

Brighton-Pittsford Post – “From the Supervisor” column – submitted for February 16, 2017 issue
Submitted by Pittsford Town Supervisor Bill Smith

A Plan for Better and Safer Walkability in Pittsford

The Town and Village shortly will release for public review our draft of an Active Transportation Plan. The plan to be proposed represents the culmination of more than a year of study and research by a citizens committee established for the purpose and Pittsford Town and Village officials and of an extraordinarily high level of public participation and comment.

This undertaking, a joint effort by the Town and Village, is intended to improve access and safety in and through Pittsford to those traveling on foot or by bicycle. It has proceeded in parallel with the project to update the Town’s Comprehensive Plan. The two complement one another. Maintaining and improving the quality of life we enjoy in Pittsford demands that we take into account convenience and safety for pedestrians and cyclists, not just how to move cars through the Town.

Among the provisions of the Plan will be to improve safety for people using pedestrian crosswalks in the Village and elsewhere. The recent incident in which a young girl was struck in the pedestrian crossing on South Main Street at Church Street stands as a disturbing reminder that motorists routinely ignore these crossings. It underscores the need to improve identification of pedestrian crosswalks in order to increase compliance by motorists. In addition to better identification of crossings, we’ll recommend narrowing widths of traffic lanes and making roadway transitions to lower speeds clearer, in order to slow down traffic at pedestrian crossings.

Pittsford is fortunate in having a good network of options for walking and biking, both for commuting and recreation. Even the clustering of residential density in the Town lends itself to creating a more complete pedestrian network that can help to tie every neighborhood into the core of the community. Our Active Transportation Plan will provide for bridging gaps in the existing system, will identify opportunities for improvements and will provide for fixing problematic areas that impede pedestrian and biking activity.

In short, what we’ve been looking at in our Active Transportation planning involves those things that together will determine what the future will be like in our community: its economy, its quality of life, maintaining and increasing real estate values by assuring that we continue to be a place where people want to live.

We easily can take for granted the community amenities and infrastructure that contribute to our fine quality of life in Pittsford. Be aware that these things didn’t come about by accident. They represent the result of initiatives in the past, similar to what we’re doing right now, that have planned and built the community we enjoy today.

Your advice and ideas have been enormously helpful in shaping our Active Transportation Plan for the better. If you have further thoughts you’d like to share as we now complete the draft plan, I hope you would share them with me at bsmith@townofpittsford.org or by phone at 248-6220.