

**BERKSHIRE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION**

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**LEE AREA TRAFFIC STUDY**

3<sup>rd</sup> PUBLIC MEETING – WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2009

6:30 p.m. at the Lee Elementary School Cafeteria

**COMMENTS RECEIVED VIA EMAIL/PHONE**

**Phone Call:** October 8, 2008

**From:** Lee Resident

The individual praised Mr. Karns' presentation of the Lee Traffic Study last night to the Lee Selectboard and said that it was highly informative and well received.

The individual also provided some insight as to impacts of traffic, particularly truck traffic, along Main Street in Lee; she said that each summer, it takes several weeks for her to get used to the continual (1) noise pollution of trucks jake braking and (2) air pollution (she said that anything with a flat surface is tinged black after a short while).

She also confirmed that left turns from the side streets cause delay; she makes mostly right turns from the side streets but that she cringes whenever even a single car in front of her is turning left. She said that she has had to wait for at least a minute when there is a left turning car in front of her during a time of peak traffic.

**Email:** January 5, 2009

**From:** Lenox Resident

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for asking the public for ideas to quiet truck traffic on Main Street in Lee. My solution to the problem involves cooperation with the City of Pittsfield Traffic Commission and Police Department and does not include rerouting truck traffic away from Main St in Lee or Pittsfield.

My solutions:

1. Strictly enforce posted speeds; lower the Town of Lee's posted speed on Main St to 20 MPH to match the posted speed on North St in Pittsfield, use billboards to remind drivers of the importance of following posted speeds, communicate with the National Association of Truck Drivers and large rig manufacturers to ensure the ability to maintain a friendly adherence to posted speeds on Main Streets nationwide. Strictly enforce a greater distance between vehicle in motion rule.
2. Replace all timed traffic signals in Pittsfield with simple stop signs and solar powered flashing caution/stop light indicators in order to reduce traffic backup and congestion, use street signs to prepare drivers in advance of upcoming strictly enforced lower posted speeds, make 20 MPH posted speed limit signs more visible and use them liberally, plant some flowers around them in summer, and decorate them with seasonal decorations year round to attract the attention of distracted drivers.

3. Restrict Main St from 11:00 AM -1:00 PM daily to deliveries and maintenance requiring use of heavy commercial vehicles.

Above are some of my ideas for quieting truck traffic on Main Streets nationwide but specifically on Main St in Lee, Massachusetts:

It seems that the opposition to my ideas is that drivers do not want to be told how to drive or how fast they will drive their vehicles. If that is true then posted speeds might as well be torn down, they might as well be torn down anyway because they are not obeyed. Limit means not to exceed. Since I have become a more conscious driver and one who strictly obeys posted speeds, I seem to be looked at as a hindrance to traffic flow. But I look at the drivers who drive 5 -15 miles over the limit as hindering traffic flow, and creating an unpleasant experience for pedestrians, bicyclists and even trucker drivers.

It is because of the majority of motorists speeding and tailing that traffic lights are necessary, traffic lights which force drivers to sit for minutes at a time creating even longer lines of traffic back-up, so that drivers moving in opposite directions can proceed through intersections...

**Phone Call:** January 5, 2009

**From:** Stockbridge Resident

The individual is opposed to both the Route 7 and West Road interchanges because there are too many environmental issues along Route 7. The individual mentioned that they had suggested the idea of making a new interchange on Route 8 in Becket that would connect Route 8 North and Route 8 South at the second public meeting, and that she felt like her idea was “brushed aside.” She did not feel BRPC presented any analysis on why the Route 8 alternative didn’t work. She went on to say that the Route 8 interchange is the only “logical” idea to “cut traffic in half” and make a new interchange from I-90 at an appropriate distance from existing interchanges.

**Email:** January 7, 2009

**From:** Stockbridge Resident

I am absolutely appalled that BRPC has trotted out this dead horse once again! How many times does it need to be pointed out that it is beyond foolish and irresponsible to construct yet another interchange in the most sparsely populated area of the state in an area designated as one of the most environmentally sensitive and important regions.

While I sympathize with the town of Lee in its desire to reduce traffic on its main street, this is NOT and will never be a reasonable solution. Why should Stockbridge and the environment pay for the extraordinary folly of those who chose this impractical route in the first place? Go back to the drawing board, Mr. Karns. This solution is unacceptable.

**Email:** January 19, 2009

**From:** Stockbridge Resident

I would like to express concern over your recommendation of a north-only exit at Route 7 from the Massachusetts Turnpike. As I have repeated at hearings over the years when this has been advanced, the construction would come directly in the center of the Massachusetts designated Kampoosa Bog Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The drainage pattern that forms the boundary of the ACEC is critical to the health of the Bog.

The unusual alkaline wetland that is the basis of the Kampoosa Bog (fen) forms the rich ecosystem providing habitat for at least 19 state-listed rare species.

Please note that construction from both east and west turnpike lanes would require extensive construction both north and south of the turnpike.

I hope that you will consider the severe effects of construction and ongoing maintenance of the roadways coming off the turnpike will have on this important resource and that the committee will take this suggestion off the list.

**Written Comment:** January 23, 2009

**From:** Lee Resident

Hello All,

Many thanks for all the work you did on the traffic studies for Lee. If the projections are true for the truck traffic, it's an accident waiting to occur. Thank you again for all the hard work and effort that was done.