ROUTE 88 INTERSECTION PROJECT

Public Comments received via e-mail through February 3, 2020

1. December 2: Sue and Duncan Geikie

As residents of Johnson Road who will be unable to attend the public forum, we have put our thoughts to email for consideration. Visibility at the Johnson-Town Landing Rds. intersection is often complicated by large vehicles parked in front of the market. Perhaps vehicle size could be restricted in front of the market, with larger vehicles being directed to the parking lot across the street or to the spaces to the north side of the market.

2. December 5: Robert Ryan

I am the owner of the property located at 284 Foreside Road and recently received the written information that a Public Forum (the “Forum”) would be held next week on December 11, 2019 “to discuss current conditions and the future of these two intersections.” I write to discuss the structure and content of the Forum.

As my family has owned the property for over fifty years, I am keenly interested in any development or repurposing of Rt. 88 generally, and specifically the Johnson Road/Rt. 88 intersection.

Unfortunately, although I own the property, my sister, who is deaf and teaches at the Maine School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, resides in the home full time. I reside in and am a citizen of the state of Texas, having moved from Maine after college.

While I understand the Forum will be recorded and rebroadcast on Community TV at a later date, I will not have access to that channel in Houston.

As my sister is deaf and suffers from additional issues, even if she could/would attend and there was a sign language interpreter (will such an interpreter be provided) she would be an inadequate representative of my interest as a homeowner and taxpayer.

Accordingly, would you kindly respond to the following as soon as practicable but at a minimum before close of business Monday December 9.

1. Would you provide a more comprehensive agenda so I may determine if I should attempt to engage alternative representation at the Forum;

2. If any written materials are available in advance of the Forum, I would very much like to have them provided or be given access;

3. Will there be any real time audio or video that can be accessed by the web? If yes, will a method to ask questions via the web be provided?

4. Who are the consultants who will present at the Forum and what are their areas of expertise?

5. Will there be an opportunity to submit comments and questions post-Forum?

6. Will a report issue post-Forum?
7. Finally, as it was indicated on the mailing that the December 11 Forum was to be the “first of several opportunities for public input” may I have the other proposed dates so I may make an effort to travel to Falmouth to provide my opinions on any decisions contemplated to be made by the town on Route 88 and its intersections with Depot Road and Johnson/Town Landing Road.

I appreciate your consistent efforts on behalf of the Town of Falmouth and trust that with all you have on your desk that my request(s) will not overburden your undoubtedly full schedule. I can receive a response at this e-mail or a call at (713) 412-6039 if it is more expeditious for you. With all best wishes and kind regards, I remain,

Very truly yours,
Robert J. Ryan, Owner
284 Foreside Road

3. December 7: Matt Blake

Hello Theo,

I cannot attend the Dec. 11 meeting about the Rte 88 intersections. But, here are my thoughts on the Town Landing Road intersection, developed over the last few years. Some are easy; some are harder. Hopefully, my thoughts can be factored into the process. I look forward to seeing some progress in this area.

Town Landing Road Intersection Improvements

Many dangerous and awkward situations occur at this intersection, for pedestrians, bikes, vehicles. I have been looking for ways to get some attention paid to improvements here for years. I am happy to see some movement on this subject.

Several ideas to help establish a vision for the intersection that serves pedestrians and bicyclists, as much as it does car drivers passing through town...

1. Provide drivers coming up Town Landing Road with good sight lines so they can at least see the oncoming traffic along Rte 88. One improvement would be to remove the unused utility pole remnant on the NE corner - this unused pole greatly blocks sight lines for drivers heading uphill on Town Landing Road and stopped at the intersection (see attached picture). This should be really easy. I previously sent a note to Hope Cahill last year (2018) at this time about this one.
   1. Even better would be to underground all the utilities around this intersection so there are no utility poles to block vision, and the neighborhood is enhanced.

2. Give the stopped cars, bikes, and pedestrians at the intersection time to maneuver and cross. The thru-traffic on 88 often is traveling fast, often faster than 35 mph posted limit, and combined with the curve in the road to the east of the intersection, there is often not quite enough time to adequately judge when to cross the street, or move out into the intersection. One fix would be to reduce state-controlled speed limits (preferably to ~25mph) on Foreside Rd. in the vicinity of this congested intersection.
1. I notice there are reduced speed, congested areas at the other end of Rte 88 in Yarmouth.
2. I note that Johnson Rd is posted for 25 mph.
3. Engage our State Reps who live in the area to help with MDOT get reduced speeds around the intersection.

