

To Whom It May Concern:

I have a business at 161 Main Street (Rte. 1), and have followed the decisions of the Selectmen and MDOT regarding the elimination of parking on the Main Street in Wiscasset, hearing both sides of the argument. I would like to comment:

Losing parking on Main Street puts all of the merchants at a hardship. Not business friendly, especially for tourists walking the Town of Wiscasset or customers of the businesses, and the elderly who find walking the several blocks to get to these businesses and others located further uphill, a hardship.

Losing parking on Main Street puts residents at a hardship. Trying to find a parking space available, whether one block or several blocks away, will be enough to have them travel elsewhere for services once found on Main Street.

Losing parking on Main Street puts the Historical District at a hardship, as parking on all of the side streets will be taken by the overflow by the lack of parking spaces provided by the Town at inconvenient places. People living in this area, without garages, will have to fight for parking spaces close by their homes; unloading home supplies, groceries, even passengers becomes a hardship.

Losing parking on Main Street puts Wiscasset taxpayers at a hardship. Empty stores, restaurants, office buildings, etc., does not generate income and will create an impoverished, "For Rent or Sale" look about Main Street, and other open businesses will begin to fail. Wiscasset taxpayers will have to pick up the slack on the tax records, and eventually empty houses, "for Sale or Rent", will appear on every street. Falling housing values and higher taxes puts Wiscasset taxpayers at a hardship.

Losing parking on Main Street puts elected Wiscasset Selectmen at a hardship, trying to keep their positions and explain to Wiscasset citizens why this has happened to the "Prettiest Town in Maine".

Please reconsider your decision regarding eliminating parking on Main Street.

Sincerely,



Judy Waner
Blythe House Antiques
A Citizen for a Sensible Solution

To the Wiscasset Board of Selectmen,

I am writing you because I am not certain that the threat represented to our community by the planned M-DOT Rte. 1 project has been adequately exposed, and I would like to present myself as a case study in understanding what is at stake.

I am a tax-paying property owner in Wiscasset, with a home on High Street, and also a long-time retailer in the downtown. My wife and I rent and operate an antique shop and bookstore in three storefronts on Water Street, which began at one location, 51B, about 20 years ago. Before that I was proprietor or tenant in a number of other downtown premises. Our shop on Water Street has been a year-round operation since its inception.

The building we operate our shops in has recently been listed for sale by its owner, and we were given an opportunity to purchase it, which we declined. There were several factors in considering whether or not to pursue the purchase, but paramount in our decision was the danger presented by the advancement of the Route 1 project. To put it in the bluntest terms, there is no way we could purchase the property unless we could continued to run our business as a year-round operation, and, there is no way to run our business year round without the possibility of year-round parking on Water Street and Rte 1. Our winter season customers are mostly local and older folk who will not ever consider parking their vehicles on Railroad Ave. or the former CEI site. Making their way in often treacherous wintertime conditions to our shop just isn't in the cards.

Just as a point of information, I observe Railroad Ave. fairly frequently from my shop back windows and rarely see anyone who appears to be over the age of 40, even in summer, parking there,

even with Reds as their destination. Walking up that incline in icy or snowy conditions would even be daunting to the younger people who do park there.

There is no question that, if the plan goes forward without street parking we will have to give up our shop. And we are not alone in facing this plight. I understand that there are at least 4 Main Street businesses who have reached the same conclusion we have. When this exodus takes place I believe that it will be exceedingly difficult, with the parking ban in place, for the landlords to find retail tenants with year-round aspirations to replace us. The spaces will either go unrented, making Wiscasset yet another abandoned downtown, or they will attract seasonal tenants, with the diminished rental rates that would require. It will also make the opportunity to dispose of those properties more difficult. Inevitably, the effect will be to lower the property values of what is now prime real estate, diminishing town tax receipts, and putting pressure on the town budget. Taxes will have to rise, unless services are cut even further than they have been in recent years. My wife and I, along with other residents and property owners, will be hit. For us its a double whammy; lose our business because of the decision to proceed with "Option 2", and have our taxes rise because of it at the same time.

The economic health of a community is always in vulnerable, delicate balance. The effect of a project like this, quite possibly, is to create just the imbalance that would cause a downward spiral in the whole local economy. Do yourselves and the town a favor and close your eyes for a minute and picture what downtown Wiscasset will look like a couple of years from now with five, possibly more, storefronts vacant. Is that a healthy community? Is that a future for the town that you would encourage?

I understand that M-DOT appears hell-bent to go forward with this project, but, if anything were to stop it, it would be the Wiscasset Board of Selectmen making as loud a fuss as possible to let them know that it is a serious danger to the well-being of the community, and that it is unwanted.

