

***Public Safety and Accessibility Collaborative***

**PSAC PORTFOLIO for 2024 ONWARDS**

**Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 2024**

**PSAC ONGOING AREAS of INTEREST**

**NOTE:** We believe the projects and initiatives in the following list are important for the Town, and all are being referenced to some degree in the Damariscotta 10-year Comprehensive Plan. There is no implied significance to PSAC in the order of the listed items. There is no implied order for our focus of attention. ***We don't even have to monitor every one of them.*** This is an important list showing possibilities for our attention. We shall collectively decide from time to time where to direct our focus. We'll explain the role of the ***"PSAC Lead"*** below. ***But, remember, it may not be feasible to be a PSAC Lead at all.*** We value all members, as and when they are able to attend and contribute to our meetings and tasks.

**PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES LIST**

**"PSAC Lead"**

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Church and Hodgdon Streets  | Marilee Harris  |
| 2. Castner Brook Bridge/Sidewalk   | Steven Hufnagel |
| 3. School St/Main Street Intersection                                    | Derek Webber    |
| 4. Hannaford to GSB School Bimodal Pathway                               | Anton Lahnston  |
| 5. Bike Racks, Bike Lanes and related Biking Actions                     | TBD             |
| 6. Damariscotta River ADA Accessible Dock                                | Anton Lahnston  |
| 7. Miles Road Sidewalk Completion  | TBD             |
| 8. "Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone" (Rising Tide to Hannaford),          | Derek Webber    |
| 9. Potential Solutions to Sidewalk "Canyon" on Route 1B                  | Derek Webber    |
| 10. Public Transportation Matters (e.g. Jitney for out-of-town Parking). | TBD.            |
| 11. Belvedere/ Route 1 rotary pedestrian crossing aspects                | Derek Webber    |
| 12. Walking Trails development, lighting, maintenance                    | TBD             |

**CROSS-PROJECT MATTERS**

*(impacts across all project areas)*

**Oversight**

- |   |                 |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Meeting Management – agenda, Zoom, Notes                         | Anton Lahnston  |
| 2. General disability related Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility   | Jim Kutsch      |
| 3. Fourth edition of Twin Villages Walking Map                      | Anton Lahnston  |
| 4. Health Related Focus   | TBD             |
| 5. Climate Change/Environmental Related Focus                       | TBD             |
| 6. National Trends Reporting – Complete Streets/America Walks, etc. | TBD (maybe DW?) |
| 7. Recruitment.   | All             |
| 8. Monthly “Sole and Tread” column, Lincoln County News.            | Derek Webber    |
| 9. Possible Damariscotta/Newcastle collaboration                    | TBD             |
| 10. Ongoing Support and Monitoring of 2024 Comprehensive Plan       | Derek Webber    |

## Some Suggested Ground Rules for PSAC Group

We are entering a new year with a few changes in approach, which will benefit from being spelled out. In particular, we are planning to introduce the idea of a **“PSAC Lead”** for each identified area of interest to make sure that we can always look to someone who will be our resident point of contact on any given topic. And, importantly, they will cover areas in which they are particularly interested, and have therefore volunteered to be our point person. This will ensure that, whenever the Town has the need for a PSAC perspective, or support for an initiative, there will be someone in PSAC who is up-to-date on that particular area, to whom we can look for advice or data or recommendations. The PSAC Lead should also be able to provide help when we are writing a relevant monthly “Sole and Tread” column for Lincoln County News and will be given credit for that contribution.

On the preceding pages are a series of anticipated task areas – some are of a project nature, others offering a broader focus which might apply equally across all projects. **However, we don’t want to overburden our volunteer group, so will only focus on a few items at a time.** Every piece of this activity will benefit from the leadership of “PSAC leads” in order for us to move forward. Also, we need to be able to count on PSAC members to keep track of each of our initiatives. The PSAC Leads will help us keep the group together, interested and in touch with developments. Of course, the PSAC Leads are not going to be able to single-handedly do the work. All the group needs to participate, but the PSAC Lead will be the lead for our collective knowledge on a given topic area. So, what in essence is the role of the PSAC Lead?

