

Linda Vacon



"For You,
For Holyoke"

FORUM for WARD 5 RESIDENTS

Meeting with Linda at Dino's Pizza located in the plaza at Homestead and Westfield Road (Rt. 202)

Monday, October 30th, 5:30PM

Forum Minutes

Approximately a dozen people attended the citizen's forum after a break in regular meetings.

1) **City Council Update:** The main issue before the City Council now is the debate on the sewer rate and what should be calculated in setting the rate. There are various perspectives on the issue with a block of councilors calling for a lower rate. Right now, the rate is CITIZEN'S \$7.50. It is expected a new rate will be set in the new year.

2) **Update on Middle School:** Good news! The rate of reimbursement to the city will be increased from \$432/sf to \$568/sf. This results in millions of dollars of savings to our taxpayers in the area of \$11M. This is very good news. On another project, which includes the windows and doors at McMahon School \$2M were saved when Councilor Jourdain questioned whether certain funds could be utilized for the required match and it was determined they could be used. This is the kind of advocacy for taxpayers we need on the city council.

3) Pending projects in Ward 5:

a. **Traffic light** at the top of Apremont and Rt. 202 is in progress

b. **Raised crosswalks** at Kane and Knollwood and Homestead and Clayton are under review at DPW.

Feed back at the meeting included a desire to keep the crosswalk on Homestead as it is currently in place.

c. Two remaining **sunken sewer covers** at Homestead and Mayer and Homestead and Meadowbrook remain.

d. **Brush and tree trimming** on Meadowbrook, Apremont and Evergreen

e. Safety project "**Please Slow Down**" 6 signs are remaining-2 were distributed at the meeting. Let me know if you would like one.

f. 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.

4) Time for updates, questions, concerns & comments: Those issues include:

a) **Tractor trailer truck traffic** on Homestead at night

b) **Traffic violations** need to be enforced -the traffic division needs to be reinstated

c) Be proactive on reminding property owners to **keep sidewalks cleared** following snowstorms. This has been an issue around McMahon School and the field on Homestead Ave and other areas on Rt. 202 and Homestead that are owned or maintained by different owners or city departments.