

Bennington Street Lighting Proposal

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) and the Bennington Energy Committee (BEC) have developed a Street Lighting Proposal which will be the subject of a July 26, 2017 Public Informational Hearing.

At the 2017 Town Meeting voters raised and appropriated \$5,000 for the purpose of upgrading existing street lights. The purpose of the funding for replacing street lights, as explained to voters, is to replace current metal halide lights with LED fixtures, at an estimated cost savings of \$60 per year per light, or a collective annual savings of about \$3,000. With conversion costs and incentives, the project would pay for itself in 2.5 to 3 years. With an anticipated grant, the payback would be reduced to 15-18 months.

While researching this funding opportunity the BEC began a subsequent task of looking at current lighting locations to consider any changes in existing street lights. The BEC did a complete inventory of lights based on data from Eversource and discovered several lights were not working and two that don't actually exist. For the lights that are not working, Eversource relies on the Town and its citizens to report the outages. It is possible that the lights that were out weren't noticed or perhaps the neighbors preferred the darkness and chose not to report the outage.

We also identified light locations that seem questionable, as well as three locations that we felt street lights should be added. A set of criteria was developed to objectively decide where lights should be located when considering traffic and pedestrian safety being the only objective for a municipal street light:

- Intersections in the Village area
- Crosswalks
- Route 202 intersections
- Other circumstances relative to safety concerns

With all of this in mind we developed the Street Lighting Proposal which you will find on the reverse side of this dialogue. We think it strikes the right balance, with an emphasis on safety. This current proposal calls for the reduction of approximately 47% of our street lights at a projected annual cost savings of \$4,500; minus the one-time cost of removing the discontinued halide fixtures.

The Selectmen and Energy Committee want to hear from you!

Any lighting that is removed (or added) could affect the totality of lights to be upgraded from metal halide to LED. Before the Board of Selectmen enter into a contract to upgrade light fixtures they want to receive public input to ensure the community's interest is fairly represented. The BOS and BEC ask that you take a few moments to familiarize yourselves with the Town's Street Lighting Proposal.

A Public Informational Hearing to discuss the Street Lighting Proposal is scheduled for Wednesday, July 26, 2017 at the Bennington Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. If you are unavailable to attend this meeting please take a moment to share your concerns, thoughts, and/or comments by email to townadministrator@townofbennington.com or by calling Town Hall at 588-2189. We will be sure to include your comments at the Public Hearing.