

**Prospect Sidewalk Task Force  
Regular Meeting  
Unapproved Minutes  
February 25, 2016**

Meeting started at 3:08 P.M. The meeting was held in the large conference room, Prospect Town Hall, 36 Center Street.

**Members Present:** Carla M. Perugini-Erickson, Robert Chatfield, Jack Crumb, Jeff Holley.

**Members Absent:** Ron Laone

**Guests:** Gerald L. Stiko, Economic Development Coordinator, Cheshire, CT  
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Bianca Poehailos, intern with Attorney Jeffrey Holley

**Discussion:**

After reciting the pledge, Mayor Bob introduced Gerry Sitko who has served as the Economic Development Coordinator for Town of Cheshire for the past 24 years. Mr. Sitko distributed a power point that was prepared by Anchor Engineering Services, Inc. for Cheshire's Public Informational Meeting for Sidewalk Improvements along West Main Street.

Discussion ensued regarding streetscape improvements made to West Main Street in Cheshire, and the adjacent greenway. Mr. Sitko advised that the upper West Main Street project should be completed soon, and he has been working on that part for the past 6-7 years.

The streetscape project started in 2005 when Cheshire received two STEAP Grants totaling \$1,000,000. Prior to this, Mr. Sitko found an old beautification plan from 1980s for the West Main Street area of Cheshire, and he presented it to the Town Council. He advised that Cheshire could have this plan in place, and they do not have to wait another 20 years, because there is grant money available. The applications were made for the STEAP Grants, and the project commenced.

The first part of the project was from Deepwood Road to Grove Street, and the Town installed decorative streetscape, including sidewalks, lighting, benches. Cheshire has focused on this area of town, having designated it as "West Main Street Commercial Village." The town wanted to create "connectivity" between the two commercial areas in town and they wanted to connect the neighborhoods. Cheshire appointed a "Streetscape Committee" to help plan the improvements to the area. The Chairman of the Committee initially wanted utilities underground, but after a quote of \$4-5 million for that came back, the committee abandoned that idea.

Mr. Sitko noted that there are no sidewalks on the northside of upper West Main Street to Maple Avenue, and it is very dangerous. There are over 18,000 cars that pass that area every day. A pedestrian was struck by a vehicle in that area, by Beachport, and the idea of the sidewalks would connect the two commercial areas in town. Cheshire applied for and received a 3<sup>rd</sup> STEAP Grant for \$500,000, and with those funds, Cheshire is in the process of the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the project, installing 1600 linear feet of sidewalks from Grove Street to Maple Avenue. They will install 2500 linear feet of retaining walls with the project. The sidewalks must be ADA compliant. The cost of this sidewalk project was funded with the STEAP Grant. The Town of Cheshire contributed \$350,000 to complete the project (engineering costs, etc.)

Cheshire is installing a HAWK Pedestrian Island to assist with crossing on West Main Street. This system was used in Tuscon, Arizona and Illinois. The cost of this project is shared between the State DOT and Town of Cheshire.

Cheshire obtained easements from property owners to install the sidewalks and retaining walls. The firm of Milone and MacBroom did the easements. Mr. Sitko took on the task of getting the easements to the landowners, making sure they were signed and filed. He wrote a letter to the landowners, enclosing the easement, and advised he would be in touch to ensure they were signed and filed.

As far as the business community, the Streetscape Committee and Eco. Dvlpment. Commission had 10 or more meetings and walked the owners through the project. They invited business owners to Rossini's or Laura's Deli, gave them lunch, and explained the project. This was not easy to negotiate with the business owners because the DOT required culvert repairs, which required Cheshire to close the street which affected their business access which did not make the business owners very happy. But the DOT did an excellent job of getting the repairs done within a 24 hour period, and overall, the sidewalks and streetscape have improved the business owner's property and accessibility by increasing foot traffic and aesthetics, so it was a good benefit to them.

Milone and MacBroom did the engineering for the project, and Cheshire paid them for their services, because the DOT would take too long and delay the project, and they did not want any delays. There are concrete pavers in the streetscape area of the sidewalks from Deepwood to Grove Street, but Grove to Maple is stamped concrete. As far as coordinating with the DOT, they were good to deal with, and they know a lot about these projects, and they relocated utility poles.

Cheshire's position with landowners is that if Cheshire affects the landscaping, they will fix it, and Cheshire is also flexible with the landowners on the retaining walls, allowing the landowner to have input into the height, etc. Ultimately, the landowners are aware that the sidewalks and retaining walls will improve the curb appeal of their properties, so they are generally agreeable.

As far as snow removal, the abutting landowners are responsible for snow removal, but the Town maintains the retaining walls. Business owners are not disagreeable with snow removal, as the sidewalks improve their business and dress up their properties.

The preliminary engineering plan cost \$10,000.00, and this went out to bid, and was awarded to Milone and MacBroom. Their total costs were \$80-\$90,000.00, covered by the STEAP grant. For the 2<sup>nd</sup> project, the engineering contract went out to bid and was awarded to Anchor Engineering, and their cost was \$40-\$50,000.00. Total engineering costs for the entire project were \$120,000.00, all covered by STEAP grants.

As far as construction, that also went out to bid. Guido Picarazzi of G. Pic and Sons Construction of Bridgeport did a great job on construction for the 1<sup>st</sup> project, and Clover Construction did some work for the project, but they were not as expeditious in completing the task as G. Pic.

Mr. Sitko recommended that for sidewalks in town, approach abutting property owners, business community and DOT as early as possible.

We thanked Mr. Sitko for sharing his experience and advise on town sidewalk projects, he advised we could contact him at any time, and he then left the meeting.

Vote was taken on the minutes of the 2/8/2016 meeting. Approved unanimous.

No action taken on the 12/9/2016 minutes, but will be set on the agenda for approval at the next meeting.

**MAYOR WILL GET BACK TO US WITH NEXT MEETING DATE – WILL INVITE DOT REP. TO COME AGAIN AND A REP. FROM COG FOR GRANT INFO.**

**NEXT MEETING TO BE SCHEDULED BY MAYOR WITH GUEST FROM DOT AND COG.**

Motion to Adjourn by Jeff Holley, seconded by Jack Crumb. Meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.

Attachments:

1. Power Point from Cheshire Public Informational Meeting prepared by Anchor Engineering for Sidewalk Improvements along West Main Street.
2. Specifications for West Main RFP and bid results emailed 2/9/16 from Don Nolte, Town Engineer, Cheshire, with email link to Town of Cheshire's sidewalk ordinance.

**Submitted by:**

*Carla M. Perugini-Erickson*