### Tasks for PSAC Leads

1. Note that the understanding is that the project and initiative items listed above might well be active for several years before completion, and we need one person (typically) to be the ongoing “PSAC Lead” for each of them. But they do *not* require a report to be provided at each PSAC meeting. It might be three or four months before it makes sense to bring something in front of the full PSAC committee.
2. The “PSAC Lead” will be asked to gradually gather relevant information on their selected project or initiative area, so that, eventually, their area of focus can move on to the next step. When this would involve a discussion with PSAC membership the “PSAC Lead” would need to notify the PSAC to signal that this stage had been reached.
3. It is assumed that a “PSAC Lead” will ask for help from other PSAC members as necessary.
4. All PSAC members are requested to pass on relevant news items to the relevant “PSAC Lead” when something is spotted in the press, social media or even casual anecdotal conversations.

5. There is likely to be some significant overlap between these itemized “Projects and Initiatives”, and so that implies the need for us all to stay involved with all areas to some degree and support the “PSAC Lead.” The role of the “PSAC Lead” is therefore to be the “go-to” contact when a particular area is being addressed. They will hopefully be the best informed of the latest status on their chosen area.
  
6. On occasion, a “PSAC Lead” may be contacted for information on their project or initiative area if it is going to be mentioned or highlighted in the PSAC “Sole and Tread” column of the Lincoln County News.
  
7. There may be times when the “PSAC Lead” needs to connect with the Town Planner and/or Town Manager for information, updates and to renew our support for the Town.

## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 1 - Hodgdon/Church Street

**PSAC LEAD** Marilee Harris



**LOCATION**



**HISTORY**

Hodgdon Street has had an upgrade in 2023 on drainage and resurfacing at its southern end, and in the process a special shared bike lane arrangement (road markings and signage) was introduced.

Church Street has had a new section of sidewalk installed (in 2020?) at the southern end. There has been engineering planning work conducted to provide a sidewalk along the whole length of Church Street to the intersection with Route 1B, including the crossing of Castner Brook. The wall at the cemetery on Church Street is currently being repaired as a first stage to prepare for the sidewalk.

#### **COMP PLAN STATUS**

Not specifically referenced in current draft because work is considered to be in progress.

#### **ISSUES**

Hodgdon Street- road surface at northern end in bad repair.

The Church Street Project has several components or stages, and the town is fully committed to its completion. Some funding may be raised via the newly extended TIF.

#### **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Schedule and financing unclear. This project may be done in chunks over a couple of years due to complexity and the cost. The town is currently working on funding.

## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 2 - Castner Brook Bridge

**PSAC LEAD** Steven Hufnagel



**LOCATION**

**HISTORY** This is a short, but complicated, section of the Church Street Sidewalk/Bike path upgrade

This location has been subject to road closures due to culvert flooding events. Formally, it is Castner Brook, which becomes Castner Creek.

Some engineering design work has been conducted involving various alternative designs and sizes for both the culvert that meets DEP standards and the pedestrian part of the water crossing bridge.

**COMP PLAN STATUS**

Not specifically referenced - work considered to be in progress.

**ISSUES**

Finalization of design of culvert (taking into account wildlife and fish crossing) and the bike/ped part of the bridge. The bridge planned for the site will also include a sidewalk – although the sidewalk may be separate from – but adjacent to – the roadway.

Need for funding clarification.



**CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Considered in progress, but schedule and responsibilities unclear. The town is working with Coastal Rivers on this, and seeking further funding support.

**PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)**

**PROJECT** PSAC 3 - School Street and Route 1B Intersection

**PSAC LEAD** Derek Webber

**LOCATION**



## **HISTORY**

PSAC has been studying various alternative solutions to solving the problems at this intersection. At one point (Sept 2021), we managed to get some traffic engineering assessments done, but the results were inconclusive and only a partial temporary experiment was proposed, and even that did not take place. The School Street crossing of 1B is slightly offset, which causes difficulties. Also, the intersection is towards the top of a slight incline that is experienced when traveling from Hannaford towards the downtown area. There has been at least one fatality at this junction.

