



DRAFT

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Monday June 19, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.
City Hall Conference Room A

The Safe Routes to School Committee met on Monday, June 19, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall, Conference Room A

I. CALL TO ORDER: Christina Westfall, Chair brought the meeting to order at approximately 10:05 a.m.

II. ROLL CALL: Christina Westfall, Chair and Traffic & Safety Representative, Debbie Finnigan, Traffic Engineer, Councilor Ned Raynolds, City Council Representative, Rebecca Emerson, School Board Representative, Police Commissioner John Golumb, Police Commission Representative, Detective Rebecca Hester, Police Department Representative and Kirsten Barton, Little Harbor representative.
Excused absence, Jonathan Bailey.

III. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES:
As not all members had reviewed the minutes of the April 14th meeting they will be accepted at the next meeting.

IV. NEW BUSINESS:

(A) Set a Meeting Time and Date – After discussion, it was decided that the third Mondays of each month at 9:00 a.m.

MOTION made by Councilor Ned Raynolds that we meet on the third Monday of the month at 9:00 a.m. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

(B) Agenda and Minutes – Debbie Finnigan asked if the members were ok with her sending PDF files of the Agendas and Minutes.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson that Agendas and Minutes get to the committee via e-mail. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

(C) 2007 Grant Project Implementation – Debbie Finnigan stated she needed to start doing something in terms of moving these forward in the next few weeks and send them to the State for the approval. Regarding Dondero we need to file with DES as it is in a wetland. Debbie Finnigan needs the Committee to approve and direct DPW to do the projects.

1. Elwyn Park Pavement Markings (Dondero School) - Bike Lanes and appropriate bike signage. Debbie Finnigan will put together a set of plans and specifications to be put out to bid. The chair stated that a nearby community were doing green bike lanes and asked if we were going to do green. Kirsten Barton stated it draws more attention. Debbie Finnigan would need to look at the standard and appropriate signage and if this is Federal money, we need to follow MUTCD and if this was not Federal money we would be able to do as we wanted, but she would not be comfortable if we were not consistent in following federal standards.

Councilor Reynolds asked Debbie Finnigan for a map of the streets that would be striped and she showed him a copy, The Committee felt it should be continued to the School.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to charge Public Works Department with engineering design for pavement markings for Project 1 in Elwyn Park. Seconded by Kirsten Barton. Motion passed.

2. Dondero School – Garfield Rd Pathway Improvements – Debbie Finnigan showed the committee a location map which is now a cut through. It is overgrown and there’s no lighting in there. Debbie Finnigan stated 3 ft of bollard lighting will be used with 180 shields on the back so as not to impact neighbors. The pathway was discussed and Councilor Reynolds asked if it could be permeable stone dust. Debbie Finnigan stated the project needs to follow ADA standards.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to proceed with the design including investigating whether the surface can be permeable. Seconded by Councilor Reynolds. Motion passed.

3. Bike Racks for Little Harbor, St. Patrick’s & Middle Schools – Debbie Finnigan stated there are proposed two at Little Harbor, two at St. Patrick’s and one for Middle School. We have 3,000 which includes excavation, concrete pads with gravel base, shipping and installation.

Councilor Reynolds informed the Committee that he saw beautiful hand pressure treated wooden racks handmade by someone in Maine, 8 ft long and very efficient and would handle a lot of bikes. Feels it would be less expensive than metal racks, installing concrete, etc. Does not believe it was anchored, it could be anchored, but for instance at the Middle School would like to have something portable as well as Little Harbor. Councilor Reynolds will e-mail the information to the members.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson for a report back on the racks at the next meeting of costs, number of bikes held by each rack, including all costs. Seconded by Kirsten Barton. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan will contact Supt. Lister to contact the Principals for their input. Debbie Finnigan stated that the State liked the fact that we considered all schools as opposed to one school, we were the any community that hit all schools.

4. Crosswalk Safety Improvements – Debbie Finnigan stated we need location to deploy six bright yellow school crossing crosswalk safety signs with rubber bases (weebles) at key locations and to install on a pilot basis two yellow solar powered flashing yellow signs set on timers at two other key locations. Debbie needs to go through the Federal Highway to get permission to do a test pilot program with the solar flashing sign. Debbie Finnigan suggested voting for six in terms of priority.

Councilor Reynolds suggested someone in the area that would be willing to be stewards of the weebles to place and remove them in the morning, and again in the afternoon.

Debbie Finnigan stated that things in the past have been put in because people want them to be there, and may not necessarily be the best choice to be there. Especially on Middle because the site distance is not good enough, the fact that the street, being wide, people tend to drive quickly, as well as parking on both sides of the street, hinders visibility even more.

MOTION made by Councilor Reynolds that SRTS requests Traffic & Safety to consider locating a new crosswalk at Cabot and Middle to allow for a weeble and if the issue is there already is a crosswalk, remove crosswalk at the convenient store. Seconded by Rebecca Emerson. Motion passed.

