosswalks will be added as RedBrook development grows.
- Asked AD Makepeace to remove any pedestrian or automotive safety obstructions, eg, large apartment advertisement sign at 2-way stop.

Intersection of Wareham rd. and river road rd: Plymouth's DPW and engineering have looked at following our request to see if a 4-way stop can be added, 4-way stops criteria are regulated by Mass Highway. Town feels the intersection doesn't yet meet state criteria.

James has reached out to OCPC for a road safety audit; they help towns with traffic studies. They collect and analyze traffic data, then schedule an open meeting with town and residents, and then come up with ideas to address safety concerns.

Other safety considerations, Lori brought up that a post office park is being built and new Apartments – one will probably impact pedestrian safety on Wareham Rd, the other may impact pedestrian safety on River Run. What's the right timing for an OCPC traffic audit?

FYI Ballpark study timeframe is 6 months – 1 yr.

Lorenzo: asked if these 2 roads are state or town. These are town roads. Mass General Law 85 Section 1 and 2 defines state and local jurisdiction over traffic signs, etc....wondered since these roads are not state roads, perhaps the town could determine if criteria met a 4-way stop. James stated that the town must follow state MUTCD specs, avoiding potential tort liability.

Bill asked if in the meantime if there is anything else we can do to emphasize it's a 2-way stop to drivers to improve safety, avoiding accidents and potential fatalities. General discussion ensued.

Follow up actions:

1. Redbrook has received new stop signs and posts for standard stop signs (current one installed more pastoral than official), not yet installed. James will request AD Makepeace to install them.
2. Old colony – audit has been requested for 4-way stop; audit will also include intersections where apartment buildings (with new road parallel to River Run to be constructed) and new post office are to be built (Waterview rd and Inkberry Lane)
3. Scope of the safety assessment needs to be determined, for Wareham Rd from River Run intersection to Wareham town line. Precinct 17 members will work to develop and submit safety concern list to the town. Town will review to see what it can address, determine what should be sent to OCPC for audit.
4. To address Lorenzo's question on who has jurisdiction over 4-way stop determination/signage, Joe will follow up with the town council, who will review/interpret Mass General Law 85 Section 1 and 2.
5. Flashing speed signs – a recent grant was awarded to Plymouth to buy mobile speed signs. James will follow up to see if these could be installed in the interim - slow traffic speeds. Lori spoke to constituents who asked that these signs not be installed.
- Joe – home rule petition. Go to Beacon hill, ask for dispensation for speed... Matt Muratore said he would do it. Kevin – long process, and a very long shot.

Kevin Canty summarized new charter changes that were of concern. If the amended charter is voted down on the ballot, a charter review committee could subsequently review it and recommend changes from it to be voted on at subsequent town meeting.

New business:

- Meet next Monday to discuss charter changes Monday 17th April.
Meeting adjourned.