3. Provide physical “reminder” to car drivers that there are people other than just the car driver using this area. One solution would be to add “speed tables: on Foreside Rd, on both sides of Johnson (maybe with a third one just southwest of Holy Martyrs and possibly a 4th one at the Foreside Community Church)
   1. Similar to the speed tables used on South Freeport Rd. in S. Freeport.
   2. Put crosswalks on top of speed tables.
   3. Have cross walk markings with state law signs on all 4 corner crossings.

4. Another reminder to the cocooned car driver zooming along 88: add overhead flashing yellow light (or even a stop sign) on Foreside Rd at the intersection.

5. Provide assistance to help drivers coming up Town Landing Road with obtaining an adequate field of view of the oncoming traffic. One idea is to add some kind of a reference line marking on Town Landing Road to mark where car can stop to be able to see around cars parked at TLM and around the utility pole on the NE corner. Maybe this could be just a dashed fog line for Rte 88 that continues across TLM.
   1. The stop line associated with the current stop sign on Town Landing Road is completely useless. If a car stops at that line, it will never be able to see up or down Rte 88 to find a clear opportunity to move into the intersection.


7. Help car drivers recognize that they are speeding in a congested area. Install speed radar signs along Rte 88 to alert and warn speeding drivers.
   1. There was a radar speed sign set up on Foreside Rd (east-bound) for a few days in September. I watched all the speeders slow down when the sign registered with the driver. It was extremely effective. Leave an automated radar sign up year-round. Put one on both directions of Rte 88.

8. Prevent parked cars/trucks at TLM from sticking out into street and blocking vision of cars coming up Town Landing Rd.
   1. Reserve ~2 to ~4 spaces in Town parking lot across street for 15-minute parking, and make the parking spaces along Foreside Rd in front of the store parallel to Foreside only (or eliminate parking along Foreside Rd.).
   2. Ask TLM store management (Mary Beth) to help situation
      1. Prevent trucks from parking right at the corner!!!
      2. I believe Mary Beth is eager to help in any way she can.

9. Align Johnson & Town Landing roads (maybe hard); but, looking back at the intersection along Johnson Rd from the back of the Town parking lot, it appears possible to slightly curve the last ~50 yards of Johnson Road so it aligns with Town Landing Road on the opposite side of the intersection (see attached picture). If you sight along Johnson Rd, the desired alignment adjustment becomes apparent. Depending on ROW boundaries, maybe need to acquire a sliver of the property from 274 Foreside, but maybe not.
   1. Making a left turn off Johnson Rd and off Town Landing is always awkward when there are cars facing each other on both roads. Aligning the two roads will make the situation much less confusing for drivers. This will cause a trickle down improvement for bicyclists and pedestrians, because confusion on the part of car drivers has ripple effects on pedestrians and bike riders.
10. Find effective ways to divert thru-traffic off of Rte 88 and onto Rte 1 and Rte 295.
   1. Enforcing the speed limit all along Rte 88 might help.
   2. Need to work with Yarmouth and Cumberland for this.
4. December 10, 2019: Kai Smith and Mary Erin Casale

Rep. Pierce -

We were pleased to hear that the council and the Department of Transportation were considering placing a four-way stop at the intersection of Johnson Road and Town Landing Road. As residents of the neighborhood and frequent users of the intersection, both as pedestrians and in our vehicles, we believe this a much needed safety upgrade. Apologies that we could not make the meeting tomorrow night, but please know that we wholly support the placement of this stop sign.

Thanks again. Kai Smith and Mary Erin Casale, Casco Terrace

5. December 10, 2019: Chuck Lamb

Amy-we live on Wescott St down towards the bottom of Town Landing Rd. Glad to know there is a meeting to discuss the intersection of Town Landing Rd, Johnson Road and Rte 88. We face the traffic issue every time we travel up the hill and the worst part is trying to see past the big ass SUV’s that are parked in front of the Market. I’m no traffic engineer but it seems to me the bulk of the problem could be solved if there was no parking in front of the Market and that area could be patio space for customers/others. Customers could use the lot across the street. I don’t think a light is needed. Thanks for reading.

