

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Daily Commute	when will you be blasting the ledge across from post office?	No response requested.
Daily Commute, Other	Fully in favor of sidewalk upgrades. However, space on this project is extremely tight. Home owners along the new sidewalk may end up losing more than the town gains. It is unfortunate that repaving the existing sidewalk is not an option. The obvious way to make more room, and minimize encroachment: Remove the utility poles and move survives underground. How much would that increase the budget?	<p>Thank you for your support of sidewalks and your comments.</p> <p>Regarding your comment, "Home owners along the new sidewalk may end up losing more than the town gains." The current design of a 5' sidewalk has minimal impact on the abbuters and provides a safe pedestrian facility which, one could argue ads value to the abbuting properties. So it is unclear what you think the property owners "may" be losing that is worth more than what they are gaining in safety and property value, aside from what the town is gaining.</p> <p>Relocating three utilities, Power, Telephone and Cable, underground would be costly to the utilities, project, town and the individual property owners. Each property owner (on both sides of the street) would be responsible for the cost of locating their services underground. This is not an option we can require of the utilities or the property owners. It would also result in significantly more excavation out into the roadway, further increasing the cost.</p> <p>We hope this helps clarify these items so that you can support the project moving forward.</p>
Daily Commute, Other	Thank you for getting back to me. I am a Union resident and wanted a little more perspective on the project. 100k is very reasonable for the proposed work, but still a lot for a small town. Your response has been helpful. Best wishes	No response requested.

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Daily Commute, Safety	There has been no public meeting. Insufficient communication to taxpayers. I am concerned about logging trucks, 18 wheelers, heavy commercial trucks, etc. daily travel impacting safety and proposed sidewalk crossing on a blind hill. Unclear that town has budgeted sufficient funds for this project. Taxpayers/voters have only approved \$50,000 in 2019 and at that time the full scope of the project was not made available. And the town still has not presented the details of the project.	(Stakeholder), Thank you for your comments. Your submittal requested a response, though you did not ask any questions, you provided several comments I will try to respond to. The Department is now doing all public meeting presentations online through our website, which you used to submit your comments. This presentation provides all the up to date information on the project from the proposed design details to the scope, schedule and budget for the project. Your concern regarding the crosswalk is valid and you are not alone. The Department has safety standards that must be met for crosswalk locations. This location has been checked against these and will be checked again prior to being constructed. It is our understanding that the town has an up-coming vote to clear up any funding concerns on the town's end. Regarding your comments that are specific to town process or funding, please direct those to your town manager or select board.
No Topic Provided	(Stakeholder) called and she expressed her concerns with dogs, trash,...she lives on the project and does not support the project.	Comment received via phone.
No Topic Provided	Dear Aurele, Please count me in as a supporter for the sidewalk in Union. Thanks.	Thank you for your support again.
No Topic Provided	(A Stakeholder) called and we spoke briefly. He is in favor of the project.	Responded via phone
No Topic Provided	I returned (The Stakeholder's) call and she expressed her concerns with her driveway grade, water running in her drive-basement.	Returned the call

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No Topic Provided	I would like to know if our town votes down the sidewalk, will the town be liable for any money. Could you please let me know. Thanks	(Stakeholder), Thank you for your email. The town would be responsible for 100% of all project costs incurred, as described in the agreement between the town and the department. That amount is approximately \$74,000 currently. Other than this public meeting process the design is on hold until the town votes. So this number will be kept as low as possible at this time.
No Topic Provided	I am merely curious about the costs vs. benefits of this project.	No response requested.