There are a number of problems at this intersection (see Issues below) and we need to do some more preparatory work before re-engaging with the traffic engineers to consider a solution. The safety aspects which are the focus of PSAC concerns involve pedestrians, cyclists as well as autos.

We are pretty much convinced that some kind of roundabout is needed. The original proposal is shown in the second photo, which would have provided a safe crossing point for pedestrians, as well as a safer way for those wanting to turn left.

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

At present, the draft Comp Plan language does contain specific reference to the need to seek safety improvements at School Street/Route 1B intersection – “possibly including roundabout solutions”.

## **ISSUES**

With regard to pedestrians, this intersection is currently very dangerous, but it could provide an excellent crossing point over Route 1B about half-way between the only two other points (ie at Hannaford and at Rising Tide). It is usually an easy adaptation of roundabouts/rotaries to include pedestrian crossing points and road striping. There are also no bike lanes at this junction.

With regard to vehicles, the danger exists for those coming from the Town Office side of School Street, and wanting to turn left onto Route 1B (or merely to go straight across to the other part of School Street). Or those coming from the other half of School Street and wanting to turn left on Route 1B to head downtown. Route 1B is the busier road, and a traffic signal solution would cause a delay backup if introduced. Meanwhile, those coming south from Hannaford and wanting to turn left into School Street (maybe in order to head down the peninsular) do themselves cause a backup because the road, as presently configured, is not wide enough for a left-turn lane.

There are problems of land ownership, and of responsibilities for 1B and School Street. And there is also a potential complicating factor introduced by the culvert on Route 1B over Castner Brook, which might limit the northern extent of associated roadworks.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

At present, there is nothing identified in the near term for addressing this problem. However, solving the problem of this intersection is an unavoidable part of establishing the Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone, intended for linking the historical heart of Damariscotta with the communities all the way up to Great Salt Bay School. And so, it is eligible for funding from the recently-approved extended TIF district.

The PSAC plan regarding priorities and schedule is to first observe the development of project PSAC 10 (ie Belvedere/ Route 1) to understand any issues with rotaries or roundabouts, while drafting out some alternative potential layouts for this intersection, before approaching the traffic engineers again.

PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 4 - Bi-Mode Path from Hannaford to Great Salt Bay School

**PSAC LEAD** Anton Lahnston

**LOCATION**



## **HISTORY**

Coastal Rivers has previously installed a short section and Crosswalk (to help students cross to see the Oyster Middens).

Full Bi-modal 10 ft Sidewalk/Bike path/Crosswalks are needed for students of Great Salt Bay School, and will extend all the way from Hannaford to the GSB School.

Engineering work and full site review took place (State, County, Town engineers) in 2021.

This path is considered to be the northern end of the “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone” which will eventually connect all the way from Great Salt Bay School down to Downtown (connecting with existing sidewalks at Rising Tide).

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

Comp Plan (still in development) is considering designating a new “growth area” for the anticipated needs in the next decade, and it will probably be centered around the Biscay Road/Church Street/Route 1B intersection. Therefore, the bi-mode path becomes even more important to install.

## **ISSUES**

Unclear funding status

Possible land ownership complications

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Considered to be in progress. A virtual public hearing was held by MDOT in the summer of 2023. The town is committed to the project and is responsible for 20% of the cost. The bi-modal pathway is currently planned for FY '25 and '26. The town's TIF (Tax Increment Financing) tool has been extended in early 2024, and the future associated generated revenues may be used towards this project.

**PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)**

**PROJECT** PSAC 5 - Biking Actions, including Bike Racks, Bike Lanes

**PSAC LEAD** Marilee Harris/Adriana DePalma/Kristina Verney/Katie Huntington



**LOCATION**



## **HISTORY**

There are a number of distinct parts to this project, and most of them were initiated by Mary Anne Moisan over about a three-year period ending in October 2023, when the Town accepted and approved a statement, called the “PSAC Resolution for Bicycle Safety and Accessibility”, about the need to include bicycle matters whenever it addresses changes in the transportation infrastructure. Included with the resolution was a checklist to assist the Town Manager to consider all possible relevant aspects.