Bruce Marcus

October 2, 2017

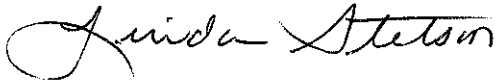
To: Town of Wiscasset Selectmen

Subject: Downtown Storefront Parking

As property owners on Water St., we have a number of small retail business tenants in the downtown district who have experienced as much as 40% or more reduction in sales when Water St. was closed to parking and traffic during July and August this year. I can't imagine the impact it will have should all parking be removed from Main Street and limited parking on Water and Middle Sts. We understand that infrastructure; (water lines, etc.) must be up-graded from time to time and will benefit all. We bear the temporary inconvenience and loss of business, but we know it's temporary.

After the June 13th vote we were optimistic and had believed the town and select board would be working with the MDOT for a better alternative other than eliminating all storefront parking. We strongly believe the loss of storefront parking will negatively impact the downtown economy. And as property owners, the potential loss of retail tenants will ultimately negatively impact our property tax burden as well.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David and Linda Stetson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

David and Linda Stetson

October 2 , 2017

Dear Wiscasset Board of Selectmen:

First, as a resident/business owner in Wiscasset for almost a decade, I would like to thank you for your non-approval of MDOT's option 2. The support of the downtown businesses contribute to the attractive character of the village, the quality of life that is fostered here and the addition to the towns tax base, Their contribution is immediately apparent.

Advertising by downtown businesses, in print and over the airways, has spurred 4 scheduled Art Walks annually, June through Sept, which benefit the entire town and enriching the vibrancy of village as well as being a healthy contributor to its base making Wiscasset a destination village . The Businesses on Rte 1, Middle St and Water St are major contributors to this effort and enrichment.

Parking is of prime importance in understanding the viability of these businesses. Older clientele, as so many of our customers are, do not, and in many instances can not, walk uphill the distances that are being suggested. They require easy access. To impact downtown business in a negative way will, as surely as night follows day, result in the loss of the many of our businesses as well as the revenue they contribute.

Empty store fronts are not an advertisement for a healthy community, Norfolk they encourage passerby's to stop.

2017, after almost ten years of economic struggle, is just beginning to experience an uptick in sales. Exercising a decision that would negatively impact the barely recovering business in Wiscasset would be an act of malice not one that demonstrates understanding.

Customers that come to Maine in the tourist season, freed momentarily from their daily responsibilities at home and therefore feeling expansive, are looking to take a tangible piece of their family's vacation with them from their time in Maine, a reminder of " the way life should be."

These people eat here, shop here, walk here because they there is a parking space " out front." Let's make it conducive to continuing our village's atmosphere and its business climate, not negatively impacting them for what is a minimal increase in traffic flow. Rather, insure business livelihoods that will otherwise be imperiled and a community that will be undermined.

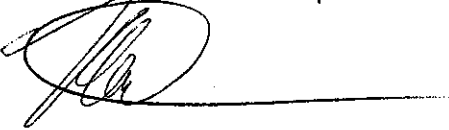
Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michael Dunn

Owner

Michael Dunn Antiques

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Michael Dunn', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Wassisset Selectmen

Oct. 2, 2017

I have had a business in Wassisset now for 21 yrs.

The removal of our parking spaces on Main St. would be detrimental to all the merchants I have customers coming the shop seeing that they get a parking space out front. Last week Fri. I had a customer come in telling she had a space out front. I asked her what would she do if there was no parking on Main St. Her reply was she wouldn't stop. Ouch!

We are running our business because we enjoy what we do and it is also our livelihood. Reality is no people, no business, no storefronts. Ghost town.

Wassisset didn't have a very healthy downtown area 20+ years ago and then the Antique Dealers moved in and things looked better and then as other businesses moved in we have a really good looking downtown. Without the parking on Main St. I can't figure out how it can remain healthy.

I care deeply about Wassisset but my business need to succeed for me to stay.

Please speak up
for us @ the meeting
on Thurs. night.

Deb Schaffer

Debra Elizabeth
78 Main St.
Wassisset Me

Oct 2, 2017

Dear Board of Selectmen,

Heleen and I own the business TRIFLES and the real estate at our two shops at 55 Main St and 55 Water St. We have had an open shop in the area for 31 years. Open year round. Wiscasset has seen a resurgence of year-round businesses in the last 10 years. It has been heart warming.

Please, please realize that the major moving of parking from Main Street will have a horrible effect on our winter business. We are not independantly wealthy. We rely on our winter business to see us through the year.

Sincerely
Matthew Roberson

Dear Wiscasset Board of Selectman,

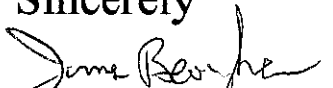
I operate a shop at 52 Water Street where I have been located for three years. During this summer when Water Street parking was not available, my customer traffic was typically little more than on a winters day or about ten per cent of prior comparable time periods.

That experience is predictive of what can be expected should on street parking be removed from Maine Street and reduced on Water St. Customers without being asked have shared that they will not park in lots or on Railroad St. and walk to other businesses or to my shop.

Retailers are going to pay a heavy price for a proposed solution to a six week traffic problem. Our businesses will close and Wiscasset will be no better for it.

I first saw Wiscasset in 1971 and it is as charming now as it was then. I do not think it will be so with closed store fronts.

Sincerely


James Beougher