

Monroe County Climate Action Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

via zoom

December 3, 2020 (3:30 – 5:00 p.m.)

Drafted: December 4, 2020

Approved: January 7, 2021

Members: John Botelho, Fred Ancello, Matthew O'Connor, Sue Hughes-Smith, Kathryn McArdle, Leah Wirley, Helen Frank, Liam Smith

Absent: Karla Boyce, Michael Yudelson

Staff: Mike Garland, Tina Stevens, Joe VanKerkhove, Patrick Gooch, Clement Chung

Guests: Thomas Polech, James Pond

Welcome, Introduction and Announcements (Co-Chair O'Connor):

1. Meeting called to order at 3:33 P.M. by Co-Chair O'Connor.
2. Referral to authorize Bergmann Associates to begin work on Phase 1 of the Climate Action Plan passed the Environmental and Public Works committee at their recent meeting. The referral now goes to the County Legislature for approval at their December 8 meeting. This committee will be presented and allowed comment on their work products when appropriate. Phase 1, which will begin in January, will cover County operations; Phase 2 will follow.
3. January meeting topic will feature representatives from Ulster County, who have had a Climate Action Plan in place since June, 2019. Kate McArdle and Sue Hughes-Smith have arranged for this meeting and welcome all questions from committee members. Comments and questions for the presenters should be submitted to Kate or Sue by December 12.
4. Co-Chair Yudelson will update the group on his conversations with Monroe County administration regarding the C-PACE Financing program.

Approval of Minutes (Co-Chair O'Connor):

1. Minutes from the November 5, 2020 meeting were unanimously approved. Motion by Vice-Chair O'Connor; seconded by Fred Ancello.

New Business:

1. James Pond, Acting Director of Transportation for Monroe County, and Thomas Polech, Transportation Project Manager, gave an overview of the County's Complete Streets Policy. County DOT provides traffic engineering for the City of Rochester, and maintain County roads. County DOT does not have input into NYS roads unless a County road intersects.
2. Monroe County is in the preparation stage for creating the County's Transportation Plan. It is felt that this will be incorporated into the County's Climate Action plan. At this time, Complete Streets is only internal County policy. The policy will need to be adopted by the County Legislature and woven into the County's Comprehensive Plan.
3. Complete Streets are a transportation policy and design approach that requires streets to be designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. This includes people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are travelling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders.
3. As of June 14, 2011, New York State Highway Law was amended to add Section 331, which requires "All State, County, and Local transportation projects that receive Federal or State funding to consider the convenient access and mobility on the road network by all users of all ages, including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users through complete streets features". All County projects have a public forum prior to start; cyclists are among the most vocal groups.
4. Benefits of Complete Streets:
Create more vibrant, accessible communities; Attract new businesses, which increases the tax base; Raise property values; Reduce greenhouse gases and traffic congestion; improve public health; encourage walking and bicycling
5. Elements of Complete Streets:
Sidewalks; Bicycle facilities; Bus lanes; Transit stops; Crosswalks; Median islands; Accessible pedestrian signals; Curb extensions; Signs & striping; Streetscape & amenities
6. County Roads vs. City Streets:
County roads: Characteristics of roads vary greatly (rural to urban); Most County roads do not provide sidewalks (Town responsibility); pedestrians and joggers must use the road; Often free flow with higher speeds where separating stopped vehicles (deliveries, parking, texting, getting directions, breakdowns) from moving traffic is more critical; Shoulders provide a flexible usage that accommodates the most users (joggers, walkers, and bicyclists) while still providing for stopped vehicles
City Streets: Urban setting with sidewalks, on-street parking, frequent transit stops, etc.; Higher volume of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles; Lower speeds, with traffic control devices (stop signs, traffic signals) in closer proximity that regularly interrupt traffic; Shoulders are not usually provided; dedicated bike lanes can be used to provide space to separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic
7. Paved Shoulders – Flexible Uses: Entry and departure from driveways and side streets; Turning space; Increased sight distance; Stopped, parked, and broken down vehicles; Bicycles; Joggers and pedestrians; mail delivery and garbage pickup; bus stops; emergency use; storm water flow; snow storage

8. Highway Geometric Design Standards Matrix - Lists minimum and desirable lane and shoulder widths for County roads based on functional classification:

- Potential edge treatments are curb, gutter, and swale/ditch
- In general, minimum and desirable widths are:
- Desirable lane widths are typically 11 ft. or 12 ft.
- Minimum lane widths are typically 10 ft. or 11 ft.
- Desirable paved shoulder widths are typically 5 ft. or 6 ft.
- Minimum paved shoulder widths are typically 2 ft. or 4 ft.
- Bicyclists, joggers, and pedestrians are accommodated with 4 ft. shoulder or more

9. "Road Diets" – Reduces the number of travel lanes, creating shoulders for pedestrians, joggers and cyclists

10. Bicycle Detection Cameras – 70 video detection cameras installed at 37 locations.

11. Recent Traffic Signal Projects - Audible Tactile Pedestrian Device Installation – APSD installed at 210 crosswalks at 12. locations; devices include voice recordings. Countdown Pedestrian Signal Installation – 2,200 devices installed in 370 locations; all County-owned signals now have countdown timers.

12. Pedestrian Safety Action Plan Project (2020-2021) – installing rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFBs) at ten locations; upgrading crosswalk striping and signage to meet current standards; adding leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) at 42 locations.

13. Monroe County Complete Streets Policy: Internal policy distributed on August 17, 2020; Applies to all MCDOT Capital and Major Maintenance Projects; Separate Checklists for Capital and Maintenance projects; Sections include: purpose, background, goals and objectives, and exceptions.

14. Complete Streets Policy Checklist: Each Capital and Major Maintenance Project will require a Complete Streets Checklist to be filled out prior to Design Approval. Checklist considerations include:

- Paved shoulders, road diet, bicycle lanes, shared use lanes
- Sidewalks, median refuges, curb extensions, ADA ramps, crosswalks
- Accessible Pedestrian Signal Devices (APSD), pedestrian countdown timers, and bicycle detection at traffic signals
- Sign upgrades, bus shelters, transit stops, trails, Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

14. Applicability and Exceptions to Policy: Is not applicable to private driveways and developments, small scale routine maintenance, or State, Town, or Village projects. Exceptions include scarcity of population, travel, or attractors indicating the need for accommodations, detrimental environmental or social impacts, excessively disproportionate safety, timing, or cost implications, infeasible due to Right-of-Way constraints, roadway capacity, or site specific constraints, or Town's long range transportation plans do not align with the policy.

15. Making vision a reality:

- Requires a joint effort by County and Town governments, often influenced by individual Town priorities and long range transportation plans.
- Takes time to see the effects and results County-wide
- Different roads have different Complete Street elements and potential based on the surrounding characteristics (ex: Redman Road vs. Winton Road)

Public Forum:

1. No public comments or requests to speak were received.

New Business:

1. Next meeting is Thursday, January 7 at 3:30, via Zoom. Link will be sent out one week prior.

2. Co-Chair O'Connor mentioned the November presentation by Haylee Ferrington, at which it was suggested the County apply for both the Climate Smart and Clean Energy Community designations. The Climate Smart Community referral was previously adopted by the County Legislature. Mike Garland stated that Bergmann Associates will evaluate both programs. Sue Hughes-Smith stated that the CEC was easier to accomplish and allows access to grant funding. Mike suggested forming a small sub-committee to layout steps that would be of high value to the CEC as many of the steps are already completed.

Motion to adjourn by Matthew O'Connor; second by Sue Hughes-Smith. Meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM.