



# Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, 03.11.2021

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## Attendees

*Facilitators: Lousie MacLellan-Ruf, David Gogel*

*City Manager Tom Luttrell*

*Connie Hayes*

*Heidi Neal*

*Fletcher Smith-McNaboe*

*Jennifer Rockwell*

*James York*

*Karen Littlefield*

*Dan Benson*

*Steve Carroll*

*Hope Percy*

*Police Chief Chris Young*

*Kathy Bourque Parker (DPW)*

*Leah Ondra*

*Adam Lachman*

*Jackie Lawrence*

*Eola Ball*

*Eric Itzel*

*Chris Johnson*

*Melody Wolfertz*

*Emma Wendt*

*Steve Betts*

## Notes

- Minutes approved from 3.04.21
- Updates
  - Kathy Updates - some locations wouldn't work, others block potential viewing of driveways
    - Loading zone that does seem to work is the one that is further up Main Street - but really far away from other stores, so might not service other people
      - James - Could we still have this as a loading zone in place to potentially attract businesses to vacant spaces?
    - Currently using the East Lane for deliveries
    - Heidi - with 2 lanes being open, loading zone not as much as a priority than when it was single lane
      - Double lane able to make it work without explicit Zone
    - Steve
      - Concerned when we say that "it works" - works for a few businesses, but the rest of Main St is being blocked for everyone and all of the traffic
        - Works well for who
          - Heidi - no businesses have complained about her trucks and any potential congestion - who are her trucks causing problems for? Seems to be slowing traffic down
        - Has anyone looked at School Street or any of the side streets for deliveries?
          - Heidi - can't then turn down Main Street
  - Tom Updates
    - Met with post master about mailboxes - didn't say No, but had to look into it and was supposed to get back to them
      - Biggest complaint/concern was that wherever it was moved, traffic needs to be able to move in
  - Jenn - has anyone looked into Tilson for Loading Zones?
    - Tom - have to look into this to see if we can move any parking spaces; looking into redesigning Tilson anyways
    - Kathy - Tilson has a grade to it - would be up hill

- Fletcher - layout of our downtown - having delivery trucks is just nature of the beast, scheduled deliveries, not necessarily as big of a problem as we are creating
  - Jenn - agrees, both lanes of traffic gives flexibility to not have loading zones
    - Business not inconvenienced
- Jenn's updates
  - Lot of logistics for making this happening this summer
  - Outlining what needs to happen - will send out a Memo for the committee to review and give feedback on the process of how to present to council
    - View slides to see outline of what needs to be done around parklets & pocket parks, application process, design parameters & cost support, use of parklets
  - All in agreement that this is a good idea, if anyone is interested in working with Jenn reach out
    - Need to align with parameters of MDOT
  - Dan Benson- are parklets as safe as barriers?
    - Yes - they will be coexisting with jersey barriers
  - James question - Can the parklets be used in the back of buildings such as Thorndike?
    - Jenn - yes, wherever there is outdoor space that can be used, thinks that it should be used
      - Using parklets on Main Street will be really enticing for residents and visitors to spend more time outside downtown, not just for outdoor dining
  - As we outline parameters for parklets we should talk about business hours
    - Major complaints from last year was that restaurants don't open until 5pm, seating sat empty throughout the day
      - Should have parklets used as public recreation space throughout the day before restaurants are open - this should be a main focus in the design to make them accessible
        - James - might be some push back if public space during day, private at night?
          - Fees to have them? - Jenn yes, application process with fee, and funding to create
  - City has allocated some funds for this but not fully funded by the City ●
    - Either 50/50 match, crowdfunding, etc. - need to decide this and start pricing out once we have a design laid out so consistent look

- Make it a community effort - painting the jersey barriers, could be a different type of barrier
    - Question - how many parklets and barriers are we going to get?
      - That's part of the question
    - David - if we can decide as a committee on parameters of the parklets, RMS can gauge interest on how many parklets
      - Jenn - outlining what we need to do research on and write out before present to City - reach out if you want to participate in the planning process (application process, funding, criteria, design, materials, public access, timeline, maintenance, duration of use, etc)
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  - Tom - love idea of parklets, look great - the \$30,000 that was allocated from the City was for planning and beautification
    - If using for parklets, would need to ask City
      - Jenn - use this for beautification of parklets?
    - The sooner we know that people want to use, the sooner we can get it in front of DOT for approval
  - Louise - trying to have parity and fairness on Main Street and side streets
    - Shouldn't be talking about money for parklets yet
      - Need to know what businesses are willing to put in in order to have thriving businesses
      - Jenn - agree, purpose more for outdoor recreation space - businesses all benefit when there is more space outside for people to use in general, regardless of outdoor dining space
  - David - should start doing outreach before next meeting to gauge interest from businesses
    - Louise - Should we move forward with Identifying how many parklets we need, an application process and trying to figure out how this will work for 2021?
      - Yes
    - James Question - focus on 2021 Covid response
- Public Comment
  - Eric Itzel
    - Crosswalks - has anyone ever considered using rectangular reflective beacons? Having flashing pedestrian signs to show motorists that there are pedestrians in street
      - Need APS by Tilson Ave and upgrade on push buttons, like by Park St
    - Kathy - re crossing of Main Street at Tilson, working on fixing crosswalks right now!
  - Emma Wendt

