

Council / Manager 11/24/14

Sunday, November 23, 2014

To: Members of the Standish Town Council

From: Maurie Hill, 20 Wildridge Road, Standish ME.

Re: My support for building of sidewalks in Standish Corner and Steep Falls.

I am writing to entreat you in your elected roles as guardians of public safety and town planning to go forward with construction of sidewalks in both Standish Corner and Steep Falls for the following reasons:

- 1) Safety for residents of all ages, including those with mobility issues, who are forced to walk either in the road or along ditches, uneven shoulders and across uneven ground even when grass is in place.

Of note, the intersection of Routes 25 and 35 is particularly dangerous. Ten wheeler commercial trucks hauling oil, gas, timber and other goods regularly crowd the intersection. At present, there are no pedestrian crosswalks on either road.

- 2) Encouragement of walking behavior (and bike riding) as a source of exercise and health promotion in a community laden with individuals suffering from a diagnosis of diabetes and heart disease. Additionally, socialization and walking with a friend or friends increases a sense of well-being and belonging.
- 3) Enhancement of a sense of community in these two Standish villages and a realization that this is just one aspect of community betterment and development for the future.
- 4) Encouragement of commerce by making stores/markets a destination for spending by local residents, thereby increasing the tax base.

In summary, I believe that the members of the Standish Town Council must vote to take advantage of the opportunities before us to improve our community's physical, social and logistical well being. We cannot live in the past forever and continue to be some wide spot in the road. No, we do not want to become North Windham with its big box stores and strip malls, but we do want to become a town with village centers where parents can safely raise their children. In addition, our seniors will know, as they age in place, that our community supports their needs for physical safety and socialization as well.

It is time for the Town Council to be courageous in their intent and actions and vote responsibly to provide the relatively insignificant seed monies that will move this town into the future with a view to safety and improved health for all.

Maurie Hill 11/24/2014

DATE: December 16

TO: Lynn Olson and Neighbors of Steep Falls

RE: Town Council Meeting tonight, with agenda item re: Steep Falls Sidewalk.

I urge folks to attend this meeting and support the Rte. 11 sidewalk in Steep Falls. I was on the Steep Falls planning committee and have learned about village planning, which has led me to definitely support this project.

There are many reasons why I support this.

a) Rte. 11 is a dangerous road, with no shoulder and no place for folks to walk. Now we've heard that with the new bridge folks are driving even faster since there is no rickety old bridge to encourage drives to slow down. There are many trucks, a major Poland Spring route, that use this road. There are studies done, that if you make a road with sidewalks and pedestrian/bike friendly, it creates a sense of urban population rather than a rural by-pass, causing drivers to slow down.

b) Economic reasons. Creating a village center, and this also applies to Standish Corner, will attract more business, which helps bring more income into the town, both through commerce and taxes. I believe an improvement to Rte. 11 will lend more tourists to attend events, shop businesses and frequent the farmers' markets. It'll enhance the village park with the gazebo and attract activity there.

Secondly, since we already owe \$65k for the walkway on the bridge, why not accept the grant which will more than pay for that project and most of the sidewalk project, leaving the town to pay about \$9,000-\$11,000 which has already been budget.

c) I also support this project, because many volunteers have spent many hours developing village plans. They were advised by professional planners how to improve villages, attract more commerce, create safe and friendly neighborhoods for families, and keep the integrity of historic and rural centers. These folks are assisting many towns, which are mandated by the state to complete comprehensive plans. Public village meetings are held for everyone's input and the plans are voted on and approved by the town at town meetings. Once the plans are approved by the town and the state, then grants are allocated to implement improvement plans. So if our town doesn't take these grants, then other towns will get them. The grantors look poorly on towns like ours that don't follow through with the plans, which jeopardizes future grants for our town projects.

So why is there opposition to the sidewalks? Maybe many voted against it for the same reason I did the first time. We think, should we spend money on sidewalks, when there are so many other, perhaps more important, things needed in town – not knowing/realizing that the sidewalk project was already approved by the town in our comprehensive plans. But now I'm educated, understand the process of planning, how the projects are budgeted/funded – which doesn't take money away from other needed items, and that the townfolks have the right to vote on if we want projects to be funded through bonds or not. My only suggestion is to improve education others on the process – even maybe town vote by ballot to accept the plans?

So if any of this makes sense, or you have your own reason, please come to the meeting and tell our council members that since these sidewalks were already approved, to please accept the grant money and proceed with the project. - THANKS.

for order 139-14 from Council Olson
12/16/14

Factors Regarding Standish Sidewalk Grant Projects

1. The approved FY15 capital budget for Public Works includes \$104,000 for the Village Center sidewalks and \$76,800 for the Steep Falls sidewalks. The \$180,800 in expenditures currently have budgetary authority; however after the budget was published the Steep Falls grant amount **decreased** reducing our matching amount from \$76,800 to \$51,500.
2. Standish is committed to spend \$ 97,000 if the projects are cancelled. No sidewalks would be built for that money.
3. Providing the match funds of \$155,500 would leverage \$622,000 with the Safe Routes for School DOT and CDBG grants.

Projects End

	Committed Funds
Village Center	32,000
Steep Falls	65,000
Standish Total	97,000

Projects Proceed

Engineer's	Match Required	Standish Budget	Grant Funds	Projects Total
51,500	52,500	104,000	416,000	520,000
25,420	26,080	51,500	206,000	257,500
76,920	78,580	155,500	622,000	777,500

Paying the budgeted amount provides a 444% increase of the investment. Stopping the projects costs \$97,000 for nothing.

For \$51,500 we get sidewalks in Steep Falls, without it we pay a penalty of \$65,000.

Submitted by Peter Biegel
12/16/14

GENERAL DESIGN ELEMENTS

There are several important design elements detailed in this document. They are: architecture (in particular, New England style architecture), street trees, pedestrian scale lighting, public open space areas and site furnishings, minimal signage and the construction of new buildings closer to the road. These elements are nicely reflected below. The upper image is a photograph of Standish Village as it appears today. The lower image is a sketch showing how the village could look in the future if the design elements called for in this document are applied.

