TOWN OF OAK BLUFFS
DOWNTOWN STREETSCAPE MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE
November 17, 2014

MEETING MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS:

Brian Packish, Chair
Doug Abdelnour
Erik Albert
Duncan Ross
Gail Barmakian
John Bradford

ATTENDEES:

Bob Whritenour
Christine Flynn
Craig Lowe

The meeting of the Downtown Streetscape Master Plan Committee was called to order by Chairman, Brian Packish at 1:08 PM in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 56 School Street in Oak Bluffs, MA.

Brian Packish: Last week we worked on the Calibrated Goals *Bullet#2 Improve/enlarge the Circuit/Kennebec Avenue pedestrian experience while providing a net parking gain with a 5-minute walk and preserving parking near convenience businesses and welcoming pedestrian experience.*

Now moving on to

Bullet #3 Strengthen linkages between Kennebec/Circuit North Bluff, the CMA, public restrooms and Ocean Park.

I did send over the bullet points from last week to the Consultant – playing phone tag – they did send me some concepts for the North Bluff – two different – one and a half percent different. The reason I did not forward the m to you is because I called John ford – to confirm I received the entire email. It just seemed incomplete. As we move on

Duncan Ross I would like to give my report on the Bradford Pear trees.
I called Bill Schwabe (sp?) who was the person who oversaw the planting of the trees and told him there was discussion about the longevity of the trees.

The longevity of the trees is 50 – 150 years
Trees are fine and beautiful
Will soon be decorated for the Holiday season
Need trimming from time to time
Dispels the myth that they only have a 25 year life span

DISCUSSION: THE CONFLICTING OPINIONS ON THE BRADFORD TREE

Christine Flynn — It boils down to what is more important; designing around a tree or designing for pedestrian experience? Have to make some choices

Brian Packish — How many of us were able to put together bullet points about #3?
Duncan, Christine and Brian have comments on Bullet#3

Let's look at Christine's recommendations:

1. Move Police station and reclaim green space at existing Police Depart

2. Improve extended consistent design of pedestrian friendly congregating area all along Circuit Ave Healy Square from Post Office to Ocean Park

3. Kennebec Ave – sidewalks on Kennebec Ave along the East side (the restaurant side)

4. Narrow Kennebec Avenue to slow traffic

5. Signage from North Bluff, SSA guiding pedestrians into downtown

6. Bus shelter at Ocean Park

7. Loading Zones

A lot of overlapping:
We talked about wider existing sidewalks

Doug Abdelnour — Notice the white line on Kennebec Ave – indicates there is room to make a sidewalk.

Brian Packish — I am going to review the bullet points for the Calibrated Goal # 2:

1) Widen/replace existing sidewalks on Circuit Ave with a preference to preserve as many existing parking spaces as possible and maximize sidewalk width. The committee supports a pilot program for parallel parking at the bottom of Circuit Ave extending up to the G and B building.

2) The committee supports a review of existing street trees to determine life span and future options. The committee supports trees on Circuit Ave. The committee supports benches/seating areas under trees, as well as the possible incorporation of trash/cigarette receptacles.

3) The committee supports working with the MVCMA to make the MVCMA entrances more experience/pedestrian friendly, including various way finding options.

4) Explore parking options from Nancy's restaurant to Our Market on both sides of the road. Create pedestrian friendly walkways to the MCVMA, harbor and parks.

5) The committee supports linking Circuit Ave, Kennebec and Ocean Park sidewalks and pedestrian areas including lines of sight to the Park and Ocean. Provide a safe pedestrian access to Kennebec businesses. Explore more loading zone times and locations.

6) Review and provide space for deliveries and trash pick-up on Circuit Ave and Kennebec Ave. Explore increasing the numbers/style of trash receptacles on Circuit Ave and Kennebec Ave.

7) Explore uniform lighting tying Circuit Ave., Healey Square and Kennebec Ave together. Continue to work with existing light poles provided through the Friends of Oak Bluffs.

8) Explore traffic calming, parking options and pedestrian experience around the Union chapel with a potential monument at the end of Circuit Ave. Link the walkways to the rest of the commercial district all the way to Uncas Ave.

Doug Abdelnour — Regarding Circuit Ave, what did it say was the priority, parking or increasing the sidewalks?

Duncan Ross — We passed a motion that said the priority on that bullet would be the pedestrian experience.

Gail Barmakian — General comment about it all, it seems that the theme is to maximize the pedestrian experience –needs to be balanced – addressing a necessary situation two or three months of the year – sacrificing by way of car traffic and parking spaces for the rest of the year for many people. You are really addressing tourist at too great a sacrifice. Seniors don't want – it's an inconvenience. Need a way to do one without compromising the other and without going to an extreme taking away a lot of parking for two months out of the year. You're encouraging people to walk on a November night.

Doug Abdelnour — Do you support of the business owners being able to park on Circuit Avenue in the s pots all day long? If we do a study and monitor the license plates and determine out who is parking. Difficult during the day to find parking, but come back at night there are so many parking spaces. During the day it's filled with shop owners and shop employees cars. We are trying to fight for something that isn't necessary.