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<p>No Topic Provided</p>	<p>1) we just finished watching the video on the project and were amazed to see that our private driveway is considered a "key location" on the walkway and that it will be tapered down for walkers to continue onto our private property. We already have problems because boaters with trailers drive down thinking they are going to the boat landing and get angry with us that there is no room to turn around. I think ending the sidewalk that way will just encourage more problems for us and that IF you must continue with this project that walkers should be discouraged firmly from continuing onto private property.</p> <p>2) Also our driveway is very steep and at a hard angle to Rte 235 for visually checking for oncoming traffic. If you are putting a 5-1/2 foot wide sidewalk at the top it (and it properly ends there as a sidewalk) that will make it even steeper. We have a lot of water running down our driveway and icing over so it is a constant battle as it stands now to keep it clear enough to get out of in the winter. I don't see anything in your plans to help us with water run-off. If a sidewalk is at the top of our driveway then our plow in winter will not be able to get all that snow off at the top, making it harder to see out of.</p> <p>3) I have talked to the DOT before about how dangerous the intersection of our driveway is because of speeders. Cars more often than not go over that curve on the top of the hill at above the posted limit and it seems a dangerous spot to put a crosswalk. Are you going to be encouraging walkers to continue down the Rte 235 on the same side of the road or on the other side? Since the fairgrounds is also private property, are you encouraging the public to again go on private land? This seems to be a sidewalk to nowhere and encouraging people to walk this far without a public destination seems to be inviting trouble for the property owners at the end of the line.</p> <p>Please let me know how these issues will be addressed. I am especially worried about the added run-off the sidewalk will direct down our drive and your assumption that it is a "key location". Thank you, (Stakeholder)</p>	<p>Hello (Stakeholder),</p> <p>Thank you for viewing the presentation and providing you thoughts. I will try to respond to them as they were presented in your email.</p> <p>1) The intent is not to encourage folks to walk down your driveway. The sidewalk crosses Depot St. just to the north of your driveway and connects to Ayer Hill Rd., perhaps this is where we can improve our design and make this more apparent moving forward. We connected your driveway to the sidewalk, as we did other drives along Depot St. to provide you direct access to the sidewalk without having to walk out into Depot St. to the crosswalk to get onto the sidewalk. this is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.</p> <p>2) As designed the project will not change your driveway from its current condition and as such will not direct any additional run-off down your driveway. The proposed design simply matches into the edge of your driveway flush with the existing pavement. This will also improve the conditions for snow removal rather. Also, we are proposing to trim some of the bushes to the south to improve visibility for the proposed crosswalk, which will improve your visibility as a result.</p> <p>3) We have minimum sight distance requirements for each crosswalk location. As noted above we are proposing some improvements to this sight distance and will be reviewing the location to ensure that it meets those requirements prior to completion of the design. We are not encouraging anyone to walk anywhere they do not feel safe. The intent of the project is to provide a safe pedestrian facility for people to use. We are not encouraging anyone to trespass on private property. The proposed sidewalk connects the residents of both Depot St. and Ayer Hill Rd. to the post office and the Commons. it also can provide a safe route for those and others to access Ayer Park via Ayer Hill Rd, a town road with far less traffic.</p>

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No Topic Provided	I know this is out of the scope of the project, but crossing 235 at the river end of Ayer Hill Rd is also very dangerous. And the boat landing property there drops off quickly from the road making it dangerous for anyone with walking issues to go down the embankment. Will there at least be a crosswalk and/or signage to warn cars (and speeding logging trucks) coming around that corner of pedestrians in the road?	Good question. As you noted it is out of the project scope, but we can certainly look into that and discuss with the town.
Other	The Union Fairgrounds are private property is the state actually encouraging public trespass?	No, we are not encouraging trespass on private property. The intent of the crosswalk at Ayer Hill is to provide a safe crossing for pedestrians to gain access to the sidewalk from the west side of Depot St. or from the sidewalk to the west side and Ayer Hill Rd.
Other	How are you going to move or blast the ledge on the property at the end of the sidewalk across from the post office? you can make the side walk on the breakdown lane instead.	No response requested.