6. December 11: Kristen Farnham

Dear Town Councilors,

I am a 22-year resident of Falmouth and for that time period have lived off of Rt. 88. Thank you for looking at traffic issues on Rt. 88. While I think it is important to look at the intersection near Town Landing Market, I would urge you to consider the feasibility of adding a sidewalk along at least one side of Rt. 88 from Rt. 1 to the Cumberland line, or at a minimum from Depot Rd. to the Cumberland line.

The shoulder/bicycle lane along Rt. 88 is heavily used by pedestrians. Starting early in the morning and extending until dusk, it is filled with walkers and runners. Users are not only residents of the neighborhood, but also come from other areas of Falmouth and surrounding towns, as this stretch of Rt. 88 offers one of the few somewhat wider shoulders in the area. My husband Bob and I walk with our dog in the shoulder along Rt. 88 every day all year long. In my 22 years, I have observed increasingly erratic behavior by drivers, who often swerve onto the shoulder. I am not sure if this distracted driving can be attributed to texting while driving or not, but it is very disconcerting as a walker who does not have the option to walk on a sidewalk. It also seems as if speeds have increased, especially among commercial trucks and vehicles. In addition, the bicycle lane becomes narrower in winter due to snow, leaving less room on the road to accommodate both pedestrians and cars.

I am very concerned that a fatality along this stretch of road will occur. A few years ago, Bob and I were on a walk near Underwood Road and witnessed the near aftermath of a pickup truck hitting a pedestrian. A sidewalk would be a step towards protecting the safety of all users.

Thank you for your careful consideration. Kristen Farnham, 11 Madokawando Landing
Response from Nathan Poore:

You are joined by other residents who prefer to see a sidewalk on Route 88. There will be comments about this and survey results about some ideas that will be on the web page. We also have a Bike/Ped Plan that identifies a need for a sidewalk. I think it will be not “if” but “when”. Funding is certainly an issue but as we move through the process this winter and spring, we may have more definitive strategies. The best way for you to advance the idea is to stay informed and take advantage of opportunities to offer input and feedback. There will be at least one more forum on these intersections which take into account sidewalks on Rt 88.

Reply from Kristen Farnham:

That is great to hear. I like the sound of “when.” I will continue to stay informed and advocate for this safety improvement.

7. December 12: Matt Blake

Regarding the Depot Road intersection, I now think there should be a cross walk across Rte 88 at Old Mill Road or at Skillins. It is often unsafe for pedestrians to cross Rte 88. It is hard for a pedestrian to see the speeding traffic coming at them from the east due to the slight hill just east of Skillins.

8. December 12: Nathan Ferrell

I am sorry that I could not attend last night’s public forum about Rt 88 and its intersections. However, I would like to submit my suggestions now via email, if that is possible. I am the priest at The Episcopal Church of Saint Mary and live in the parish rectory at 41 Foreside Road. I am a runner and biker, so I pass through the intersection of Rt 88 and Depot Road between 3 and 8 times a week as a pedestrian. I do not think any kind of stoplight or blinking light is needed there. The only improvement I would suggest involved the connection to the sidewalk along Depot Road. Painted crosswalks across Rt 88 and Depot Rd – which connect to the Depot Rd sidewalk - with signs requiring drivers to stop for pedestrian crossings – this, I suggest, is the best way to improve pedestrian safety here without creating other unnecessary and burdensome changes. Just my two cents. Hopefully it helps.

9. December 12: Matt Pines

Nathan, I wanted to take a quick moment to thank you and the staff, and the council, for organizing the forum last night. It was well prepared and presented, and your facilitation skills are on point. Overall I was really impressed, it is apparent that a great deal of intent and planning went into the meeting. Thank you. Asking people to commit their time, you have to be prepared, and it shows. That said, I do want to raise a couple of points.

I don’t know how much we can talk about intersections as if they don’t exist within the wider context of the Rt 88 corridor. Obviously if we are discussing options like an additional 3 pedestrian crossings at the Johnson Rd intersection, there is an implicit acknowledgement that there is significant pedestrian traffic on Rt 88, pedestrian traffic that currently walks on the shoulder of a busy road. We need a sidewalk. I
know they are expensive, but we’re finding ways to put sidewalks in other parts of town with far less pedestrian traffic. It’s time.

