

Wiscasset Transportation Committee
February 9, 2009

Present: Don Jones, Cindy Fischer, Lois Kwantz

Absent: Seaver Leslie, Sean Rafter

Guests: Jon Edgerton, Travis Pryor, Wright-Pierce Engineering; Art Faucher, Town Manager; Bob Faunce, Lincoln County Planner; Anne Leslie, Wiscasset Gateway 1 Representative

The meeting opened at 7:03 PM and began with the report from Travis Pryor and Jon Edgerton about the progress on Railroad Ave. in our efforts to make that area over into a future transportation center and parking area. Jon and Travis reported that they had talked with Maine Eastern Railroad Company and MDOT about what we would like to do on Railroad Ave. They seem to be okay with our direction; we do need to have an offset from the railroad tracks of AT LEAST 10'6" but preferably 15'. They will also require some kind of fencing/guardrail between the track and parking/pedestrian traffic. In reviewing the proposed concepts, we need to decide how much parking we would like to see and offer options for access and egress. Maine Eastern was not specific about how tall the guardrail would need to be but most likely we can have something that will "fit" with the flavor of the historic area. We also need to observe FEMA guidelines regarding flood elevation for any formal railroad station that we would want to build in the future, especially if we hope to use federal funds for some of the project. Building materials need to be able to withstand flood damage although the requirements are less stringent for non-residential construction. One advantage with a "village waterfront" zone is that the set back requirement is smaller than other shore land zoning. We discussed how large a travel lane is needed - 16' wide - and would like to have further information about whether the space behind the Wiscasset General Store and Fairfield Signs is large enough to accommodate delivery trucks AND the 16' wide travel lane. We are also looking at doing the project in phases in order to make it feasible financially; parking spaces are our first priority. We also want to be flexible in working out the various phases. It is possible that MDOT might contribute to the construction of a rail station; however, the town would be responsible for maintenance of bathrooms, etc. After looking at the various possibilities for the layout of parking spaces, etc. we recapped the points that we would like to see addressed as part of the project. They are:

1. A safe loading zone on the Route 1 end of the lot,
2. Maximize the parking available,
3. Some space for bus parking,
4. Safe pedestrian access to the downtown area,
5. Clarify size/height issues of a railroad platform in relation to the track level,
6. Look at inclusion of an information center for fliers, etc. on site, and
7. Have a larger view of the traffic flow out of the space.

MDOT stands to receive money from the stimulus package and this project might be a good candidate for some of that money but we need to move quickly. Jon and Travis felt that they could return with further answers to some of our questions by March 9th

and so we set that date tentatively for our next meeting. Arthur asked the transportation committee to discuss the idea of charging for parking in this area.

Bob Faunce asked the committee to form a subcommittee to study the bicycle/pedestrian piece of what is going on in town and with the Gateway 1 project. This committee would look at improvements in bicycle and pedestrian access and movement. We need to gather info about how sidewalks, bike lanes, trails, etc. are being used and to see what residents who are using these transportation modes would like to see for improvements. We brainstormed for names of people who might be willing to serve on a committee like this and Don and Bob agreed to divide up the names and contact these folks.

Anne and Arthur gave us some feed back from the latest Gateway 1 meeting that they had attended and gave us a copy of a packet from HNTB. It lays out proposed transportation improvements and land use action being recommended using the "Riding the Currents" scenario. We thanked them for their report especially since the transportation committee is the official town response panel (TRP) for Gateway 1.

The committee postponed reviewing the January 5th minutes until next month when our committee will hopefully be at full strength. We adjourned at 9:15 PM after setting March 9th as our next meeting unless notified otherwise.

Respectfully submitted by Lois Kwantz, Secretary