Rebecca Emerson stated it is more an issue of visibility and safety, as it located is probably the flattest, best visibility wise for traffic. Coming from Cabot and Union even with a car is hard.

Rebecca Hester stated that parking may need to be reduced. Debbie Finnigan stated all these issues need to be considered and the minutes of this meeting will be included in the Traffic & Safety package.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to have Department of Public Works buy Weebles to put at the following locations: Lincoln/Miller on Miller, Summer/Austin on Summer, Cabot/Middle on Middle; Dennett/Woodbury on Dennett; McKinley/Van Buren on McKinley and Parrott Avenue at Middle School. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

Debbie Finnigan referred to the two solar power flashing signs are basically crosswalk signs with flashing red on top and bottom that flash during school hours which will be a pilot program and think about their placement.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to refer to Public Works Department.. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

5. One-Day Workshop – This is to invite community members, schools, kids whoever wants to come to discuss SRTS, bring in a professional to come in and run this workshop. Rebecca Emerson suggested doing the workshop in conjunction with the Kick-off Walk to School Day on October 8th. A flyer will be sent home

Kristen Barton and Councilor Raynolds had suggestions for the professional and will e-mail Debbie the information so that Debbie can put out RFP's.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson to refer to Public Works Department to follow up with an RFP to determine what the cost will be for the workshop leader. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

6. Survey about Walking & Biking to School for Parents - Debbie Finnigan stated the surveys are the same as last year with a few changes putting SRTS at the top and also a place for them to write in the school and will be sent out at the beginning of the school year.

Debbie Finnigan asked Rebecca Emerson to ask about sending the Survey electronically at the next School Board meeting.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson that SRTS ask that the National Safe Routes to School Surveys be sent to parents in whatever format is acceptable to School Board and National SRTS with the first packet of the school year, Parent Survey Evaluation. Seconded by Councilor Raynolds. Motion passed.

6. Student Incentive Program (School Resource Officers) – Debbie Finnigan stated for the reimbursement suggested referring to DPW to work with SRO to determine the incentives that may be useful in training at school.

MOTION made by Rebecca Emerson that the SRO and Public Works Department work together to determine the incentive program that will work best at each school and make the program happen through the school year. Seconded by John Golumb. Motion passed.

Councilor Raynolds stated that helmets are very important and required by law. It was suggested to speak with Kiwanis as Children's Day did not occur, would they be willing to donate the helmets.

Detective Hester referred to Kid Power, a program at Little Harbor and New Franklin that encourages walking and biking and increasing activity. Detective Hester asked the Committee a lot of this has to do with an incentive for the activity not necessarily as it relates going to and from school and how does this committee want that? There are a lot of walking clubs at New Franklin and Little Harbor for kids to exercise more. The incentive is to create walking and biking to school but also trying to reach the people taking buses. Councilor Raynolds stated anything that makes it safe to walk or bike to school, a flasher, a reflector, etc. Detective Hester will come back with ideas and a plan of what works as an incentive and how it should be best integrated into what the schools are doing.

- (D) **Walk to School Day – October 2008** – Walk to School Day in October – Debbie Finnigan stated we need a commitment from everybody to help get this done. It was suggested the City declare it's National Walk to School Day getting the Police, City Council involved, newspaper coverage, a big party, Councilor Raynolds suggested at the next PTA meeting Kirsten have it on the Agenda that October is International

Bike/Walk to School Day, the principals need to know, press release. Councilor Raynolds will be there walking, suggested City Councilors walking, School Board members walking. A firm commitment is needed to make this work. The Chair suggested a formal sign up. Rebecca Emerson suggested a community block party and to notify the City Wide Neighborhood committee. Kirsten Barton presented the Committee with a time line worksheet of checking off what you need to do and will pass it out to the committee. Debbie Finnigan suggested to get community support a press release on SRTS for October K-8th grade are having a National Walk/Bike to School Day and SRTS is looking for help to commit. Rebecca Emerson suggested a special day such as an assembly, etc. It was suggested a sub committee that may be interested in this one event. It was suggested to have the principals present at the next meeting.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

- (A) Committee Members from New Franklin School Dondero School, St. Patrick's School and Portsmouth Middle School** - The chair stated we have a potential Committee member from Dondero and we still need someone from the Middle School, New Franklin, and St. Patrick's. Councilor Raynolds suggested the PTA send out an e-mail that SRTS is looking for a representative. It was suggested that the Superintendent contact the Principals and have the Principals contact the PTA. The Chair will contact Supt. Lister.

Detective Hester stated they have a traffic enforcement car, and one thing she would like to do is have educational literature.

Councilor Raynolds would like to see bicycle striping on Middle St. between Lafayette Rd and downtown State St., Middle St. is wide, plenty of room for striping and cars travel fast.

Debbie Finnigan suggested e-mailing her if they want it on the Agenda for discussion.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 21, 2008.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Complete packet is on file at the Public Works Department

Respectfully submitted

Elaine Boucas
Recording Secretary