

**South Berwick Town Council
Public Hearing
Traffic change options
September 19, 2023**

Chair Mallory Cook opened the hearing at 6:00pm. Councilors present included John James, Jessica Cyr, and Melissa Costella. Town Manager Tim Pellerin and Assistant Town Manager Jennifer Janelle were also in attendance. Jeffrey Minihan participated by Zoom.

The purpose of the hearing was to receive public comment on the recommended traffic changes, as submitted in the Sebago Technics Traffic Study, that include traffic lights at Main & Portland St and Main & Route 236, roundabouts at Main & Portland St and Main & Route 236 or do nothing.

The public audience consisted of 18 in person and 7 by zoom.

Chair Cook gave a brief overview of the process to date. She covered the history of 17 prior traffic studies in town, Sebago Technics' recommendations for changes, and the potential long-term improvements if signal lights are installed. The MDOT is in full support of the project and has moved it up on their calendar for both funding and construction. The Town's estimated cost will be 20% of the total project, estimated at \$500,000. Our costs would be taken from the TIF account, not creating a tax increase.

-Elita Galvin, Beaver Dam Rd, thanked the Council for finally tackling the issue. She did express her concerns about having two signal lights if they are not properly programmed. She also commented that 'cut-thru' neighborhoods could see an increase in traffic because of people wanting to avoid the lights.

-David Bradley, Emerys Bridge Rd, read a letter expressing his concerns about making traffic changes downtown. (The letter is attached to the minutes in the official book.) He added that constructing rotaries or erecting signal lights will change the downtown forever.

-Brett Cropp, Liberty St, stated that he was in favor of lights. He expressed his concerns about traffic in the 'cut-thru' neighborhoods. Speed bumps and bump-outs could be used to help calm traffic. Mr. Cropp also suggested that the Council consider establishing a Transportation Committee to help monitor the issues.

-Cliff Cleary, Spillane's Hill, stated that we do need to make sure we preserve downtown business parking. "Hope it works."

-James Howell, Quarry Dr, asked that the Council take into consideration the effect any changes will have on various neighborhoods. Roundabouts won't work because of the large trucks that come through town. "No change is unacceptable."

Councilors noted that they were surprised at the extremely low turnout for the hearing. Email comments will be accepted until September 25th. The Council will consider action at the next meeting on the 26th.

The hearing was closed at 6:25pm.

Attest:

Barbara Bennett, CCM