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Other	<p>I was wondering how the sidewalk project progressed this far without a public hearing first. If a hearing had been held, the town and DOT would have learned whether or not there was public support for this proposed sidewalk. Union's most recent Comprehensive Plan (page 130 bullet #8) states [quote]Pedestrians and Bicycles: To promote pedestrian and bicycle safe options, the Town will welcome opportunities to create multi-use, walking and bicycle paths throughout the Town and especially into interior areas as well as sidewalks in the village and other areas. Through public participation the Town will prioritize potential projects, then seek CDBG infrastructure funds, Maine DOT Enhancement funds, and other sources to create new paths where best suited and in agreement with landowners. Public support for these project proposals will be obtained before the Town commits resources.[quote] In this particular case, the town didn't seek to obtain public support for the project or voter approval to expend taxpayer funds. Now we're finding out that Union taxpayers will owe the DOT \$73,000+ if Union citizens vote in November to cancel the project. Shouldn't a public hearing have been held first BEFORE any financial commitments were made?</p>	<p>Stakeholder, Thank you for viewing the presentation and submitting your comments. The process you outlined is a local process, which to our understanding did take place, though we were not directly involved so cannot provide first hand knowledge. What we can offer is that the town, prior to submitting the project application to the MaineDOT had hired a design firm to assist them by developing a conceptual design and cost estimate. That information was submitted as part of the project application. Therefore we have no reason to think the town leaders didn't have authority to enter an agreement and to move the project forward. Since the town put this project forward, our process is to develop preliminary plans so we have something to present with more accurate cost and impacts identified. This leads to better public comment and a better design that addresses those public concerns brought up and keeps the project within budget. It is not focused around whether or not to move the project forward or not, though it does document the level of support or opposition. I hope you find this helpful and encourage you to inquire with the town leaders as to the process that took place prior to submitting the project application.</p>

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Other, Property Owner/Right of Way, Safety	7 Tree Lane is not a key location, it is a private driveway. You appear to be encouraging the public to continue their walk down 7 Tree Lane. Also the crosswalk to the fairgrounds road is in a blind spot in the road and most traffic comes up over the hill at above the speed limit this could be a dangerous situation.	Thank you for your comments. Please see the response that was just sent in response to your email regarding these same questions and let me know if you have further questions. I apologize for the delay in the response. This is the first project we have used this system for meetings and we ran into a few bugs, which impacted our being able to respond.
Other, Safety	The application was for a sidewalk from Common Road to Ayer Park to provide for pedestrian traffic to Ayer Park. Three curbs and three crossings were added to the plans which are unrelated and certainly increase costs. Since there is already a partial sidewalk near the common, and the most dangerous part of the walk is further south than the proposed improvements, maybe the project should START at Ayer Park and work its way toward the common as funds become available, rather than ditching the town's request and redirecting funds to improvements for the Common area.	No response requested.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Other, Safety	<p>I question the need for this project. I see that as a result of this project there will be less green to walk on and less trees for shade and beauty. I feel safer walking the way it is now. Runoff will be a major issue. Green ways absorb runoff, asphalt encourages it. This project makes no sense to me.</p>	<p>(Stakeholder), Thank you for the good comments. Though you didn't specifically ask a question, by clicking "respond to me by email" indicates that you would like a response. So the following is offered in attempt to clarify/explain the "need for the project". Currently there is no safe place to walk along this route unless you are walking off of the road, which in some places is on folks front lawns, which is trespassing and the terrain is not navigable for everyone, making that option not physically possible. Though you are correct, a sidewalk would mean 5' more pavement, the added runoff will be minor and will be handled by the existing drainage system. Yes, some green space will be lost, but the remaining green space will be enhanced by the addition of the sidewalk, new loam and grass seed. Property owners could choose to add new landscaping to further enhance the beauty. Sort of like adding a deck or porch onto a house.</p> <p>A paved sidewalk would provide everyone a safer place to walk, not just those who are able bodied, but those with physical disabilities and families with young children as well.</p>
Other, Safety	<p>Would like to get a copy of the project graphic if possible can't seem to copy this one. Very recent selectman and want to see this project go through...need it for my push to the public. In color if possible.</p>	<p>No response requested.</p>

