

MINUTES
Brandon Planning Commission
June 16, 2014

Present: Anne Bransfield, Chair; Marty Feldman, Tracy Wyman, Linda Stewart, Jeff Guevin.

Also in attendance for the hearing: Richard Baker, Robert Black, and Debbie {insert name here}

HEARING on VTrans Bicycle/Pedestrian Grant Application

The Chair opened the hearing at 7:00 p.m.

There was a discussion of the segments of approaches to the Neshobe School and surrounding area that have missing links in the sidewalk. Richard Baker noted the finding that there was no room for a sidewalk on ____ Hill. In addition, there was noted a discrepancy in the length of certain segments. Later, it was suggested that the needed measurements could be taken using GIS or Google Maps.

Supporters of this grant that have already been contacted and will provide letters of support if needed include the Downtown Brandon Alliance (Brandon's MainStreet/designated downtown organization), the Greater Brandon Economic Development Committee, and the Planning Commission. In addition, the project committee is looking for support/endorsements from Safe Routes, Brandon Area Chamber of Commerce, and others.

Debbie ____ explained how the project came about: It all started with Safe Routes, at the school level. It's been presented to the Neshobe School Board. Neshobe now a Safe Routes school, but we have to show continued growth in making things safer. The first round was a thorough town-wide analysis, looking at walking paths. The analysis revealed that the approach to the school from the Brandon Gap (Route 73) should be 35 mph with a blinking . The Town Select Board was asked; however, there is no money in the Town budget to make this and other needed changes.

VTrans, through this grant, can help. It's a matching grant. Lisa Kenyon, the Neshobe School Board chair, said the Ely Trust could provide matching funds, that the project is within the fund's parameters. However, a special School Board meeting will likely be needed. Lisa Kenyon had said that the Trust could likely fund \$30k and get \$20k back.

Richard Baker noted that the overall cost of the project was \$31,500, making the required match \$3,150, and that the bill would need to be paid 100% up-front, of which 90% would be reimbursed.

All in attendance were impressed that the Ely Trust could be so gracious and were happy to know the match was to be somewhat less.

Debbie explained the Ely Trust. The business finance person, Brenda, in the school district administers the Trust funds. It can provide certain things, such as Chrome Books, and is by its terms to be used as a last resort or supplement to existing funds. Although the criteria will become more defined soon, the proposed project fits squarely within the purpose and terms of the trust.

The Chair said, "This will leverage something important and beneficial to the students in the area."

Debbie will notify the Chair and R. Baker when the funds are available and about advertising.

Richard Baker noted that the project will be presented Thursday night [June 19, 2014] at the 6:30 p.m. Regional Transportation Council meeting on the third floor of the Opera House in Rutland. Jeff Stewart (Downtown Brandon Alliance / MainStreets / Designated Downtown) may go. Richard is chairing the meeting and encouraged all present to attend to present the project. He also noted that Brandon had successfully obtained such grants in the past.

The Chair suggested Tina Wiles might be able to attend but hoped that others might go in case she could not.

A commissioner asked about the "public meeting" required on the application. The Chair noted that this was it.

Richard Baker responded that the notice requirement would be met by copying the "tear-sheet" out of last Wednesday's Reporter, showing the date, place, time, and subject of the hearing.

Linda Stewart said she could get a copy of the tear-page.

The Chair: We have a really good team for this. When can we get a letter of approval?

Richard Baker: Likely immediately.

The Chair: We need to have six hard copies in John Caplan's hands by the 27th.

A commissioner said a letter from Judy Pulsifer would be great.

Debbie said that Tina Wiles was going to check on that.

The Chair will forward a letter to Debbie as a template or suggestions for supporters to consider in their letters.

The Chair **closed the hearing** at 7:19 p.m. and immediately **opened** the Planning Commission meeting.

Tracy Wyman moved, and Linda seconded, approval of the May 19 minutes, which passed unanimously.

Tracy Wyman moved, and Linda seconded, approval of the June 2 minutes, which passed unanimously.

Jeff suggested the Planning Commission discuss its direction as we move forward with the Town Plan, Brandon-Based Code, and cooperative efforts with town government and non-governmental organizations.

General discussion ensued, facilitated in part by Robert Black.

ADJOURNED at 9 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 7, 2014, at 7 p.m. in the Library.