

Forest Home Improvement Association Officer's Meeting
April 6, 2011, 8:00 pm - 10:00 pm
Forest Home Chapel
Minutes

Officers in attendance: Jon Miller (President), Max Evjen (Vice President), Beth Kelly (Secretary), Bill Arms (via webcam) (Treasurer) and Michael Bend (Immediate Past President). Community members in attendance: Bruce Brittain, Doug Brittain, David Gross, Abe Stroock and Nanette Blakeley.

1. Approve Minutes from February Meeting

Minutes had just been completed and all officers had not had a chance to review them. It was agreed that approval would take place by e-mail.

2. Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Bill Arms reported that he paid Wendy Petti (webmaster) \$200.00 for two years of web site fees for the FHIA web page. Bill will be away for an extended period and will give the checkbook to Jon Miller.

3. Alternative Transportation Working Group

Abe Stroock presented a list of easy improvements involving crosswalks and paths. Those include:

1. Along Caldwell Rd to Forest Home Dr. up to Plantations Rd.
2. Construct a path from McIntyre to Forest Home Dr.
3. Further improve Forest Home Walkway
4. Path from Forest Home Walkway to community entrance on Warren Rd.

The group also expressed support for Cornell's published plan to reconfigure the Cradit Farm intersection at Pleasant Grove Rd. so that traffic is diverted away from Forest Home.

Michael and Jon met with Town Supervisor Herb Engman to deliver a list and discuss these proposals. Herb agreed to share the list with the Town Engineer but made no firm commitments, except to ensure that the areas around the new traffic calming features would be cleaned up as previously agreed. He didn't think the suggestions for crosswalks would be a problem. In general, he is concerned about right of way issues given the Coddington Rd. disputes.

Michael and Jon also asked Herb to take responsibility for snow removal from the west entrance of The Byway to the upstream bridge. Herb demurred, saying that sidewalks in Forest Home are narrower than the minimum width for the Town's equipment and therefore it wouldn't work.

There are also budget limitations.

The Alternative Transportation Working Group has developed a separate project list for Cornell, which includes the following:

1. Path from Plantations Rd. to Dairy Bar
2. Sidewalk snow removal from The Byway west entrance to the downstream bridge
3. Beebe Lake path improvement (including winter upkeep of lower path)
4. Crosswalks on Forest Home Drive near Beebe Lake
5. Re-routing Cornell-related traffic (graduation, parents' weekend, etc.)
6. Request to be involved in planning for the rebuilding or removal of the Tin Can crossing on Judd Falls Rd.

Bill mentioned the problem of GPS navigational systems using Google Maps, which routes traffic through the neighborhood. Is there a possibility of getting Google Maps to re-route so additional traffic isn't routed through the neighborhood? Bill will follow up.

David Gross reported that he has been trying for years to get TCAT to reduce the number of buses that travel through Forest Home. TCAT has instructed drivers of out-of-service buses to avoid the neighborhood, and has assigned a smaller bus to route #41. David presented specific ideas for re-routing the #31 & 37 through North Campus or along Campus Road instead. Discussion followed as to whether FH residents depend on those routes and want buses re-routed. It was agreed that a question will be added to the Traffic Calming Survey that is due to go out soon asking if neighbors would authorize the FHIA's requesting TCAT to change the routes.

4. Traffic Calming Survey

A draft survey had been drawn up by Bill Arms and shared with the officers on Google Docs prior to the meeting. Michael emphasized the need to keep the survey limited to issues regarding the entrance features and speed tables. It was agreed to include additional space for comments as well.

David Gross suggested waiting until we have data from the Town's speed and volume survey planned for April and May before sending out the survey. Michael Bend agreed. When a date is set the community will be notified. Herb has talked to Jim Weber about the placement and number of counters to be used. Bruce Brittain mentioned that the traffic count should be conducted when schools are in session so the results are comparable to those from 2005. Bruce offered to ask the Town to use hose counters (6) as they had done previously. A decision was made to print copies of the survey rather than online survey monkey. Street captains will disperse the surveys after e-mail notification is sent out.

5. Spring Clean-Up & Other Community Events

Spring clean-up will take place April 30th from 10:00-12:00, meeting in the Chapel parking lot. Bags and trash tags will be provided. FHIA will provide refreshments -- Michael will pick up food and beverages.

The FH History talk/walk is all set for April 16th.

The FH Music event is scheduled for May 14th from 1:00-3:00. Beth is setting this up.

Max Evjen's presentation about the science communication work he does with wife Megan Halpern is scheduled for June 11th.

Michael may give a talk about reading education, depending on the scheduling of other events.

6. Property Maintenance Law

The Town's proposed new property maintenance law was discussed. The Britains expressed concern that appearance issues will be legislated. Certain objects (e.g., farm equipment and boat trailers) may not be kept in the front yard or visible from a neighbor's yard. The public hearing for this is set for April 11th. Although it was agreed that the proposed law appears to be badly thought out, it was decided that no formal action would be taken by the FHIA.

6. Street Closure Rule

Jon will send a letter to the Town expressing support for a proposed rule allowing for the closure of a public road for events such as neighborhood block parties.

7. Deer Control

David Gross talked to a Cornell wildlife biologist regarding the deer reduction project that is in its fifth and last year. David said he hopes Cornell will invest in another cycle. The deer population is down since the program began. Jay Boulanger will be consulted about future plans.

8. Micro-hydro power and the creek

Jon has reported at previous meetings on his discussions with Cornell engineering professor Jeff Tester and his students about the feasibility of generating electrical power from the waterfall behind The Byway. Tester called a meeting at Snee Hall with several members of Cornell's Sustainability Community (including Cornell Utilities) to seek buy-in from other sectors of the university. The response was very positive. Ed Wilson (Cornell Manager of Utilities and Sustainability) is coming to talk to The Byway neighbors about the project as a result of this. The Byway residents are meeting to discuss parking and the need to resurface sections of the road.

Max, who represents FHIA at the University Neighborhoods Council, reported on a presentation to the UNC about the Vet School's new building and the veterinary digester.

The upstream bridge is scheduled for renovation in 2012, and plans are being finalized this spring. Bruce is representing Forest Home on this project. There is some concern about the removal of trees on Barb Chambers' property and an incursion onto the Fletchers' lawn. Michael will draft a note expressing concern. Bruce will draft something for County Highway Superintendent John Lampman. Jon will send these out.

9. Lighting

Jon reported that Cornell has agreed to remove a redundant street light near the Beebe Lake entrance feature.

Adjournment