In summary, the distinct parts of the long-term project consist of:

- Bike racks (design, locations, cost-including shipping, installation, maintenance, funding sources). We note that it is not necessary to focus on one design, although opting for a single color might work. Initial locations might include the town office, the public restrooms in the parking lot, and the chamber of commerce. We may be able to include locations of bike racks on future editions of our maps.
- Bike lanes
- Bike trails
- Shoulders alongside road surfaces.
- E-bike provisions

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

The plan is still being finalized, but the present draft does include various bicycle-related elements:

- Paved shoulders on Bristol Road
- Promote connections to East Coast Greenway
- Enforce the “PSAC Resolution on Bicycle Safety and Accessibility”, including support for installation of bike racks.
- Explore bike lanes along Route 1 B from Rising Tide to Biscay Road
- Possible request for town status as a designated “Bicycle Friendly Community” by the League of American Bicyclists.

## **ISSUES**

As a first step, we need to finalize process of selecting, obtaining and installing bike racks

Need to provide bike lanes along Bristol Road all the way to town border

Need to ensure that future shoulders are adequate for cyclists to use

Need to extend our thinking to include Newcastle.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

To be clarified. Some guidance will come from Comp Plan when finalized.



## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 6 - ADA Compliance and Safety (incl ADA-Accessible Dock)

**PSAC LEAD** Jim Kutsch (and Anton Lahnston re: Dock)

**LOCATION** General throughout the town of Damariscotta



**HISTORY** PSAC has not hitherto pursued this area of ADA compliance systematically, although some work has been done in preparation for a possible ADA Compatible boat ramp for river access. However, current obstacles in terms of complicated ownership issues mean that this is unfeasible at this time.

LCRPC has, however, conducted an ADA Compliance Assessment for the town, as part of the Comp Plan process, and found some violations particularly in the downtown area.

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

The LCRPC non-compliances are noted on one of the Comp Plan maps, provided by Laura Graciano.

## **ISSUES**

There is a strong need for the town to work on compliance, and PSAC is committed to supporting that compliance. Crosswalk road markings do not survive winters, and a better solution is needed. Furthermore, winter damage is often done to the sidewalk embossed footpads at each crosswalk (see photo). Maybe cases for improvement will involve work on downtown sidewalks, crosswalks and additional pedestrian-activated lights.

The work already put in place related to the ADA-Compatible boat ramp will probably re-emerge as a consequence of its current inclusion of the draft Comp Plan.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Unclear. Need to start with the LCRPC ADA Compliance Assessment report.

**PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)**

**PROJECT** PSAC 7 - Miles Street Sidewalk Completion

**PSAC LEAD** Anton Lahnston



**LOCATION**



## **HISTORY**

During 2023, the culvert crossing on Miles Street was rebuilt, and the road surface was raised so as to be compatible with anticipated sea-level rise predictions. Significant riprap was added. At the same time, two other improvements were added to make pedestrian access to the hospital safer: first of all, a partial sidewalk, with granite curbing, was added at the hospital end of the road, and new lighting, guardrails, and a new water line were installed, but there was inadequate funding to complete that part of the task. Then, a pedestrian-activated crossing signal (RRFB - Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon) was installed on Bristol Road at the junction with Miles Street, to connect with the sidewalk on the east side of Bristol Road.

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

There is nothing specifically referenced in the Comp Plan's current draft, since the work is considered largely completed.

## **ISSUES**

The main issue is that the work is incomplete, with unclear ongoing actions, schedule and funding. At present, it is not totally safe for pedestrians (particularly if needing wheel chairs) to attempt to go/come between the town and the hospital, because of the missing section of sidewalk on Miles Street.

There is an ongoing subsidiary issue regarding the speed of traffic on Bristol Road (currently 35 miles/hour), and the absence of a true pedestrian - operated traffic stop sign (the present sign simply flashes a warning, but does not produce a red stop light for road traffic).

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Unclear status, and availability of publicly-raised funds for completing the task.

**PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)**

**PROJECT** PSAC 8 - "Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone" including Route 1b "Canyon".

**PSAC LEAD** Derek Webber



**LOCATION**





## HISTORY

Over the years, several surveys of townspeople have indicated the need to extend the sidewalks from downtown to the more northerly parts of Damariscotta.

The “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone” is a PSAC concept intended to represent a completed length of sidewalk stretching all the way from Rising Tide to Hannaford. It would effectively link together the downtown area with the remainder of the commercial area of the town. It was first introduced during a public town meeting introducing a TIF district, whereby some possible funding could be raised for at least partial sidewalk construction. The TIF received Selectmen approval on 19<sup>th</sup> Feb, 2020. At this stage, the engineering work on the backbone has not been done, but it is clear that this is not a short-term project. Furthermore, not only pedestrians, but cyclists should also be considered when designs are produced. A glance at the photographs is enough to point out the dangers to pedestrians, and cyclists, who attempt to undertake this Route 1B at present, and yet people do try to negotiate their way along it. Ironically, it is so risky and unsafe that very few even do attempt to do so, and therefore the accident statistics do not pick up on this as an issue.

There are two major areas of difficulty along the length of the proposed “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone”, which deserve extra attention in search of solutions, and which are therefore separately addressed in the PSAC forum. One of them is so dangerous that it has its own identifying name “The Canyon”, and can be seen in two of these images. The technical (and therefore funding -related) problem is that Route 1B just north of Rising Tide and the Car Wash goes through a cutting in the granite bedrock that is common in the region, which makes it difficult to provide adequate room for a pedestrian and bicycle path. PSAC members have been exploring ways in which “The Canyon” can be rendered safer to accommodate the “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone”. The longer-term solution may need an expensive phase of rock blasting, but it may be possible to come up with a shorter-term less expensive proposition.

The other section which needs special attention is the intersection of School Street and Route 1b, which is discussed under a separate PSAC Project. But sufficient to say here, is that there are **no** formal pedestrian crossing points on Route 1B between Rising Tide and McDonalds – a considerable stretch – and the School Street/Route 1B intersection is one opportunity to correct this shortcoming, again, under the context of the need to complete the “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone”.

## COMP PLAN STATUS

In the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan, there are various separate references, which when taken together, can be seen as effectively addressing the need for the “Damariscotta Sidewalk Backbone”:

- Create a Route 1B bike/ped path from Rising Tide to Biscay Road
- Improve safety of all users of the School Street/Route 1B intersection, possibly including roundabout solutions (NB covered under a separate project summary).

## ISSUES

Technical solutions are needed for both the “Canyon” and School St/1B intersection. DW and the Town Planner have been reviewing the issues.

Complications of mixed responsibilities at School Street/Route 1B

Overall uncertainties about engineering and implementation schedules and funding.

An informal pedestrian walkway between Chapman Street and the rear of Main Street Market and Hancock Lumber might be considered for upgrade as part of an interim solution.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

The TIF district envelope, originally approved in Feb 2020, to provide more funds for associated sidewalks, has now been extended. A “TIF Extension” town meeting took place 27 March 2024 in the Town Office, when this TIF extension received Town approval.

Meanwhile, work progresses on Church Street sidewalks, which will at least provide a partial alternative solution for pedestrians/cyclists trying to get from downtown to the Hannaford location.



**PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)**

**PROJECT** PSAC 9 - Public Transportation

**PSAC LEAD** Lisa Hagen

**LOCATION**



## HISTORY

PSAC has not so far engaged with high priority in this aspect of public safety and accessibility, but we have had some influence on the content of relevant parts of town surveys, and so have knowledge of the level of interest in town residents. Therefore, we continue to have influence via the Comp Plan (see below) on what needs should be met.

Specifically, in this project we need to address:

- Rail service
- Concord bus services
- Taxi and Uber type services
- Jitney connections for out-of-town parking (and rail station). We note that Lincoln Health is currently operating an employee Jitney Shuttle which is carrying 15 pp three times/day for various shifts going from/to a parking lot at Belvedere and Miles campus.
- Item A5 from CRP Community Actions (implement strategies that increase public transit ridership).

