

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board Work Session
MINUTES
Tuesday, August 9, 2022, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
Or on ZOOM**

**SELECT BOARD JOINT MEETING with the WOODSVILLE COMMISSIONERS
Topic: Central Street - Forest Street Intersection**

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Fred Garofalo called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Select Board Attendance: Kevin Knapp (Here), Katie Williams (Here), Mike Graham (Here), Vice Chair Steve Robbins (Here), Chair Fred Garofalo (Here), A quorum was met.

Woodsville Commissioners Attendance: Kevin Shelton, Administrator; Steve Wheeler, Paul Kidder.

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager (TM): Brigitte Codling
Assistant Town Manager (ATM): Jennifer Boucher

Members of the Public Present

In Person:

Regis Roy
Lynn Wheeler
Jay Bullard

Online:

Janice Dube
Joanne Young
Robert Maccini
Alex Nuti-de Biasi (*Journal Opinion*)
Jim McKinnon
Justin Boulter

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DISCUSSION, part 1

- Chair Garofalo announced that this is a Joint Meeting to discuss the Central Street – Forest Street Intersection Improvement Project in Woodsville.

- Chair Garofalo presented Minutes from a 2017 Select Board meeting and read comments from James O’Shaughnessy who wanted a light at Forest St. because he was concerned about the blinking red light after being involved in a motor vehicle accident. Chair Garofalo noted in 2017 neither the Board nor the Commissioners made a decision. Chair Garofalo stated that TM Codling came to Haverhill in 2019, and the project was initiated, but the NHDOT did not put this project on their 10-year project list.
- TM Codling presented a detailed history of the Central Street – Forest Street intersection project and discussion continued, as follows:
 - Joint Meeting with Woodsville Commissioners in the fall of 2019 talking about the options.
 - At the same time, the NHDOT was doing a study of traffic lights and dangerous intersections in Woodsville.
 - The Administration invited a state traffic engineer and others to a meeting to discuss the various projects in Woodsville.
 - Commissioner Kidder noted that at that time there was not vote of confidence on that project from the Commissioners.
 - TM Codling began work with the North Country Council engineer on designs for the intersection, including the reinstallation of a crosswalk from Cumberland Farms to Shaw’s; however, the state said the intersection is too wide for crosswalk installation.
 - Chair Garofalo noted and Administrator Shelton agreed that in 2019 the Commissioners did not want to put money into a state road project.
 - In 2020, Woodsville began work on identifying underground utilities, and the state surveyed the intersection. TM Codling noted that Covid began, and all projects were put on hold.
 - In 2021, the Town sought to resubmit the permitting, but the warrant failed, and the highway budget prevented the project from going forward.
 - In the winter of 2021 and into 2022, the Town focused on this project once again.
 - TM Codling stated that to continue the project, the Town has to resubmit for permitting and schedule the project. The bond, which is minimal, is in place.
 - TM Codling asked the Board to reaffirm or terminate the project.
- TM Codling stated that Phase 1 is the turning lane project, but the DOT noted that the turning lane is not necessary. TM Codling described in detail the motor vehicle movement in the existing intersection. Administrator Shelton asked if the Town would restore the intersection to its original design, and TM Codling replied that the state would not allow it.
- TM Codling stated that the Town could put up temporary barriers in the turning lane to see how residents respond or the Board can dispense with the project.
- Vice Chair Robbins asked about the Forest Street crosswalk, and TM Codling replied that the crosswalk will be redone with a slight change in direction.
- Graham asked about the traffic study, and the number of vehicles counted at the intersection, and he commented that narrowing the turning lanes will not affect the problems at the intersection. TM Codling discussed in detail the change in traffic movement when narrowing the roadway. Graham stated that it is the left-hand turning

that is the problem. Administrator Shelton noted that it will make the intersection less safe because the vehicle will come into a “funnel.” Graham noted that he would like to see the state take control of this project and, if needed, control traffic with a light. Graham noted that the speed of traffic at this intersection too fast, and he recommended that the Haverhill Police Department patrol this intersection.

- Lynn Wheeler commented that studies have been done about the problems on Forest Street and, because of the Forest Street hill, the right turning lane was required.
- Regis Roy commented on the right turning lane.
- Chair Garofalo stated that he recommended a fix of the intersection all at one time rather than a partial fix. TM Codling stated that the 3-year, phased project allows drivers to get used to the changes. Graham stated that the Town needs to get this project on the DOT’s 10-year plan.
- Vice Chair Robbins suggested better signage at the intersection.

NHDOT 10-Year Plan

TM Codling described the NHDOT 10-year planning process, as follows:

- It’s the responsibility of the municipalities with the Regional Planning Commissions to submit projects, and public meetings are held for the public to discuss options because public support is required.
- A decision on a preferred option is made by the governing bodies.
- The conceptual design phase is next. The regional commission design can be used, and a preliminary estimate is done.
- The next round of proposals for the DOT is in July 2024, whereupon the Town submits a preproposal with a final proposal in August 2024. In September of 2024, the proposal is reviewed by the Transportation Advisory Council for ranking. Then the top-ranking projects get submitted by the regional commissions to the DOT.
- The DOT sends feedback for incorporation into the project design and once completed the project is sent back to the DOT between May and December of 2025 for incorporation into their 10-year plan.

Other Options

TM Codling spoke with the head of the Regional Planning Commission, and she offered some options:

- For the Town to do the project themselves.
- Competitive grant programs, such as the Streets for All grant, which develops an action plan to prepare for the DOT 10-year plan list.

DISCUSSION, part 2

Chair Garofalo asked how the Town can get this project done.

- TM Codling noted that there has been an additional block highway grant coming to the Town in August, which would be available for this type of project.
- Commissioner Wheeler noted that for Forest Street there is no through trucking.

