

## Ward 5 Citizens Forum Minutes

Approximately a dozen people attended the citizens' forum at Dino's Pizza on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

### 1) City Council Update:

- a) One main issue before the City Council now is the study of the sewer contract and costs and rates once the analysis is completed this year. There is also discussion as to whether the rate setting should be returned to the Board of Public Works. It is expected a new rate will be set this year.
- b) Another change being considered is a moving from an elected Treasurer to an appointed Treasurer. This matter has been in committee since 2021 or earlier.
- c) Proposed sports complex: those in attendance found the proposal positive, but were concerned that taxpayers would be expected to pay toward the development as they feel it would not be affordable to raise taxes more.

d) Mass DOT will hold a meeting on improvements to Maple and High Streets on Feb 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 at the Holyoke Public Library. It is posted on the city website [www.holyoke.org](http://www.holyoke.org).

### 2) Pending projects in Ward 5:

a. Traffic light at the top of Apremont and Rt. 202 is delayed once again. A new mast arm is now being fabricated to fit on the footing that has been completed. It is expected this will be installed before the end of June 2024.

b. Streets listed for re-paving include Dupuis, Homestead (north end), & Lynn Anne. There are others that may be added as the list is expected to be finalized soon and will be updated on the website.

c. Areas needing traffic calming in Ward 5 as determined by the city engineer include Whiting Farms Road and Cherry Street. Since our engineer has left the position, this will be followed up with the new engineer once hired. A traffic light evaluation for Tokeneke and Whiting Farms Road has been requested.

### 3) Updates, questions, concerns & comments:

- a) Tractor trailer truck traffic on Homestead at night-ongoing problem JB Hunt named as seen frequently at night
- b) Traffic violations need to be enforced -tickets need to be issued.
- c) Need to keep sidewalks cleared following snowstorms. This has been an issue on Westfield Rd., Lower Westfield Rd and some areas on Homestead Ave.
- d) Suggest that census cards from the city include postage for easy response, but if too expensive that the drop boxes be available.
- e) Sidewalk repairs were requested. Those in attendance indicated a petition in the spring for repairs would be a good project to submit to City Council

### 4) CPA ballot question:

This is currently tabled in City Council. The Mayor vetoed it last year indicating he wanted a higher turnout election to have the question on the ballot. The question asks voters if they want to lower the CPA surtax rate from 1.5% to 1%. Voters should be able to have a say on taxes and I strongly believe voters should have a say on their taxes.

Your Ward 5 City Councilor

Linda Vacon

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