The other point is a wider one, that I’m not sure how you can address, but I’m sure there are models out there that can be adapted. The issue is getting a wider, more representative sample of users/residents/stakeholders. Right now the input the town is gathering in all the processes is heavily biased towards those who read newsletters or papers, and have the luxury of being able to get over to FES at 7pm on a weeknight (so basically older, perhaps retired people with older or no kids). Kids, and most parents with kids, are shut out of this process. I had to leave another engagement early, and skip my son’s cub scout meeting to attend.

We saw it last night, with the 0% response for the 1-20 year old demographic question. The sense that child users of the Rt 88 corridor don’t enter the equation was amplified with a demographic question that asked about household boat moorings, but no similar question asking about how many kids in a household. I know there was no intention on behalf of the town to appear as though boats matter more than children, but the omission didn’t look great. Likewise the data on car traffic, but no corresponding data on bike and pedestrian traffic. There are data sources out there, it would have been nice to see the Strava heat map for Rt 88 for instance.

I’m happy to discuss, and lend support in any way I can, if there is any appetite at the town hall and on the council to start finding ways to reach out to a wider cross section.

Thanks again for all you do for our great town.

Matt Pines, 96 Underwood

Response from Nathan Poore:

Thank you for talking the time to attend the forum and sending me your feedback.

You raise several good points. I hadn’t thought of the demographic question about children – certainly they are more important than moorings.

Your suggestion about sidewalks beyond the intersection areas is also being expressed by others. We will be sure to point this out with results we post to the web site. I think you know that sidewalks on 88 are in the bike ped plan so its more of a “when” topic than “if”. But “when” can be far too long for some people. I appreciate your advocacy for sidewalks and will make sure it is part of the postings on the new web page that should be available in the next couple of weeks.

Your suggestion for methods to get feedback from a wider representation of the town is a subject that we are spending a lot of time on. We will be hiring a consultant to help us with this. I can also add that a small staff team, including myself, are reviewing new technologies. We reviewed something interesting next week that is a survey tool that could be a very valuable tool. There will be more on this subject in the next year.

Again, you have offered great feedback and I appreciate your time.

10. December 13: Stephen Russell
Born and raised on 88, current age 60 years, I am intimately familiar with the Foreside. Unfortunately, I could not attend Wednesday's meeting. I would like my voice heard.

I suggest the speed limit be reduced to 25 mph from the height of hill on the north side of Mill Creek to the Cumberland line. This would, of course, protect bicyclists who also travel much too fast, especially when in large groups.

As well, the yellow/red opposing flash that hung over the Johnson Rd. intersection should be brought back.

Response from Nathan Poore:
Good morning Mr. Russell,

Thank you for taking the time to send us your suggestions. We are collecting emails re this matter and we are happy to accept yours. We will be posting public comment from various means on a new web page for this project. That web page should be available soon. We will send you an email once it has been constructed.

Thank you again for your comments.

Reply from Stephen Russell:
Thank you for replying back. An afterthought was 25 mph from height of hill after crossing mill creek to Johnson rd.

11. December 16: John Kirkham
Re the Route 88 meeting / slides / planning process- is that just for the two intersections, or for Rte 88 along that whole stretch?

We were not able to make the meeting in person. We are concerned about safety on the whole segment from Rte 1 to the Cumberland line, not just the intersections, and were wondering about that.

Response from Maggie Fleming:
The first exercise on problem areas and the second exercise (ideas for improvements included in the PowerPoint) focused on the two intersections.

12. December 17: David Gooch
To whom it may concern.

I must congratulate Nathan on the job he did (with the staff support) conducting the meeting on the intersections on Route 88. Courteous, professional, brisk and focused on the matters at hand. Well done.