Erik Albert — Facebook dialogue questions – for people with limitations and mobility issues the sidewalk is the most treacherous part of Circuit Avenue to navigate by Ben & Bills down. A vibrant summer community and a great downtown year round are not mutually exclusive. These are things that we will share as a community.

Duncan Ross	I would add we are not saying to get rid of all the parking spaces we are looking at increasing parking at different places. Everything can't be right in front of the store where everybody wants to go. If parked down along the harbor not a long walk for most – it is for some.
Brian Packish	Going to check your mail – it would not make sense to park down there. In our discussion we thought about stopping at the G & B as the farthest limitation. The businesses that are in those parking spaces are not at the post office.
Gail Barmakian	Can you use that as one option but also have other alternatives.
Brian Packish	The bullet point is: 1) Widen/replace existing sidewalks on Circuit Ave with a preference to preserve as many existing parking spaces as possible and maximize sidewalk width. The committee supports a pilot program for parallel parking at the bottom of Circuit Ave extending up to the G and B building. Felt potential temporary thing – block 10 spaces – left as a pilot. We need wider sidewalks there. You have to walk down single file to get by
Doug Abdelnour Erik Albert	Imagine two wheelchairs, Baby strollers
Gail Barmakian	Chuck's idea of changing the angle – I thought interesting and useful
Erik Albert	..the sidewalk is the red light area
Brian Packish	Primary section is to narrow- need more than nine inches on each side of the road to make it happen. If it worked down there then parallel the whole street
Gail Barmakian	How can you do a temp pilot program parallel parking because once you widen the sidewalk - not temporary anymore?
Brian Packish	Pilot part would be to see if you function with that parking. When they did the presentation – they had the parklets. I revisited the point so everyone can hear them and to see where we overlap. Kennebec … Items numbered two, three, four and seven on your list is consistent with the bullets from last week.
Christine Flynn	I would like to see it more specific to sidewalks there and not just be a general safe pedestrian access.
Brian Packish	Narrow Kennebec Avenue and slow traffic

DISCUSSION ON SIDEWALKS ON KENNEBEC

Kennebec Avenue	Sidewalks or other safe pedestrian access
Doug Abdelnour	Potential for pavers or bricks across the road to control speed between Healey Square and Ocean Park
Gail Barmakian	like a speed bump – more aesthetically pleasing
Duncan Ross	Police to enforce stop sign on Kennebec – corner of Post Office
Brian Packish	Specifics to sidewalks:
	Sidewalks or other safe pedestrian access to Kennebec Ave
Craig Lowe	Can we make better access to Kennebec Avenue from Circuit Avenue
Doug Abdelnour	Wooden ramp at Mocha Motts be approached (town) to lease for access to (Circuit/Kennebec Ave) or obtain an easement
	This summer no access by Ben & Bill's this summer – closed off
Doug Abdelnour	Need signage to restrooms
Gail Barmakian	The town has priority to use that land on the harbor
Doug Abdelnour:	Chapter 91: "Public areas" owned by the state between Nancy's and the Sand Bar & Grill that the town can use. Application is still pending.
	Restroom currently located between Lobsterville and Nancy's
Brian Packish:	RESTROOM DISCUSSION:
	Current restrooms located at Our Market Backside of Kennebec Avenue North Bluff SSA inside
	Do we need more bathrooms or better signage and Way finding enough? How do we strengthen the linkages?
	Way Finding is the starting point
	IN VENICE AND NANTUCKET THERE ARE RESTROOMS EVERYWHERE AND SHOWERS

Bob Whritenour	We need to manage what we have Regular maintenance needed - need a comprehensive maintenance plan Promote clean, attractive and working restrooms with increased Way Finding Explore additional restrooms
Bob Whritenour	A lot of confusion with our visitors as to where the restrooms are – better management and then expanding
Christine Flynn	Not taken seriously enough to pay someone full time to take care of the restrooms and maintain them properly
Gail Barmakian	The focus should be more of a maintenance plan
Brian Packish	How do we expand on the restrooms Park department also looking at the restroom situation MORE DISCUSSION ON RESTROOMS
Erik Albert	Point for brick one, explore the possibility of paid use of restrooms.
Brian Packish	How about promote attractive, clean working restrooms with increased Way Finding and provide a comprehensive management and maintenance plan. Explore the addition of a changing room and outdoor shower at the North Bluff restroom Discussed at the North Bluff ?
Bob Whritenour	We are discussing steel sheet piling instead of concrete at North Bluff Project Outdoor shower at the North Bluff Replace the concrete The cheapest way possible MORE DISCUSSION ON MATERIALS FOR RESTROOMS AND REQUIRED MAINTENANCE
Brian Packish	Again for this bullet point: Promote attractive, clean working restrooms with increased Way Finding. Provide a comprehensive management and maintenance plan. Explore the addition of a changing room and outdoor shower at the North Bluff restroom
Christine	It is necessary for us to consider what could happen outside the Zone because that will help us do better in the zone. Reference to current location of restrooms on map
Erik Albert	Niantic Park is on the list for Way Finding

MORE RESTROOM DISCUSSION

The cost for Doug/Nancy's per flush to cover the harbor and pedestrian crowd

Christine — It is done all over Europe – consider and discuss pay restrooms,

then invest in the restrooms that clean themselves

Brian Packish — Do we want to add, explore pay restrooms?

