

VOTE NO on Old Farms Road Phase I - Avon doesn't have to sell its soul

On December 14, residents will vote on whether to accept a new vision of "rural New England" and Avon's iconic gateway - one with tractor trailers navigating school zones and a large roundabout in the middle of a mature forest. All for a "free money" grab that would turn Old Farms Road into an even busier thoroughfare.

The proposed roundabout is designed and sized to accommodate tractor trailers, beckoning cross-valley traffic to Old Farms, Scoville and Thompson roads - through two school zones and two trail crossings. Envision that!

Shared accident and injury numbers, for the entirety of Old Farms Road, mislead residents by suggesting the project will significantly reduce incidents. In fact, over nearly 8 years, this section of road has experienced 11.5% of reported accidents, one (1) with injury and zero (0) involving bicycles or pedestrians. Residents deserve straight facts and quantified benefits before saying "go".

"Minimal" widening, tree removal and lighting to "maintain the rural feel" is an empty promise. Detailed plans for the Project show the construction clearing will range from three to six times wider than the new roadway. With extensive barriers, signage, lighting, and no replanting, the "rural feel" will be lost to a "highway feel". The bridge replacement at Waterville Road is a good example of what "minimal" will look like after a relocated roadway is cut through the Old Farms woods.

The Town has failed to negotiate any provisions for open space, habitat preservation or limited development west of the proposed road, as AOF becomes more isolated.

Thoughtful, collaborative planning and investment are needed to improve the condition and usability of Old Farms Road, while protecting the resources and character of Avon. Grant funding is not disappearing.

Vote No - The Town and Community need to work together to get this right; that can't happen if appropriation is approved.

Chip Walters

Avon Resident