I am not a big supporter of those who feel there must never be change in my neighborhood. Safety especially of children dictates change. Increased traffic and changing demographics has brought the need for change.
I am going to address only the intersection at Johnson Road and Route 88 as I think the fix needed at Depot Rd is obvious. In a neighborhood such as this we do not need, traffic lights, blinking lights, or strobing pedestrian crosswalk lights. I have included a diagram that illustrates what I think will work. Create a safe crosswalk from Johnson Road to a slightly raised pedestrian plaza on the corner of Town landing road. This crosswalk would originates from a raised sidewalk bubble on Route 88 the Johnson Rd. side. The Johnson Road bubble would allow cars to nose out a bit to see a little farther up Rt.88 to make a safe turn. There should be a depression parallel to Route 88 for bikes. On the Town Landing Road side taking advantage of the roads offset create a raised pedestrian plaza eliminating two parking spaces. This plaza would have to be gently tapered to allow trucks to make the turn on to Town Landing road. Perhaps the addition of some rumble strips, bumps or flexible barriers could protect pedestrians. This would greatly improve the sight lines to the west as you turn left from Town landing road to Route 88. Then all that is needed is crosswalks with the impress brick to serve as traffic calming and enforcement of existing speed limits.

Thank you
Hello Theo,

I write to you today both as a member of the Skillin’s Greenhouse family and as a resident of 22 Depot Rd. I have attended the latest meeting on the possibility of changing traffic flows at the corner of Depot Rd and Route 88. While you and other consultants for the town are looking at these possibilities could you please look at the viability of a crosswalk between 88 Foreside Road and 89 Foreside Road. We did have a Cross walk up until the last repayment of that section of 88, which is when the crosswalk was not re-implemented.

Here are a few reasons I have observed leading me to the notion that this would continue to be a beneficial location for a crosswalk:

- Metro bus stop
- Mussel Cove neighborhood school bus stop
- Slow Southbound traffic as it enters the intersection.
- Heavily used on the Maine Marathon Day, Memorial Day, Christmas 5k, and other route 88 events.
- Heavily used by Skillin’s employees and customers
- Heavily crossed by children and dog walkers of the local area
- Top of the hill offering great visibility of oncoming traffic
- Our nursery parking lot is a heavily used cut through as there is no sidewalk to the corner.

We as a family, residents, and business owners do appreciate your attention to this intersection as I can personally say speed and close calls with community members, employees/customers, and myself seem to be increasing. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions, and again thank you for looking into the pedestrian and motor vehicle safety on Foreside Road.

Hi Nathan,

I am a neighbor of Kristen Farnham and she has shared correspondences regarding the proposed sidewalk along route 88. I would just like to heartedly second everything she says. I have lived here for 26 years and have spent many hours walking my dogs along 88 – sometimes with a bit of trepidation. I always look forward to the small stretch by the little park that does have a sidewalk because I know I will safer there. There is a tremendous amount of pedestrian and bicycle travel along this road as I’m sure you know and what seems like a continuing increase in the number of vehicles using this road.

How will we know when the web page is up and running? I would definitely like to provide to input to the project.

Thank you! Jenifer Stewart, 10 Madokawando Landing

Response from Nathan Poore:

Good morning Jennifer,
Your email was found in my junk box this morning. I am not sure why it was automatically delivered to that location.

I am sorry for the delayed response. Thank you for sharing this information and you will find that there is a web page already up re this matter. You can find it here https://www.falmouthme.org/long-range-planningeconomic-development/pages/route-88-intersection-study

Thank you, Nathan

15. January 5, 2020: Lillian Harris

Dear council,
I did not attend the Dec. 11th route 88 intersection study meeting, but I did review the Forum Presentation with Keypad results. I want to thank everyone involved in this meeting and in creating such an easy-to-read summary of the results of the meeting. Here is my input:

1. The issue that impacts me the most personally is the lack of a sidewalk on (most of) route 88. In decent weather I love walking from my home on Thornhurst Road to Town Landing Market. It’s a great way to spend time outdoors, get exercise, catch up on podcasts (this is actually a great benefit!), and connect with others out for a walk. I only do this walk when I’m feeling brave because the traffic travels quickly and I worry about not being seen by drivers who are distracted and in a hurry. I would LOVE for there to be a sidewalk along the entire length of Route 88 in Falmouth. It would greatly improve my quality of life (and safety!) and would do so for many other residents who also use the road for this purpose. I have seen enough people traveling on the shoulder pushing strollers, walking dogs, catching up with friends, and just the other day a woman who jumped into a snow bank to avoid being hit by a car while walking at dusk (she was wearing lots of protective gear and a flashing light), to be convinced that this would be a great benefit to many on Falmouth foreside. I’m sure the project would be costly and take some time, but I think it would be well worth it for many years to come.