## COMP PLAN STATUS

The current draft of the Comprehensive Plan (still under development) contains specific relevant references to:

- The need for a Parking Study
- The provision of appropriate bus stop pull-offs for the Concord bus
- Continuing support for rail travel

## ISSUES

With regard to rail service, there is a need to work to support Newcastle in upgrading its railway station infrastructure, including parking, and a Jitney service. There is a need to assist the railway service providers to continue to explore the best way to provide passenger service. They conducted some surveys of passengers last summer when they were carrying out some test runs (see the photo at Newcastle drop-off).

With regard to the bus service, there is a need to provide a bus stop arrangement which does not block traffic on Main Street or cause pedestrian safety hazards during the stops.

Maybe there could be a development of the Lincoln Health's Jitney shuttle to support town needs by adding a few extra stops, and/or more frequent operation.

We should also include Newcastle, too, while doing our homework.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

No attempts have been made thus far to obtain financial support for this project area, but it may be possible to apply for a grant via the Community Resilience Partnership under Strategy Area A, specifically A5.

PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 10 - Belvedere/Route 1 Rotary – Pedestrian and Bicycle Crossing

**PSAC LEAD** Derek Webber



**LOCATION**



## **HISTORY**

This rotary has been designed and is part of the MDOT's ongoing task list. Rotaries are not very common in this area, and its design and implementation will therefore be an important test case. The intersection itself is recognized as dangerous by the accident statistical database of the State, having seen eight or more crashes in a three-year period. We have an interest in other intersections around town which might benefit from a rotary/roundabout solution, and so we intend to see what lessons we can learn from this project. Of particular concern are what provisions will be made for pedestrians and cyclists at the intersection, and what will be their ability to safely cross over Route 1 and continue onwards over Belvedere Road. MDOT held an on-demand public meeting in June/July 2023 to address any issues at that time.

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

Considered as work in progress in the current draft of the Comp Plan.

## **ISSUES**

Arrangements for pedestrians and cyclists. We may need to discuss with Dave Allen, the regional engineer for MDOT, to ascertain what provisions are being made. Can we perhaps use the new splitter islands in this way?

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Considered to be fully funded, at \$4.0M, with a scheduled start in 2025.

## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 11 - Walking and Bike Trails Development

**PSAC LEAD** Marilee Harris and Katie Huntington

### LOCATION



### HISTORY

The photo shows an area in Michigan where they make great efforts to create and maintain walking and biking trails (largely for the benefit of students and faculty of Ann Arbor university).

In Damariscotta, Coastal Rivers has been the main provider of such infrastructure to our community to date, and they are working steadily towards adding to their network and connecting up parts that are currently separated. However, they can only offer this on property which they currently manage.

PSAC's main contribution thus far has been to ensure that such trails are included in each subsequent edition of the Twin Villages Walking Map.

There have been some longer-term visions of establishing a walking trail that would go all the way from the Coastal Rivers Round Top trail head, and going around behind Hannaford and in an arc eventually connect up near Lincoln Health via a trail roughly parallel to High Street.

Such a trail, if it were possible, would bring extraordinary health benefits to the town. Some preliminary work, a couple of years back, identified some potential routes below power lines, some of which are used by snow mobiles.

### **COMP PLAN STATUS**

In the current draft of the Comprehensive Plan, there is some language about evaluating selected public rights of way to see if they can be upgraded for bike/ped interconnectivity purposes.

Language is also included to encourage the installation of sidewalks and bike lanes to link together the town's future "growth areas" with the original town center.

Otherwise, there are no specific references to identified locations for such trails.

### **ISSUES**

We have not in PSAC been able to devote enough focused effort to move these ideas forward.

### **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

No current plan, or schedule, or financing identified – although there is abundant infrastructure money becoming available from Federal and State funding opportunities, and to some extent the newly Extended TIF could contribute over time.

## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT** PSAC 12 - Sidewalk Design Elements and “Complete Streets”

**PSAC LEAD** Derek Webber

**LOCATION** N/A

### **HISTORY**

This is a new concept for PSAC to consider, and thus far we have not done any work in this area.

