

Blackstrap Road Public Forum - April 5, 2018

Summary of Comments

Traffic:

- There is heavy truck traffic on the road, presenting a danger to bicyclists and pedestrians, and contributing to poor pavement conditions.
- The amount of traffic seems to be on the rise. Tom Errico, TY Lin, said that while the design alternatives will take future traffic projections into account, there is currently not a capacity problem with the road.

Speed:

- Speeding is a major concern of residents. Falmouth PD is well aware of the issue. They will be collecting new data this spring.
- Widening travel lanes can have the effect of inviting higher speeds. On the other hand, traffic can be calmed with narrower lanes, speed-feedback signs, pavement markings, landscaping, etc. There are trade-offs that will have to be considered.
- The Town does not have the authority to adjust the speed limit, but most seemed to agree that 35 mph is a reasonable speed limit, as long as there is compliance.

Pavement conditions:

- "Maintain good roads now; rebuild bad roads later."
- The Town will be performing work in FY 2020, so work may begin as early as fall of 2019. The Public Works Department will be making spot repairs in advance of the bulk of the work being done in FY 2020.
- Potholes are a problem. Public Works has checked for potholes. The majority that remain are on State sections of the road. But, we've put in the request to the State to have those areas addressed. Public Works has money set aside for next year to buy a new piece of equipment capable of making hot asphalt repairs (as opposed to cold-patching). The result will be repairs that hold up much longer.

Bicycle and pedestrian safety:

- Blackstrap Road is used heavily by cyclists. Motorists often do not give the three-foot minimum when passing. While some believe cyclists should ride single-file, others believe that it is safer and easier to pass multiple cyclists when they ride in a peloton (grouped) formation.
- Curves limit sight distances, making it dangerous when it is necessary to cross into the opposing lane to pass one or more cyclists.
- While full sidewalks may not be necessary, residents did express a desire for a safe place to walk.
- The design alternatives will consider different lane width/bicycle lane/shoulder/sidewalk configurations.
- There may be constraints to widening the roadway to account for bike lanes or sidewalks, such right-of-way limits, or trees, stone walls, or steep slopes within the right-of-way.
- MaineDOT is committed to a Complete Streets policy, considering the safety of all road users.

Rural character:

- Maintaining the rural character of the road was important to residents.
- There is concern for the amount of litter along the roadside.

Utilities:

- If there are future opportunities for public utilities in the area, it will be coordinated with this project.

This list is intended as a summary only, and may not reflect all comments received. For questions or comments, please contact Andrew Clark at (207) 699-5329 or aclark@falmouthme.org.