2. I think a 4-way stop at the Town Landing/Johnson Rd intersection is a great idea to slow traffic and make it safer for pedestrians.

Thanks, as always, for your good work.
all my best, Lillian

16. January 7, 2020: Jan ter Weele (office visit)

Remove or relocate utility poles at corner to improve sight distance from Town Landing Road to north on Route 88.

17. January 7, 2020: Tom Stegemann (office visit)

Relocate and gently curve Route 88 ten or fifteen feet to the west in front of Town Landing Market to improve safety in that location and improve sight distance from Town Landing Road to south on Route 88.
18. January 8, 2020: Doug Popper

That was a wonderful presentation on many levels! Thank you.

I’d like to comment on the intersection of Town Landing Rd and Rte 88. When a traffic light turns yellow, and even before that, people tend to speed up to make the light. Also, traffic lights are very expensive!

On the other hand, 4 way stop signs are cheap and they guarantee that people will slow down at the intersection.


Dear Councilors,

I write to you today to advocate for a sidewalk on Route 88 from the Cumberland line to Route 1.

My family and I are 30 year residents of Falmouth, the last 25 years of which we have lived off Route 88 on Madokawando Landing. Over the years, we have seen many changes to all parts of our town, including the Foreside, and we are grateful for the leadership role you and your predecessors have taken in making Falmouth a desirable and safe place to live.

My family members are regular pedestrian users of Route 88. It of course remains our automobile access to the world, but it is also the road where we walk to reach the Village Center or Town Landing Market for shopping, ride our bikes for exercise and pleasure, and walk to visit friends, the bay at Town Landing, and the woods in the Preserve. We lived on Madokawando when the road was improved and the pedestrian shoulders added to Route 88 in the 1990s - significant improvements for that time, but not enough today.

We have observed rising automobile and pedestrian traffic over the last two decades. The automobile traffic moves at higher speeds and more erratically, as distracted drivers try to multi-task. Because there are also more pedestrians, there are more opportunities for pedestrian-automobile interactions. Some drivers are careful and gracious, but most are focused on their passage along Route 88 to other destinations.

As one small example, allow me to point out the intersection of Madokawando Landing (north entrance) and Route 88. A driver coming south on 88 may have already reached a significant speed in the section between Town Landing and Madokawando. If that driver encounters another automobile stopped in the roadway awaiting its opportunity to make a left turn into Madokawando, the driver will often swerve on to the pedestrian shoulder in order to pass the stopped vehicle on the right. Unfortunately, given the curve of the road, it is not possible for the driver to see any pedestrians or bicyclists on the shoulder ahead of him/her, nor is it possible for any pedestrians or bicyclists to see the on-coming driver. In my opinion, it is only time until we have a serious automobile-pedestrian accident at this location - and this is only one of several such intersections.

My family and I are grateful that the Town Council is revisiting pedestrian access on the Foreside, and we would urge the installation of a sidewalk on at least one side of Route 88 from the Cumberland line to Route 1.
Please be in touch if you need more information on this topic.

Sincerely, Vicki Swerdlow

20. **January 27, 2020: Steve Smith** (stopped by in Town Hall)

Suggest either 4-way stop or traffic light. Turning left from Johnson Road onto Rt 88 is hard.

21. **February 3, 2020: David Gooch**

Move carefully Town Landing Market is fragile and vital to our neighborhood

22. **February 3, 2020: Robert Ryan**

As with the portion of the Council Meeting devoted to the Rt. 88/Rt. 1 Interchange, I cannot attend Monday's meeting. I recognize that no council decision is scheduled to be made on Johnson Road/Rt. 88, and that there will be additional meetings. Nevertheless, I wanted to amplify my prior comments after reviewing various of the other e-mails (by the way the commentary was generally excellent). I do not believe that a four-way stop is necessary, the comments of Mr. Russell, by way of reinstalling a Yellow/Red Flashing Signal Light seems appropriate along with many of the less expensive enhancements (sight line improvements, sidewalks, etc.). I hope to actively participate further in this discussion.