

WALKABLE DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

March 24, 2026

via ZOOM

Attendees:

Tistrya Houghtling
Michael Deegan
Steve Powers
Corey Stall
Josh Young
Tony Murad
Jared Anderson
Don Adams

Discussion:

- Following feedback from the NYSDOT TAP Team and providing guidance on how best to apply, with the potential for additional State funding to supplement the Town match, the Town Board re-approved applying for the new TAP grant, which was successfully submitted on March 12. This is further discussed below.
- Option 3 of the 8 alternative options was also approved by the Town Board if 2025 TAP funding is not awarded. Option 3 will have the same limits as the original 2023 TAP award, use concrete as the sidewalk surface, and minimize the amount of curb relocation needed.
- CM reviewed the Town/DOT meeting of 3/16/26 and noted the following:
 - The original application and rationale for the pre-application for the 2025 round was discussed. The pre-application was intended to apply for funds to cover the difference in cost from stone dust to asphalt.
 - The TAP review team indicated we could not apply in this manner but provided guidance on how to apply for a “new project” which would need to utilize concrete for the sidewalks and could also expand the limits to Shatford Park. DOT also noted in their pre-application review that they may consider contributing funds to the project.
 - The Town was clear in the application and at the 3/16 meeting that the Town’s \$500,000 bond is the maximum amount the Town can contribute to the project. Therefore, acceptance of the grant, if awarded, is contingent upon confirmation that the DOT will supplement project funding, so the Town match remains no larger than \$500,000.
 - CM/the Town reiterated the project’s goal of reducing the travel lane width to 11’ to help calm vehicle speeds, as stated in the original 2023 TAP Application. The speed limit is 40 MPH and the 85th percentile speed is 47 MPH, just west of the project, as of 2024.
 - It was discussed that the Town would benefit from expanding the scope of the current project to include the Shatford Park extension, so DOT may conduct an environmental review the full potential corridor. Without a change in scope, DOT is only permitted to review the original 2023 TAP scope. If CM determines the scope change should be pursued under the current project to allow for environmental review of the entire potential project area, the Town will work with CM to provide a scope change letter making this formal request.
 - CM will conduct some preliminary screenings to ensure that the scope change and expanded environmental review should be pursued at the current time.
 - DOT stressed the importance of moving the project forward toward design approval and not letting it go dormant, so current funds remain available.
 - The Town/CM will provide DOT with design criteria, preliminary plans and typical sections depicting the proposed change to lane/shoulder width, proposed crosswalk locations and available sight distances, and a description of the Town’s goals – particularly around traffic calming.
- If the project does not receive 2025 TAP funding, the addition of curb and drainage improvements will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

- Cutting of the slope on the property between Midtown Mall and Blueberry Hill was discussed. This resulted in a brief discussion the right-of-way acquisition process and the potential for securing a grading release in lieu of an easement. CM will review the situation with DOT for guidance.
- Josh Young has a good relationship with the property impacted by future grading and the property owner is fully on board to participate in whatever way is needed. Josh can speak to them about potential easement donation or a grading release.
- The tree cutting window of November 1 to April 1 was discussed in the context of the trees on the slope of the affected property. Contracting a local tree company to do any necessary removals was mentioned. This will be reviewed closer to the end of 2026.
- Adding members to the committee was discussed. After some back and forth, it was determined that the committee will accept the current interested parties for membership and ask that the Town Board cap the number of members at that total.
- CM will set up a separate discussion with Tistrya to go through the reimbursement process.

Meeting ended approximately 7:15 PM

Supplemental Information regarding the 85th Percentile Speed:

Available NYSDOT speed data can be found on NYSDOT's "Traffic Data Viewer" at the following link:

<https://nysdottrafficdata.drakewell.com/publicmultinodemap.asp>

Zooming into New Lebanon, we see a green triangle west of our project, near where Route 22 joins US 20. Clicking on that triangle brings up a box of data that has been recorded at that location, where it lists the 85th percentile speed at the bottom. In 2024, it was noted as 47mph. In 2022, it was 46mph. This is the closest available DOT source.

NYSDOT uses the 85th percentile speed (the speed at or below which 85% of drivers are going) as a measure of how to set design parameters such as lane width, shoulder width, curve radii, etc. so that roads are designed safety for the speed people are generally comfortable going regardless of the speed limit. Speed limits are often set below the 85th percentile speed.