- Excited that this conversation is happening, the fact that parklets and pocket parks are being brought up is great - they are fantastic, lot more utilization, lots of vibrancy
    - General pedestrian safety issues - downtown often with bikes, strollers, dogs, etc - terrifying experience
      - Really value not being in a car and walking around town, but worry about this every day by subjecting her son to this experience
      - Balancing risk of car safety vs pedestrian safety
      - Wider sidewalks, parking spots, etc - more breadth and separation is exciting with this -- parklet parks will be good for this
    - Bike lanes - if there are ways to be creative in exploring this too
  - Hope Percy
    - Love the flashing walks along by the High School
    - Public education on pedestrian safety and traffic safety in general ■ Maine State law not just to yield to pedestrians at the crosswalk, and also pedestrians who have intent to cross
      - Investing in education would help
      - RMS to work with City to work on social campaign on this
- Public Comment
  - Emma wendt - +a million for parklets! (And pocket parks)
  - iPhone - Only one restaurant has had outside dining all winter
  - Jenn
    - Criteria for Preparation of Recommendations to Council
    - 1. Application & Approval Process
    - 2. Design Parameters
    - 3. Cost Support/Match
    - 4. Use Guidelines & Public Access
    - 5. Timeline & Duration of Use
    - Anyone willing to do work offline with me, please let me know and we can schedule a meeting to outline the details/recommendations of this ahead of the next meeting
- Survey Results
- Question from James - Has RPD ever considered a traffic cop Downtown from time to time? Growing up I remember one at Tilson and Main from time to time ○ Tom -New positions are on hold to keep the tax rate low but always can be looked at in the future
- Public Art as Traffic Calming Mechanism
  - For businesses who have parklets, think of public art for the barriers as an option for decorating

- Crosswalk painting
  - 3d optical illusion crosswalks and raised speed bumps - slows people down

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- DOT says that we need to work with white lines initially
      - Research shows that traffic slows down, speed cut in half
        - Particularly in short term
    - Connects with OUT Maine who has asked to do rainbow as well for Pride ○ Thinking about reaching out to Alexis from Arts in Action to see if we can get this going
    - Product driven, would need to figure this out with public works, city, police, etc
    - Vision would be to start those crosswalk and visuals at Park and Main ●

Talking about ways to blend community engagement, public art, traffic calming in our downtown

- Discussion around traffic calming strategy
  - Then next week is about communication, signage, beautification
- Next steps on this?
- Connie Hayes
  - Love the idea of illusions in crosswalks, love the idea of Alexis work on it - already working with community and teenagers, community members, etc ●

Questions

- Eric Crosswalk painting- is ADA compliance being considered in that concept raised crosswalk panels, tactile dome placement, etc
  - ADA compliance for the visually impaired was the focus of my question
- MDOT?
  - Yes, as long as in 25mph zone and have white keys you can do what you want
- Kathy
  - One thing to make sure of is that the crosswalks on Main Street have pavers, concrete, then the white lines
    - Don't necessarily have a paved surface to work with
    - Connie - Alexis can figure out the surface issue
- Steve
  - Reached out to Rodney Lynch - who told Steve that in 2011 the DOT gave the city money specifically for calming and pedestrian safety on Main St - included in that was funds to construct speed bumps, there were 2 speed bumps constructed and crosswalks that were improved
  - Louise - support from DOT varies based on Director
    - Past speed bumps became a problem for the plows, one of the reasons that we can not have raised bumps

- James - Tom so there is no way to get money from council from this Downtown from this downtown plan for a summer traffic season traffic?
- Consensus
  - Painting crosswalks with Alexis/Community

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- Street art as traffic calming measure?
    - Yes
  - Jenn - comment on this note as we think about overall beautification and signage and tie street art/crosswalks into design of parklets
    - Louise - people's own businesses would be responsible for their own jersey barriers
    - Jenn wants to put together parameters for design so everyone can be on the same page for the look of the design
  - Next week
    - On beautification, signage, communication on the plan
      - Who wants to tackle what?
    - Jenn has agreed to take on parklet processes
    - Tom and Louise on permit process
    - David and Louise to reach out with Alexis

Respectfully submitted,

Louise MacLellan-Ruf and David Gogel

3/11/21 7 pm - 7:57 pm