

06/07/21

This letter/petition is in regards to the Conway TIP Road Reconstruction project.

We the Property owners agree with making necessary upgrades to the street and drainage system, but rejects the proposed Reconstruction and acquisition Plan. With the Covid-19 pandemic issue, we do not feel our voices have been duly heard and the town has continued the process without the necessary input and concerns of the property owners affected by this project.

If a through study would have been performed it would have resulted in the fact that two bike lanes and two sidewalks are totally unnecessary and in reality, decreases the safety of the Conway Street residences.

The acquisition also inflicts a hardship as some rental properties will lose parking spaces for tenants therefor reduces rental potential and income.

Our hope is, the town will agree to hold a meeting with the property owners and obtain a solution that works best for the town and property owners as taking legal action is not desired.

A speedy response would be greatly appreciated.

Name

Conway Street Address #

Brian [Signature]

26 Conway St Shelburne Falls, MA

[Signature]

2 Conway St. Shelburne Falls MA

[Signature]

24 CONWAY ST SHELburne FALLS MA

Stretch Wilson

16 Conway St. Shelburne Falls MA
Buckland

[Signature]

46 Conway St. S Falls MA

[Signature]

9 Summer St.

[Signature]

9 South st. Shelburne Falls

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As residents of the lower riverside portion of Conway Street, we are writing to voice our concerns over the proposed Conway Street Development Project.

The informational package each homeowner just received in the mail, with the clear visual documentation explaining the planned redevelopment project, is what we should have received on day one, or at least when the full scope of this project was understood. The point is, we shouldn't be getting this at the end of a process, but at the beginning of one.

For many of us, Covid was an extremely disruptive time. Many of us didn't have the ability to process anything beyond the global emergency enveloping our world. Our mental and emotional capacity to manage anything beyond the crisis was simply nonexistent.

Knowing this, city officials, and community representatives, should have taken extra care to make sure everyone was fully informed about the development project. At the bare minimum, everyone should have been sent out, on day one, the map detailing how the proposed project would impact them individually. If our representatives had the interests of the community in mind, that would have been the most basic form of courtesy they could have extended to us. Ideally, a second document, detailing the entire plan, for the full length of Conway Street, should have been added as well.

Only after these initial forms of communication and outreach were initiated, should community meetings have been organized. The process our city officials and elected representatives have chosen seem backward, and maybe even intentionally divisive or anti-community, especially when you factor in the Global pandemic.

That being said, as residents of lower riverside portion of Conway Street, we would like to say we support the general intentions of the plan, and support the desire to add bike lanes, and make a walkable, livable, pedestrian friendly, downtown.

Nevertheless, we also wish to maintain the existing character of our neighborhood, which, in this case, represents the portion of Conway Street that extends from #4 to #28. We believe that the greenway along the waterfront, with its two pedestrian walkways, is sufficient for the level of traffic we currently experience.

We also believe, in the event that there is a significant increase in pedestrian traffic, the walkways, in their current form, can easily accommodate these needs without being overburdened.

During the recent filming we had a 500% increase in people using the sidewalks between Lamson and downtown. There were no problems accommodating this increase. In the center of town there were obvious congestion issues, but along our stretch, there were no issues.

By that measure, even if the Lamson Factory complex were to increase both its retail space and office space to full capacity, it would never equal the amount of continuous foot traffic created by the film crew. There are currently two parallel sidewalks passing through the riverside park. These two walkways are more than adequate for pedestrian traffic.

It does not seem necessary to direct pedestrian traffic to a third sidewalk located on the residential side of our street, especially when that traffic will eventually be forced to crossover to the riverside walkway when entering the center of town.

So regardless, whether or not the sidewalk begins at the Propane Company or it begins at #4 Conway Street, all pedestrian traffic will eventually be channeled onto the riverside walkway. Therefore, it make more sense to simply skip the residential portion.

That being said, we do see the need for some renovation on our side of the street. The addition of an actual concrete curb dividing the road from private property would provide both a visual and functional purpose.

From a functional standpoint, a curbside would help direct stormwater runoff to the appropriate drainage pipes. This doesn't currently happen. Not all the drainpipes even work. In addition, it would add a protection barrier between our residential spaces and car traffic. As we all know, in 2018, #16 Conway street building was hit by a drunk driver. A curbside barrier, even if just 6-8 inches, might have prevented that from happening.

From a visual perspective, a curbside edge, clearly delineating the residential spaces from the edge of the road, and will produce a subtle, but obvious, visual structure to the riverside park area. The effect would be similar to having a sidewalk.

In closing, we want to say, we understand that a public review process already took place, but we believe the disruption to life caused by Covid was the wrong time to push through such a significant and potentially disruptive project. This is a community project. It effects our community and really should have been approached differently. The packages we just received with visual representations of what this project means for each residence, should have been distributed at the beginning of this process, not at the end.

Sincerely,

Ramona Goldstein 28 Conway St. Buckland
Stephen Wilson 16 Conway St. Buckland
Nelson Park 8 Conway St. Buckland