Gail Barmakian — Before I forget, did Way Finding put Hartford Park in their discussions?

Yes, we have signage

Brian Packish — Restrooms: Promote attractive, clean working restrooms with increased Way Finding. Provide a comprehensive management and maintenance plan. Explore the addition of a changing room and outdoor shower at the North Bluff restroom.

Can we add as #8 from bullet points last week (11/3/14

Doug Abdelnour — #8 from bullet points on 11/3/14

Can add in or put in this one – strengthen linkages, etc.
Potential material changes to paving at the intersections to create traffic calming in the target area.

They are struggling and really hungry for information. They need to send us something. Even if this is a start we can give to them, get some minutes out. Bob posted a job description for us like a five hours a week, secretary, minutes type person. You've had some people respond to it?

Maybe we can get that info to them soon. What else do we have?

DISCUSSION

Christine — Police station area over 20 parking spaces
identify existing dead zones for sitting areas and improvement
increased public sitting area
review potential parking to increase public use for pedestrian/public.

Brian Packish — Okay, so next point is
Identify dead zones in and around the police station for public/pedestrian use

Erik Albert	Way Finding Update: Discussed locating main map and signage directly across as pedestrians exit boat. Information on Signs: some out of the scope Fishing Pier Camp Meeting Association, Downtown area, Harbor, Flying Horses, Town beaches with Inkwell specific put in there, all bathrooms, taxis and buses, ferries, information booth, Police department, Post office, Ocean Park, Niantic Park, Jetty Beach, Healy Square, Library, tennis courts, East Chop lighthouse, etc. We discussed naming from the Island Queen to the Seawall, BEACH WALK and from the Island Queen to Our Market the HARBOR WALK. Talk about having a historical perspective –walk along the beach you can see the way it used to look with pics of the old beach houses (before and after) - incorporate history trail and the African American Trail, bike parking and directions, maybe a bike rack at Sunset Lake. Entering Niantic Park from Tuckernuck by the Seaview near Waban Park, either Tuckernuck or Pequot to get you into OB downtown instead of by the boats. Where to put information kiosk and maps – HY Line, SSA, Island Queen by the buses and by Our Market too Same map and signage on the boats with maybe a take a way – phone app with a QR code and changing Circuit Ave Extension to Harbor Avenue
Gail Barmakian	Something to draw people to the other businesses further down on Circuit Avenue parks so people know there are other business down there. Signs to the bowling alley will direct pedestrians to the stores along the way
Brian Packish	Under #8 we have, ….*linking walkways to the rest of the commercial district.* Right KIOSK DISCUSSION – Christine & Erik
Brian Packish	On or around December 1st, that's when I would like a full update and a summation coming back from the consultants based on their recommendations and then Erik will bring that in and we will have a good amount of time to discuss.
Doug Abdelnour	If the main map was over by the restrooms – people would not have to cross the street to see the map.
Erik Albert Doug Abdelnour	No crosswalk – highly problematic Will be a big park there –
Erik Albert	The police stations is best

	Wait till you see the projections for this
Gail Barmakian	I agree with you
Brian Packish	As part of the North Bluff plan – is the park still going to be what we originally discussed
Bob Whitenour	The new design is not done – but it is slated
	DISCUSSION ABOUT NORTH BLUFF PARK
Brian Packish	Let's finish up # 3 Identify dead zones in and around the police station for public/pedestrian use.
Christine Todd	Chuck at last meeting brought up the telephone poles and lighting Can we add lighting on Kennebec Ave
	We added #7. *Explore uniform lighting tying Circuit Avenue, Healey Square and Kennebec Ave together and continue to work with existing poles provided through the Friends of OB.* Stephanie Mashek was here and did not have the required illumines per square foot but there is
Christine Todd	Can we just provide a bus shelter now where the bus stop is at Ocean Park on the brick patio area; keep the momentum going
Brian Packish	It is 2:30 PM = next Monday at 1:00 PM
	CONTINUED DISCUSSION ABOUT THE BUS SHELTER
Brian Packish	#4 – Bus shelter located at Ocean Park on the brick patio area of existing bus stop. Next week we will discuss *improve SSA* bullet points
Christine Todd	Plans for a public hearing
Brian Packish	Bottom line: get this information to them – review their summation Public hearing to review multiple concepts continue with the phases Hopefully prior to Christmas

Tape ran out and meeting not adjourned
MOTION TO ADJOURN @ 2:30 PM
SECOND:
VOTE: