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## Sherman hears Complete Streets update, solar project progress

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Village of Sherman Board of Trustees received an update on the Complete Streets Project from Mayor Colleen Meeder at their meeting this month.

Meeder told board members that more than 30 people took a walking tour around Sherman to view and assess the village's strengths and weaknesses and to determine what issues need to be addressed. "They toured the village, discussing streets, sidewalks, lighting, placemaking, etc.," she said. "It was lengthy . . . a lot came out of the complete street walk."

Present in the group were representatives from GOBike, CHN and Barton & Loguidice, Meeder said. GOBike will be creating a report on what they saw, she added.

Meeder said the walk covered even very simple things, like paint and directional signs on the trail. It also covered the possibility of speed mounds on East Street to slow down traffic, she said.

The study for the Complete Streets Project has been completely paid for by a CCPEG (Chautauqua County Partnership for Economic Growth) award, Meeder said.

However, for the project to move forward successfully, "the village will need to obtain an infrastructure grant from CDBG, Community Development Block Grant, to address the underlying stormwater issues," she said. "The USDA is holding a loan with a 1.25% interest rate for us, but we have to have this grant. The pressure is on right now."

In a later development, Meeder reported that the Village of Sherman received the CDBG co-funded infrastructure grant award letter on Friday, Nov. 10, for \$1,250,000 for Stormwater System Improvements to East Main Street, Franklin and Miller Streets.

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"This is the anchor project of a multiphase Comprehensive Stormwater Improvement Project that will include trail development and complete streets elements," Meeder said. "While the CDBG grant will focus on the 'gray infrastructure' the Village has an outstanding application for 'green infrastructure' with the NYSEFC for GIGP Green Innovation Grant Program funding."

Trustees also received an update on the continued work at Edmunds Park. The restroom building construction is nearly complete and the interior plumbing and finishing work will begin soon, Meeder said. "There is a great deal of work that goes into the interior - a lot of details," she said.

Meeder went on to note that the project has been going on for three years and, originally, volunteers were going to do most of the work. However, as the project expanded, the village decided to use contractors, she said. Despite inflation, the cost of the project remains relatively low, she said. "We are going to have an amazing project for only \$89,000," she added.

In another matter, Meeder told trustees that the solar project is on schedule, though it is far from complete. The panels and fencing are finished; the cement pads have been poured and many of the electrical lines are installed, she said.

Meeder noted, however, that the village has received backlash from a recent article in The Post-Journal. The article reported on statements regarding the Sherman solar project that were made at a public hearing in Clymer. Meeder said the statements were incorrect.

"There is no hint of any financial distress related to this project," Meeder said. "The construction company contracted by Solar Liberty is from Jamestown, and the electricians are from no further than Buffalo. Solar Liberty is celebrating its 20th year in business, as one of the first solar energy companies in New York."

Meeder went on to say that a solar project is very comprehensive and involves

an enormous amount of agencies, whose approval is required for the project to progress. "The rumor mill of misinformation is absolutely absurd and it is extremely disheartening," she said.

In an interesting historical matter, board members passed around a comprehensive sewer study that had been conducted in 1968 by the New York State Department of Health for Chautauqua County. The study was found by Wastewater Treatment Plant Chief Operator Jay Irwin.

Meeder pointed out that the study recommended that the communities of Findley Lake, Sherman, Panama and Clymer create independent sewer systems to serve their respective communities. "Of those, the Village of Sherman is the only municipality that took advantage of the funds available at that time," Meeder said. "In 1975, a decision was made to create our sewer system. Thank you to those who came before us and had some foresight, saving us millions of dollars today making it cost prohibitive for a community of our size."

In Irwin's report, it was also noted that three street lights were installed on Park Street and the street light at the corner of Park and Willard, near the school, had its lumens increased. "Wow! Does that make a difference!" Meeder said.

Meeder also told trustees that members of the CCDPD (Chautauqua County Department of Planning and Development) visited the village on October 10 and were taken on a bus tour to visit various locations. Sites visited included trail heads, parks, housing project sites, infrastructure sites such as the sewer plant, the Yorker Museum, North Haven and the newly activated EV stations, she said.

"They were here all day," Meeder said. "There was a whole range of subjects we showed them. The point was to have them get an eyes-on look at these places in Sherman. It was a really good day."