

TOWN OF PRINCETON MA
Princeton Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
September 5th, 2017

AC members in attendance: John Shipman, George Handy, Jimmy O'Coin, Judy Dino, Bill Lawton, Wayne Adams
AC members absent: Don Schoeny

Advisory Committee Agenda

- AC Public Hearing for STM Warrant Article, Route 140 Project to Authorize Town of Princeton to Obtain Easements

Meeting started at 6:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

- AC member Judy Dino recused herself from the AC members table and voting
- John Shipman opened the meeting with an overview the reason for the evening meeting, the process and protocol on how the hearing will be run.
- Bill Holder, Princeton Road Advisory Committee (RAC) led a discussion on the background of the project planning, the timeline, the scope of the Route 140 project
 - Joe O'Brian, former town selectman, provided history of the planning work spanning back to 2008.
 - The failing culvert over Keyes Brook in East Princeton was a catalyst for the project in 2008. As state funds were being made available to several towns to improve Rte 140, the engineering planning was expanded to encompass 1.5 miles of road improvements for safety and speed management in addition to the culvert. In town planning, the culvert is labeled as a bridge, though it does not meet DOT definitions. The culvert is complicated for replacement since Rte 140 runs over the culvert, the Rte 140 road-way understructure serves as a dam.
 - Costs for the culvert replacement have ranged around \$1M+ . The financing of the culvert replacement is part of the Route 140 improvement project funded by state and federal grants. Without the Rte 140 grants, the town would need to pay for the culvert replacement. With the town RAC rallying behind Rte 140 improvements, the town costs were projected to be less than town rebuild of the culvert. Town costs are for the engineering plans and for the easements. The engineering plans are \$600K. The easement cost will not be known until after STM when assessors are engaged for appraisals.
- Town Moderator is requesting the RAC/TA provide some slides for the Rt 140 rotary/roundabout to help lead residents through understanding the project and its easements.
- Several questions are not answerable at this time:
 - Will East Princeton property values go up, go down, or stay the same?
 - What is the total cost of the easements, both permanent and temporary?

- Will any permanent easements result in a life-style quality being degraded?
[The engineering firm maintains that all facets of household and property activities will be retained]
- How many yield signs are planned at the rotary?
- Questions and answered were from the floor and town leaders.
 - When was the last town hearing for East Princeton residents for this project? April 2016, and full transcript is available from the Town Administrator. Were all residents in favor? The next planned meetings with E. Princeton residents will start in late September, assuming the STM vote is passed.
 - Some residents are favor of the project since it will fix drainage problems that exist today, that can flood some basements. Residents are in favor of speed management.
 - The Rte 140/Rte 31 rotary easements will not affect the septic leach field for the northside properties.
 - Based on review of the engineering plans, the studies do show expected queuing at the rotary during rush-hour. Some are concerned that frustrated drivers may speed after getting through the rotary; some have noted the police department will need to manage this scenario. Question as to whether home value prices will be effected with constant queuing, as to why would a new homeowner want to live with this situation.
 - The southbound angle at the rotary is 270 degrees, which may be too sharp in too short of a distance for a truck to maneuver around while going slow and using the rotary drive-over apron.
 - Town DPW will need to apply more effort and resources to clean drains periodically and for snow removal. These increased efforts will fit into the current town budget with no increase.
 - How will the RAC and BOS use future Chapter 90 funds vs general town funds to fund easements?
- Motion by George Handy for the AC to be in favor of the September 7th STM Route 140 Article to authorize the Town of Princeton to secure permanent and temporary easements. Second by Jimmy O'Coin. Motion passes Y-4, N-1, A-0. No vote cast by AC member Judy Dino.

Session adjourned 7:45 PM

Upcoming AC meetings

September 7th, 6:30 PM, Thomas Prince School, STM at 7:00 for citizen vote

Handouts and Referenced Documents

- STM Warrant Article
- Speaking notes for Bill Holder overview of Route 140 project

Minutes recorded by Wayne M. Adams, AC Member