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<p>Property Owner/Right of Way</p>	<p>How much has this cost the town of Union to date for the DOT's work. The DOT is aware that this is Route 235 where in the past there have been numerous complaints regarding speed how do you propose to get a pedestrian at the top of Ayer Hill Rd across safely to Seven Tree Rd. There are logging trucks travelling at unsafe speeds how will they stop in time and other vehicles. The owners on the west side of Depot St. cross at the Post Office walk down east side and then cross in the middle of 235 to their homes or do they walk to the top of the hill to the next crosswalk.</p>	<p>The town is responsible for 20% of all project costs. As long as the project goes forward as planned the town would not receive the first invoice until the fall of 2021 and a final invoice after construction is complete in 2022. At the proposed crosswalk on Ayer Hill we are proposing to do some clearing of brush and limbs to improve the sight distance, as well as installation of advanced warning signs for the crosswalk. We will also look at the possibility of installing flashing warning lights (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) at the crosswalk. Residents along the west side of Depot St. will continue to walk where they are comfortable. We are only able to construct sidewalk on one side of the street. however, this does not mean we are encouraging folks to cross the street in an unsafe manner. Thank you for your questions. I hope you find this response helpful.</p>
<p>Property Owner/Right of Way</p>	<p>In total how many trees will be remove and what are the addresses Also, how wide will the sidewalk be where there are telephone poles (5 1/2[quote]) plus???</p>	<p>The plans currently call to REMOVE 11 trees. These are indicated as REMOVE on the plans shown in the presentation. The sidewalk is proposed to be approximately 5' wide behind utility poles that are proposed to remain in place. Thank you for your questions.</p>

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Property Owner/Right of Way	How much money will the Town of Union be obligated for if the Project is terminated by the voters in November 2020,.	The town would be responsible for 100% of all project costs incurred, as described in the agreement between the town and the department.
Property Owner/Right of Way	Estimate to the Town for maintaining the sidewalk for 20 years. Will special equipment be needed to remove snow.	Every town handles maintenance their own way so we are not able to provide a response to these questions.
Property Owner/Right of Way	Per your response on 7/7/20 I asked how wide will the sidewalks be and per the video its states 5 1/2' wide. Per the video because of utility poles the sidewalk must be wider. Please clarify the width not only of the sidewalk but also the width around the poles.	(Stakeholder), The sidewalk is proposed to be approximately 5' wide behind utility poles that are proposed to remain in place. Because each pole is a different distance from the curb line these distances vary. The plans show each location and indicate the distance from the face of curb. Our standard practice is to maintain a 5' wide sidewalk to the greatest extent possible. The 5.5' dimension provided includes the 6 curbing. On this project while others do extend out beyond the right of way slightly.

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Property Owner/Right of Way	Why was there no public meeting before the project got to this point of spending over \$73,000 and the State was informed prior that the Town didn't even have a Public Meeting on this Project. Your own Projects and your Property state "considers the public's input & moves forward".	The Department received an application for the project from the town and the project is only one phase in the town's sidewalk master plan, as noted in the application. The town then entered into an agreement with the Department to design and construct the project. This indicates that the town has vetted this project. The Department's process is to do the preliminary design work and develop conceptual plans, as was presented here, and then seek public comment before moving on to final design.
Property Owner/Right of Way	sidewalk on wrong side of road	No response requested.
Property Owner/Right of Way	will impact future union budget taxes will have little impact in numbers versus current numbers of people walking	Thank you for your comments.
Property Owner/Right of Way	Thank you for the presentation, it was well done. Sidewalks on Depot St seem superfluous taking a substantial portion of many folks yards. I do not recommend. Why a cross walk to the back road of the Fairground, isn't that private property?	No response requested.

