

**Wiscasset Transportation Committee
October 6, 2008**

Present: Don Jones, Cindy Fischer, Lois Kwantz, Sean Rafter

Absent: Seaver Leslie

The meeting opened at 7:05 PM with a review of both the April 7th and the July 7th minutes. After some additions, corrections and clarifications, the minutes were accepted as revised. Sean moved the April minutes with Cindy seconding the motion; the vote was 4-0. Cindy moved the July minutes with Lois seconding; the vote was 3-0 with Sean abstaining because he was not present at the July meeting.

Old business: Re: the bypass route on Rte. 27 and whether the route should or might affect voters' decisions concerning which school building to close, the primary and the middle schools have both been under consideration for closure. If the middle school is the building to be closed, then the school board and the town need to be aware of the bypass route because it may very well affect the placement of the primary school entrances/exits. There was a task force meeting on September 18th to discuss just such issues. Don had notified the superintendent of schools about the meeting, suggesting that perhaps someone from the schools should attend but no one showed up. If the town votes to close the middle school, Don believes that, at some point, the engineers involved in the retrofit of the primary school building need to deal with the bypass route in order to determine how best to place the entrances and exits at the school. As the bypass route is proposed, Rte. 27 will be elevated somewhat to allow the bypass to go under it.

Interim Approaches: Don recapped a memo sent out by MDOT concerning interim approaches to reducing traffic congestion in Wiscasset during the peak months. Some are already happening; some are scheduled to begin; some are not likely to ever happen due to cost versus effectiveness. The approaches are as follows:

Completed:

1. Changeable message sign on I295 notifying congestion in Wiscasset Wiscasset police activate when they observe congestion and the sign states "WISCASSET-EXPECT-DELAYS". Due to stop on 10/15/08.
2. Permanent traffic counters both north and south bound.

In Process

3. Web cams with radar to monitor speeds, etc. to automatically activate the changeable sign on I295.
4. Install Edgecomb westbound dynamic message sign

Dismissed/No Further Action:

5. Lee St./Bradford Rd. intersection alignment.
6. Remove the word coastal from Rt 1 signs.

Under Discussion:

7. Traffic signal or round about at intersection of Rte1/27 in Wiscasset.

8. Develop off street parking plan. Discussion between MDOT, Wiscasset and County Planner is on-going.
9. Underground pedestrian crossing; **MDOT is recommending no action** on this proposal due to excess cost versus possible benefit.
10. Use of traffic officer to control traffic flow (added to list as a possibility).

On Hold:

11. Development of traffic calming measures are on hold due to a major rehab of water lines, etc. in downtown Wiscasset within the next 2-3 years.

Bypass Task Force Meeting: This meeting occurred on September 18th and specifically addressed interchanges on Rtes. 27 and 218. The Wiscasset delegation was pleased that MDOT appeared to be strongly considering building a full interchange with Route 27(Gardiner Rd), but was disappointed that the N2a-1(preferred route) interchange with Route 218 had such a high cost and long payback that MDOT is no longer considering it. Don is still pushing for reconsideration of an interchange on 218 and he drew up less complicated interchange scenario for MDOT to consider. The WTC is interested in keeping as much of the traffic coming into Wiscasset from Rte. 218 out of the center of downtown by allowing them to get on the bypass before they ever reach Main St. (Rte. 1). Another benefit of having an interchange out on Rte. 218 would be to keep the heavy truck traffic off of Wiscasset's local roads. Currently, the trucks have to use West Alna Rd., Fowle Hill Rd., etc. to get onto Rte. 27 in order to then head south on Rte.1 because there is a weight limit on Rte.218 (Federal St.) before they are headed into the village. There is going to be a special meeting, not a full task force meeting, to discuss the Rte. 218 options. It is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 16th at 5:00 PM. The location is still not decided AND the ground rules re: who can attend and who might be allowed to have a voice have still not been decided either. Don will update us when he has further information.

Gateway 1: Don is trying to schedule a meeting for the officials of town to get together to discuss the future of the Gateway 1 project and some of the ideas being discussed, particularly around how the governing bodies in the towns that are part of the Gateway 1 corridor might collaborate. Don stated that we could see major changes in how town governments operate but that it might result in a much better situation than we currently have. We need to remain open to possibilities and discussion.

There being no further business, we adjourned at 8:00 PM. We set a tentative date for November 3rd for our next meeting but Don will let us know for sure. It is possible that our meeting might be a joint one with other town officials if he can schedule it.

Respectfully submitted,
Lois Kwantz, Secretary