

Age-Friendly Shepherdstown

May 29, 2024

MINUTES

Attending: Marty Amerikaner, Marcy Bartlett, Steve Pearson, Bob Smiles, Linda Spatig

After approval of the April meeting minutes, Linda reported that we have two, possibly three, new committee members to consider. The first, Beth Montgomery, has expressed an interest in getting more involved in town activities. Marcy is in the process of inviting her to be part of the upcoming downtown sidewalk safety assessments.

The other two, Jan Hafer and Charlotte Baker-Shenk, have offered to join us to work specifically on hearing accessibility as part of our efforts to improve communication in town. We are thrilled to have this new interest in our work and will submit paperwork as needed to Town Council for these two, possibly three, new members. We also agreed that our communication efforts would include vision, as well as hearing, issues.

As part of this discussion, we revisited the importance of having push-button, accessible doors installed at Town Hall. Linda said this request was made years ago by the Accessibility Committee. She will follow up with a new request to Town Council as soon as possible. Based on Steve's recent experiences at the Opera House, we estimated the cost to be about \$5000 per door.

Old Business

1. Greater Shepherdstown Bike Route

Marty reported that we have the go-ahead from the Public Works Committee to move forward with paving the "goat path" on the west end of High Street. He will follow up on next steps which may involve hiring out the work.

There is no decision yet about signage. In a Public Works Committee meeting in the near future the plan is to review the sign location map developed by Jim Ford's committee as part of the Wayfinding Project. Marty will represent us at that meeting.

We revisited the need for cautionary signage at the west end of High Street. Marty will look into what might be advisable, possibly in consultation with the Highway Department.

2. Downtown Fall Prevention and Safety

Marcy met with the Parks and Rec Committee and reported that the town staff was continuing to make repairs as needed in the town parks. A budget for the new stairs for Cullison Park has been approved but work has not yet begun.

As soon as town elections are over, Marcy will get back to work on preparing for the assessment of downtown sidewalks, which will begin with developing a rubric and training individuals to do the assessments. The rubric will be consistent with Ron Eck's report on what is needed to make the downtown area ADA compliant.

New Business

1. Hearing/Vision accessibility

Linda reported that the Shepherdstown Public Library has secured a grant to enhance hearing and vision accessibility, focusing primarily on technology. She would like to get feedback about what kinds of needs are most pressing and how the grant might be most effective in meeting those needs. She is preparing to meet with SAIL members, as well as members of this committee, to seek feedback. The meeting will probably be a part of an upcoming SAIL Brown Bag Lunch program. Linda will let the committee members know whenever this is scheduled.

2. Age-Friendly University Committee

Linda and Marty met with Carolyn Rodis who is a member of Shepherd University's Age-Friendly University Committee. We agreed it was a great idea to work collaboratively with this university group since our missions have a great deal in common. Linda suggested that we share minutes with the university committee, consider having one or more combined committee meetings, and share key documents with information about the committees. Linda agreed to send a copy of our Age-Friendly Shepherdstown Action Plan to Carolyn Rodis.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, June 26 12:30, on zoom