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Safety	Can't open full story	<p>(Stakeholder), Were you able to view the video presentation of the project? I am trying to understand what part you may not have been able to see. I see you submitted another comment also so I am wondering if you have now been able to find everything? Please let me know if you haven't by responding to this email directly. Thank you, Aurele</p>
Safety	<p>Thank you for getting back to me. I still cannot view the presentation (I just tried again). My comments are based on the information I already have. The sidewalk was to go to Ayer Park, but now is stopping halfway at the top of a hill for the same cost? What is the purpose of this sidewalk? Who does it serve? Why is this a priority? We have been told this is a done deal without a town meeting on the subject. But we are being asked to vote in November on whether we want the sidewalk without an open discussion. At the very least we should table the project until such time that we can have a town meeting. I found the link to this site by accident while on Facebook, not through any communication from the town or the Maine DOT. I doubt many Union citizens know about this site, but even still I cannot view your presentation. How is anyone able to make an informed decision on this project without open dialog? Thank you.</p>	<p>Let's try to address your access to the presentation first. It will not work in Internet Explorer, so if that is the browser you are using please copy the URL and paste it into a different browser such as CHROME. Let us know if that does not work, We would very much like for you to see the presentation and be able to open the graphic file so you can access all the information.</p> <p>The purpose of the sidewalk is to provide a safe pedestrian facility for folks to use, connection the residences along the project to the post office and Common area and existing sidewalks that lead to the town office and other locations. This location is part of the town's comprehensive sidewalk plan and was prioritized by the town. The town has indicated that prior town meeting have discussed the project prior to the town applying for funding. Further questions regarding town meetings and approval should be directed to the town office. This presentation serves as the public process the Department is required to follow and allows for questions/suggestions and comments from the public. Notice of this presentation went out in the form of letters directly to abutters, newspaper ad, facebook ad, and on the town web page. We have received numerous comments, indicating folks have been made aware. Please contact the town manager or select board directly for dialogue regarding town funding, process and prioritization of this project. We are only able to address questions and comments on design related details of the project.</p>

Topic	Stakeholder Comment	MaineDOT Response
Safety	Thank you for providing our town with information about how DOT has planned to do this project.	Comment received via phone.
Safety	We like the plan but have a question about the crosswalk at the fairground road: Will there be a yellow warning light installed or some other method if the visibility of northbound traffic is poor coming over the hill. People tend to speed over that hill heading into town.	At the proposed crosswalk on Ayer Hill we are proposing to do some clearing of brush and limbs to improve the sight distance, as well as installation of advanced warning signs for the crosswalk. We will also look at the possibility of installing flashing warning lights (Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons) at the crosswalk. Thank you for your question.
Safety	So for clarification only one (1) tree is to be removed. Very much in favor of this project...brings back the historical being of the common.	The plans currently call to REMOVE 11 trees. These are indicated as REMOVE on the plans shown in the presentation. Some of these trees are on the edge of the impacts so they may be able to remain. Thank you for your support of the project.
Safety	This side walk replaces a previous wood sidewalk and a currently buried concrete sidewalk. Suggest that prior to the crosswalk at Ayer Hill that the speed limit be reduced to 35mph prior to the current 25mph signage. At our property 42 Depot we share a ROW that currently has an 8x8 wood barrier. the reason for this is that the water runoff from the north causes basement water issues if not directed to the road. the road is approx 2-3 feet higher than when the house was built. We have historical photos of the road if you would like to view.	Thank you for your comments. We are not allowed to change speed limits as part of our projects here at MaineDOT. There is a process for that which the town has to initiate by submitting a request to the Region Traffic Engineer. The design details are such that all water within the roadway is contained at the gutter line and collected into the existing drainage system until it is outlet at the low point. We are always interested in historical photos of the road if you would like to share them.
Safety	HELLO	No response requested.

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Safety	I am a new property owner in Union and not yet a resident. However I intend on moving to Union in a few years. Therefore I would generally approve of improvements to the town such as sidewalks. I admit no knowledge regarding the funding or the implications to taxpayers. But the addition of sidewalks I believe will improve safety and raise property values in the long run.	Thank you for the comment.