A good first step would be to find out what is implied under the “Complete Streets” rubric.

And then, it would be helpful just to monitor the “Complete Streets” website and webinars and report back to PSAC with any matters of interest.

### **COMP PLAN STATUS**

At present the draft Comprehensive Plan document contains the request for the town to produce an ordinance which would include sidewalk design requirements. Among the suggested elements are minimum widths, curb types, street trees – for shade and other health benefits. Another idea would be to add in bench seats at appropriate distances.

Another section of the draft Comp Plan currently includes language to advocate at State Level for MDOT’s customer service ratings to include “Complete Streets” criteria, especially within village areas.

### **ISSUES**

PSAC needs to begin to draft some ideas for consideration in our community, so that we can support the anticipated steps to eventually seek improvements at the state level. We need to begin to do some research to support proposals for eg trees along sidewalks, bench seating ditto, citing health benefits data. “Complete Streets” may be seen as a general philosophy, which might have implications across several other project areas. We may not ultimately wish to totally subscribe to its criteria (it may deprive us of some flexibility), but it could provide some useful guidance for potential new ordinances.

### **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

Currently no schedule, no funding.



## PSAC PROJECT SUMMARY (May 2024)

**PROJECT**      PSAC 13 - Bristol /Main Street/ Church Street Intersection

**PSAC LEAD**      Marilee Harris

### **LOCATION**



### **HISTORY**

PSAC has not previously addressed this junction as requiring improvements. Probably at least in part because it is daunting 😬 This is the crucial point at which all peninsular traffic meets up with the local town traffic of Damariscotta. And, importantly, it must be noted that much of the road traffic going up and down Bristol Road involves trucking. If we add into the mix that Church Street does not align with the intersection, but (even if we ignore for now the addition of Vine Street in the same geographic area) introduces a “dog-leg” element into the mix, then we see the complications. Historically, the Bristol Road part of this intersection has become wider and wider as traffic has increased. Meanwhile, the needs of pedestrians have not been considered of

primary importance, and at present pedestrians must navigate a series of crosswalks, without the benefit of any fully-coordinated pedestrian-activated crosswalk signals. It is also dangerous for bicycles to navigate.

It seems clear that PSAC now needs to include this intersection as one of its ongoing projects, and that some alternative solutions be formulated to handle the traffic conflicts, both in the longer term (which might involve a total redesign of the intersection), and in terms of short-term measures to assist pedestrians.

## **COMP PLAN STATUS**

In general, the Comp Plan makes a case for improvements to infrastructure to make roads and intersections safer for all – and that includes for pedestrians and cyclists. And the Plan contains traffic accident statistics which show this general region of requiring attention, although at present there is no specific named reference to this junction. Furthermore, the draft Plan contains a recommendation for Damariscotta to become a “Bicycle Friendly Community”, and clearly this junction would be an implied locus for future action in that context. We are aiming for pedestrians to be able to walk all the way from downtown up to Great Salt Bay School, and this junction, right at the start of such a potential walk, at present is not a good example of what we are seeking for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

## **ISSUES**

There are historical buildings all around the geography of this intersection – eg Baptist Church, Chapman-Hall House, Chamber of Commerce/Information Office building, the old fire station – which must be considered in any proposed solutions.

There are parking zones (dentists, attorneys, church, Chamber of Commerce, etc) which add complexity to any solutions.

In the shorter term, maybe some tinkering with signal timings might help, but probably it will even in the short term require installing some additional (pedestrian-activated) signals.

Any longer-term redesign, such as considering, say, some kind of roundabout, will be constrained by lack of space (or space which has current uses, such as the bank parking lot).

Another level of complexity will be encountered when bicycles are considered, since this is their entry point to the peninsular and its popular tourist attractions, including the Pemaquid Point lighthouse.

## **CURRENT SCHEDULE AND FINANCING STATUS**

No current plans or financing identified, although the State DOT has stated that it is planning to upgrade Route 1B, without currently identifying exactly what that will entail. It may be helpful to study the current Newcastle/MDOT funding collaboration associated with that town’s tricky intersections.