

## Plan calls for roundabout at Route 6 and Shank Painter Rd. in Provincetown

By Katy Ward

Posted at 6:00 AM

PROVINCETOWN — The proposed Shank Painter Road reconstruction project, slated to begin in 2023, will lead to big changes including a new roundabout at Route 6 and dedicated bike and pedestrian travel lanes.

Under the plan, which has been proposed by the town and must be approved by the state Dept. of Transportation (DOT), people driving on Route 6 towards Herring Cove Beach will be greeted by a roundabout at the Shank Painter Road intersection. Route 6 heading towards Herring Cove from there will get a “road diet,” which will turn the current northern roadway into a two-lane road with cars traveling in both directions. The current roadway on the south side of Route 6 will become a bike and pedestrian shared-use lane.

James Fitzgerald of Environmental Partners, the engineering firm the town hired to do the project design, explained how the proposed rotary will work during the select board’s annual traffic hearing on Nov. 19.

“On the north side there will be one slip lane for those who want to continue on Route 6 towards Herring Cove,” he said. “People can use that slip lane without having to travel onto the roundabout.”

Fitzgerald said that the roundabout will help “improve operations and safety,” and avoid “gridlock traffic.” It will also highlight Shank Painter Road as the primary access to town and efficiently process traffic while providing a “traffic-calming feature.”

“The goal is to promote people to take Shank Painter Road rather than tight Conwell,” he said.

The road work is expected to extend along Route 6 from the Shank Painter Road intersection for a distance of about 6,200 feet, or 1.2 miles, towards Herring Cove Beach. It will also include 2,900 feet, or about a half mile, of Shank Painter Road from Route 6 towards Bradford Street.

Dept. of Public Works Director Rich Waldo said the engineers and town staff have met with the Cape Cod National Seashore and the Cape Cod Commission to discuss the project.

“The Seashore sees the benefits of this project with providing connections to their trail system. They support this project,” Waldo said. “And the Cape Cod Commission said the project is consistent with their plans for the Outer Cape bike and pedestrian network. So they are on board, too.”

Shank Painter Road will also get revamped. Both sides of the road will get sidewalks with a “sidewalk apron,” a sloped opening that will provide adequate driveway space for delivery trucks and vehicles. The western side of the road, where the Pilgrim Bark Park and Stop & Shop are, will have a two-way bike lane, separated from the roadway by greenery, in addition to a sidewalk. There will also be ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] conforming wheelchair ramps, parking accommodations “where appropriate,” new signs and drainage improvements, said Fitzgerald.

Portions of Shank Painter will become more narrow. The current roadway for cars ranges from 10 to 15 feet in each lane and the proposed lanes will be uniform at 11 feet, Waldo said.

Fire Chief Michael Trovato, who also owns a business on Shank Painter Road, said he worries that traffic will get backed up on Shank Painter because it will be more difficult for cars to pass a vehicle that has stopped to turn. The fire station is on this road, so slowing traffic here would increase emergency response times, Trovato added.

Jay Gurewitsch, who lives off Shank Painter Road, said he’s very much in favor of the project, but is concerned about the positioning of the sidewalk, especially as a dog walker going to the Pilgrim Bark Park.

“Shank Painter is a disaster zone and this [project] will solve a myriad of problems,” he said. “My only concern is sticking humans between racing bikes and racing cars.”

Funding for the project will come from the Mass. Dept. of Transportation’s TIP (Transportation Improvement Program). The overall cost is estimated at about \$9.4 million, said Waldo, but that figure could change. The state will pay all construction costs, but the design phase is being paid for by the town, using about \$186,000 from a town meeting appropriation and about \$121,000 from Chapter 90 funding, said Waldo.

“We will ask town meeting voters to fund another \$320,000 in April to complete the design,” he said, bringing the total design cost to about \$628,000.

“[State officials] are enthusiastic for this project because of the ‘Complete Streets’ initiative,” said Waldo, adding that this project put Provincetown ahead of 15 other communities to receive funding.

“Most of the work is within the town-owned land with the exception of a small portion within the national park,” he said. “They will cover the cost of improvements to both jurisdictions.”

Currently the project is still in the conceptual design phase.

“We most certainly will bring this back to you,” said Waldo. “This is the concept we are looking at and we will dive into it a little deeper with more comment. We plan on proceeding with the design, but with the notion things might change.”

Waldo said engineers hope to have 25 percent of the design secured by January 2019. A public hearing with the Mass. DOT will be held in December 2019, with the final design completed by February 2022.

“We have had four public input sessions to date,” Waldo said by email on Monday. “Public input is important to us and DOT and has been useful so far. Throughout the phase of the project, the design team and DOT will have several iterations of review. If DOT does not approve of an element of design it would be up to the design team to justify the design and request a waiver.”

If the public objects to this plan, the DOT could withdraw funding, “which would be a real loss for Provincetown,” he said.