

Walk Friendly Newtown Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 29, 2022; 12:00 pm via Zoom

In attendance: Courtney Lang, Don Hayden, Scott Williams, Emily Heinz, Amy Lustig

Absent: Rebecca Bancroft

Don opened the meeting. He is putting together a timeline and schedule for WFN and for meetings with Council with June 15, 2022 in mind as the Walk Friendly (WF) application deadline. He will circulate for feedback.

Don asked what kind of WF application review/approval is required from Council? Amy will inquire and report back to the group.

Courtney is continuing her work on the **Engineering** portion of the WF assessment and is going to Borough Hall to go through relevant Borough documents and inventories for the assessment.

Don has been working on the **Evaluation** and **Background** sections of the WF assessment. The Evaluation section has been generally straightforward, but the Background section requires some information that cannot be found in documents like the *US Census* (for “Community Profile” and the *Newtown Borough Comprehensive Plan* (“Status of Planning”). In particular, the “Status of Walking” section requires information regarding to what extent people in the community are walking for various purposes. Don suggested that an online survey to Borough residents would be the best way to gather this data, among answers to other WF-related questions. He will look into what to incorporate into the survey, noting that WF is primarily interested in residents’ (as opposed to visitors’) experiences.

Courtney reached out to Walk Score and learned that it is possible to go through the “professional” side of the site to send relevant information in to Walk Score. Walk Score data is important to the WF application.

Don asked Amy and Emily if there are any core Council initiatives or documents to build around/be aware of aside from the Comprehensive Plan and the Open Space Plan (both currently only available in draft form). While there are grants being pursued/to be pursued, no long-range planning documents/initiatives currently happening in the borough that would impact WF planning at this time. The Comprehensive Plan draft will be discussed at the Council Work Session on April 6, 2022, and Amy will report back to the group on the plan’s status following that meeting.

Emily asked if it might be beneficial to apply at the December 2022 date instead of the June 15 date to allow for the Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan to be finalized. Don stated that WF advised him to apply as soon as possible so that they can provide feedback sooner. The expectation is not to be certified after the first application but instead to begin the process of gathering input from WF.

Amy completed the **Enforcement** section of the WF assessment with additional information from Chief Sabath regarding crosswalk policies and guidelines and citation/warning data regarding parking violations. Scott asked if Chief had returned with any information about the pedestrian safety initiatives he mentioned had happened in Chester County – he has not, and Amy will ask if he (Chief) has learned more about it. Amy will also ask Chief if there's any movement on placing the electronic speed sign.

Emily (**Education and Encouragement**) reported that she'd ordered the car magnets and business window stickers and that they both shipped today. She also talked to Nicole Rodowicz from the Recreation Board regarding incorporating WFN activities into Arbor Day and that it will be considered for next year due to the fast-approaching event date in April.

Don will share his thoughts on the Comprehensive Plan with Emily and Amy to incorporate into Council Work Session discussion of the draft. He added that moving forward, WFN should identify borough touchpoints for areas of work and expressed the need for the committee to have greater understanding of how we get things done beyond the assessment.

Courtney is putting together an operational document chronicling the work of WFN, including identifying roles, responsibilities, resources, touchpoints, and applications of the "E's."

Amy will add a Volunteers Contact List to Sharefile for all to access. Don suggested we give volunteers a designation/title, such as "Pedestrian Safety Ambassador" and Amy suggested we invited all volunteers to attend Work Sessions and Council meetings when WFN will be on the agenda. She also noted that the original Newtown Borough Traffic Committee Facebook page is still "live" and asked if WF would like to become administrators for it for future use (Yes).

The next meeting will be on April 27, 2022 from 12:00 – 1:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 12:59 pm.

Minutes submitted by Amy Lustig in the absence of Secretary Rebecca Bancroft.