

Board of Selectmen

Dale Harmon, Chairman
Douglas Burnham, Vice Chair
Charles R. Cunningham
Stephen W. Ham
Steven Lewis

Town Manager

Daniel Bryer Jr.



**Town of Boothbay
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Wednesday April 13, 2016
7:00 PM
MINUTES**

Present: Dale Harmon, Douglas Burnham, Steven Lewis and Town Manager, Dan Bryer

The meeting opened at 6:00PM at the Town Hall for Public Hearings.

The meeting was recessed at 6:30PM to move to the YMCA for the rest of the meeting.

At 7:00PM Dale Harmon brought the meeting back to order.

Proposed change in traffic pattern at Boothbay Center:

Mark Lenters, a consultant with MDOT started the discussion by doing a presentation that answered all the questions that were raised at the last meeting on this topic. This is a power point presentation that can be seen on the Town's website as well as on Channel 7. The total cost of this proposed project is estimated at 3.3 million, with 1.5 coming from the TIF, 1.5 from Paul Coloumbe and 1.0 from the MDOT.

Paul Coloumbe spoke to the group. He talked about his history, his past and how he got to where he is today. He talked about his civic involvement. Why he wanted to do this project. He talked a little about what he plans to do with land that he owns on the back side of the common. He said he plans to put a parking lot complete with restrooms on the East side of the common and donate it to the town. He has also agreed to fund the construction of a new 1.6 million dollar Ambulance building for BRAS.

The cost to the town's people for this project would be zero. The Town's portion of the financing would come strictly out of TIF money and would increase taxes.

Mark Lenters played a video, a conceptual design of what it would look like to drive, walk, and a bird's eye view of going through the Rt. 27 corridor after this project was complete.

Dale Harmon thanked Mr. Lenters and Mr. Coloumbe for their input and opened the floor up to questions and comments. Mr. Harmon did ask that since this was a Boothbay Selectmen's meeting, that Boothbay residents go first.

Doris Burnham asked questions about the bike ways. She commented that with the shoulder missing now by the Country Club it was not as safe as before and wanted to make sure the bike ways would be safe and that there would be shoulder room.

Kathleen Knowlton asked questions about the entrance and exit to the Post Office. She also asked questions about the entrance to Back River road. She wanted to know if Common Drive would remain 1 way to would be 2 ways. (This has not been determined yet).

A member of the audience asked questions about the proposed Village Square. The Village Square that was shown in the plans will be built whether this project goes through or not and no land will be taken from the common.

Fred Kaplan said there were not enough statistics on the traffic study to make a decision. He said the facts presented were loose and not impartial, he feels they were directed towards a particular end and done with no objectivity. He talked about the pedestrian crossings and how the roundabout would be better without crossing. He said the crossing will stop traffic. Mr. Kaplan questions if the TIF funds fall short.

Dale Harmon answered Mr. Kaplan's question about the TIF funds. The Selectmen and Town Manager have done the projections and the Fund will not fall short. Dale Harmon said if the Tax payers vote the project down that it will not go forward.

Mr. Lenters said that currently all traffic has to stop for crossings and with the roundabout only one part of the traffic would have to stop at a time.

Jean Reese Gibson talked about the gatehouse at the entrance to the County Club. She said she can envision an event happening there and the cars lining up to get in will end up lining up in the road and blocking traffic. The President of the County Club said they have provisions in place to this will not happen. Mr. Coloumbe said this will never happen, if more than three cars line up, the gate will open and let the cars all in off the road.

Tammy Steinmetz asked when the Selectmen would vote on this and was told that would happen tonight. Ms. Steinmetz next asked about Bus Drivers and asked if that had been talked to. She also questioned if the congestion was enough to warrant this big of a change. She questions who would be responsible for the upkeep and if the Town parking lot would lose spaces.

Dale Harmon said he preferred the Town be proactive instead of reactive, plus it would be cheaper to do now rather than later. The cost of things only go up and with this opportunity the Town can get more for its money by partnering with MDOT and Mr. Coloumbe. The Town Parking lot will not lose any spaces. The town roads will be the responsibility of the town to care for and the State roads will still be kept up by the State as they are now. If the medians and center of the roundabout have planting, the Town would need to be responsible for taking care of them.

Andy Hamblett said he applauded the plans and thanked Mr. Lenters and Mr. Coloumbe for answering all the questions raised. He talked about the sidewalks and how wonderful it will be to have them from the YMCA to Clifford Park. He feels this is a move in the right direction and should be looked at as Economic Development.

Laura Honey said people come here to visit because they love it. One of the biggest concerns is safety and this will make it safer. She feels it is a wonderful idea to change the entrance to the gas station on to Chapel Street. She feels this is a positive step and said we can't live in the past.

Susan Whitehouse said she can appreciate the vision and the work that has gone into this so far and thanked Mr. Coloumbe. She said his thoughtfulness is appreciated.

Scott Campbell had questions about the pull out and fire hydrant at the entrance to Common Drive. He stated the Fire Department using this a lot. He also had questions about the visibility of Ambulances coming out onto Rt. 27

An employee at the Chamber of Commerce talked about tourist coming into the region and how they are frazzled by the time they get here and the signs are hard to read. She felt the signs need to be fixed and not add a roundabout.

Lori Mitchell said this is good for multi generations. She is in favor of the project.

Win Mitchell said he recently went to a seminar on how to attract new business and talked about changes that Brunswick went through bringing in the train station. Change is scary but it can be an improvement and the history of the area and its uniqueness can still be kept. He is in favor of this change.

Tim Pinkham works for Bigelow Labs and said they give support to this project. They want to improve safety for their employees and vendors.

Rob Ham said this addresses safety concerns. He currently drives by the Cory Lane/ Back River intersection 5 to 6 times a day and this part of the road has to be fixed. He talked it will be safer to get to the playground from the common and will allow people to go see the monument in person and not only look at it from their car as they drive by.

Skip McPhee asked what the actual speed would be coming into the roundabout and where the speed signs would be. (The top speed would be 25mph)

Wendy Wolfe, a Selectmen from Boothbay Harbor said thank you for this community process, this is how to shape the fabric of a community. She sees Boothbay as the gateway to Boothbay Harbor and this project will let people know they have arrived somewhere. She feels it is a wonderful exciting proposal, she said it is economic development and makes sense.

A Boothbay Harbor resident said this addresses safety concerns and will be an improvement.

Another Boothbay Harbor resident encouraged Boothbay people to go forward with the project, it makes sense and will be good for tourism. He asked what a TIF is.

Dan Bryer and Dale Harmon both gave a brief description of what a TIF is, how it is created and where the funds come from and what they can be used for.

Dale Harmon said the Board of Selectmen have to make a decision for discussions to go forward from here. After a brief discussion, *Steve Lewis made a motion to vote to move the proposal ahead as a town project for public input and authorize the Town Manager to engage directly with MDOT to present a draft BPI for review by the Board and Doug Burnham seconded the motion. Vote: 3-0 in favor.*

A couple of people from the audience objected to the board voting without a full board present. Dale Harmon explained that it did not matter since they had a majority present. Dale Harmon also pointed out that the public will be encouraged to participate as discussions go forward. This vote was not to actually do the project, it was just to allow the Town to proceed in exploring the project and to secure the funds. A vote will be taken by the Townspeople before this project can take place.

Steve Lewis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:35PM and Doug Burnham seconded the motion. Vote: 3-0 in favor.