

Wilmington Selectboard Meeting Minutes December 2, 2025

Present: Tom Fitzgerald, Vince Rice, Tony Tribuno, Charlie Foster, John Lebron

Others Present: Scott Tucker, Jessica Archambault, Nikki Steel, Jon Hurdle, Jack Widness, Patsy Reagan, Therese Lounsbury, Nina Truslow, John and Rachel Lazelle, Jamie Roy, Laura Stone, Gemma Paulson, Jonathan Griffin, Carol Bois, Emily Carris Duncan, Pam Greene, Jeremy Salvatori, Sara Molina, Josh DeBottis, Senator Seth Bongartz, Joanne Yankura, Dennis Heberlein, Jen & Chris Engel, Ann Loughran, Jessica Lee Smith, Samantha Kondracki, Cheryl Trudeau

Meeting called to order at 5:59 pm

1. Visitors, Public Comments, Possible Changes to the Agenda

- Add a Liquor Commission after the bridge update, special event permit
- Move minutes to next meeting

2. Approve minutes of November 18, 2025

- Moved to next meeting

3. Bridge #31

VT AOT and VHB gave an update on Bridge #31

- The existing bridge has undergone many repairs this year and is on a more frequent inspection schedule now. They are hopeful the latest repairs will get us through until the replacement is set to take place. Mobility and traffic, the park, hydraulics and historic values are all items that have been considered. There may be temporary impacts to Riverbank Park, but the plan is not to have any permanent changes to it. Limiting the impact on vehicle and pedestrian traffic is a priority, but there will be impacts. They are looking into the width of the bridge as it is narrow for over-sized loads plus pedestrians. Relocating overhead utilities will be an extensive part of the project as well as moving the utilities that are attached to the bridge. Accelerated construction seems to be the preference based on input from the community meetings that were held.
- Detours, a temporary bridge, phased construction, and constructing the bridge off-site, while managing traffic flow on and around the bridge construction site were all considered. For an accelerated construction period, we are looking at the bridge being closed completely estimated for 28-days when the contractor will work 24/7 and have the space necessary. There is pre-construction and post-construction work to be done leading up to the complete closure. Fourteen days leading up to and after the closure are estimated for one-lane travel. The official re-route would take vehicles/trucks to 100 South, Route 8, Route 7, and Route 30. A temporary bridge was considered off South Main St that would come out behind Crafts Inn, but that was not the preferred choice, since it would lengthen the project, a much longer construction period with greater impacts on the downtown.
- Pedestrian access during construction; a temporary bridge is proposed near the existing Bridge #31 using the park and some of Crafts Inn/Molly Stark area; Reardon's Bridge would require a ramp and is a long route for pedestrians to walk for downtown access, is not viable.
- Alternative; no action was considered, and rejected, since the bridge is deteriorating rapidly. Rehabilitation; would address some but not all issues, 50 years or less bridge life. Bridge

replacement on alignment; would address both hydraulics and structure(s) deficiencies, with a 100-year life expected. Replace off alignment; site is too constrained and rejected. Replace on alignment is the best option, utilizing the accelerated construction option (3a), it is estimated there would be a full closure of the bridge for 28-days and 14-days single lane closure. They would widen and lengthen the bridge, slightly. Both Molly Stark and Riverbank Park would have to be restored by the contractor after construction.

– Selectboard comments

- Lebron; moving the utility back and forth is what makes the town share double? That is correct. For the 28-day full closure, what happens with traffic? That is what the detours would be for. Locals can use more local roads, but official detours will be on state roads.
- Tribuno; will there be another meeting like this in the future? After plans are completed, they will be sent to the town and asked if they would like another meeting
- Foster; When does the state review the proposal? The state has reviewed it and signed off on this recommendation. If something is brought up tonight that may need a second look, it will be brought back to them. What is done to advertise that downtown is still open? Yes, at a road closed sign, they have posted that businesses are still open.
- Rice; would like to consider a permanent pedestrian bridge and make it a covered bridge. A permanent bridge was considered but ruled out due to many constraints.

– Public comments

- Barker Willard; would you not need a more local detour for fire/police? There are alternatives– parking vehicles on either side, using Mutual Aid, etc.
- David Richman; have you considered incorporating lighting into the bridge? There are lights on the original structure so lights can be added to be similar to what is currently there. A police officer should be down there when it is down to one lane, and it should be scheduled during the quiet times.
- Samantha Kondracki; would like to see a permanent pedestrian bridge. Is there a way around the use of federal funding? It depends on how significant the park is.
- Jack Widness; in terms of evaluation criteria, who determined the red, yellow, green? Were local authorities consulted? This is something VHB has used in the past, so they determined them. There is no official scale in terms of determining if something is a good/fair/poor improvement.
- Emily Carris-Duncan; traffic management would be helpful. If detouring into Jacksonville, having some traffic control in the center would be helpful as well. Is there going to be an official detour for traffic going to Dover? They are looking at one. There is a chance the intersection may need to be closed for a portion of time.
- Rob Marzelli; in terms of the temporary bridge off South Main, would it be one lane or two? It would be two lanes and pedestrians. Where would all the cars that normally park down there end up parking? That was one of the reasons that option had been ruled out. The temporary bridge currently being discussed is just a pedestrian bridge next to the current bridge.

- John Lazelle; utilities are being moved to South Main and cross near Crafts Inn? The whole parking lot floods. It's all a possibility. It could look different once we start talking and planning out.
- Carol Bois; it would be helpful to have a map of the local traffic. Have you prepared for an event like Irene that was only 14 years ago? Hydraulics will be updated, and those events will be considered.
- Dennis Heberlein; if a permanent pedestrian bridge is created, couldn't you widen the travel lanes so there is a turning lane East bound turning North? During analysis, adding a turning lane only showed (limited) benefit on weekends during winter months, and created other issues for other turning vehicles. Was eliminating one of the sidewalks completely looked at? No, it was not looked at.
- Brian Lynch; kudos for increasing space for pedestrians and bicycles on the new bridge. In terms of moving utilities, there have been some temporary closures in town day-to-day, and if there is work that needs to be done pre-construction, what is your ability to push to have the utilities moved? How much control we have depends on where they are all going to be re-located.

4. Action Items

- None

Fitzgerald moved to enter Liquor Commission at 7:29, Rice second; all in favor.

5. Liquor Commission

- Tribuno moved to approve a Special Event Permit for Rock River Restorations at the Fashion Plate (31 West Main St) on 12/13/25 from 2:30–5:30 pm catered by VT Distillers, Inc., Lebron second; all in favor.

Out of executive session at 7:31 pm.

6. Other Business/Correspondence

- Town Report Dedication; will send thoughts to Scott this week.

7. Select Board Members Comments

8. Town Manager Updates

- Still hiring for a Police Officer position.
- Highway has hired David Dix as an equipment operator/laborer and is hiring for transfer station/building & grounds. We thank Peter for his work.
- Chamber Gala is on 12/11 at 5:00 at The Hermitage Inn.
- Service Line Inventory; Chris and John will be talking with MSK about a possible grant to complete the next step.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Jessica Archambault

Approved by the Wilmington Selectboard:

Thomas Fitzgerald, Chair

Vince Rice, Vice Chair

Tony Tribuno, Clerk

Charlie Foster

John Lebron