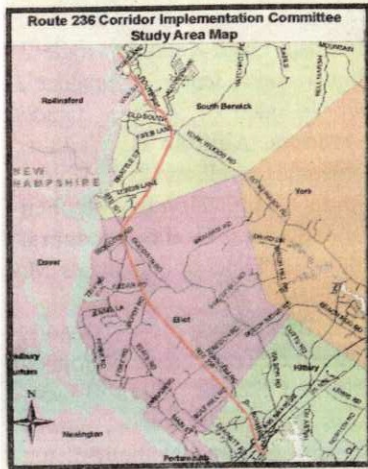


# Committee Hopes to Improve Route 236

By Magen Petit  
editor@theweeklysentinel.com

SOUTH BERWICK —

For the past eight months, the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee and the Kittery Area Comprehensive Transportation Study (KACTS) have been working together in hopes of improving Route 236 that stretches over the towns of Berwick, South Berwick and into the traffic circle in Kittery.



The stretch from Berwick to the Kittery Traffic Circle is the area that is focused on. *Photo courtesy of Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission.*

So why is this a necessary plan of action for Route 236? According to the Southern Maine Regional Planning Commission's website, it states that Southern Maine is growing faster than any other region in the state and the effects of the growth shows up more apparent on the highways. "Over the past 20 years, traffic volumes on Route 236 have more than doubled up to 18,000 average annual daily traffic in some locations. At present, there are currently nine different Maine DOT designated "high crash locations" on the ten-mile stretch from downtown South Berwick to the Kittery Traffic Circle."

A year long study is currently taking place with the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT). The study focuses on traffic in the problem areas and identifies the problems having to do with dangerous intersections, speed



A possible reduction of speed limits on Route 236 may take place depending on the outcome of a study done by Maine Department of Transportation. *Photo by Magen Petit*

limits, intersection conditions, and access. The study also does a traffic count and records the dimensional information. After it's finished, the data will be compiled and analyzed in order to come up with the outcome of the study.

"When the study is complete, we will meet with MDOT and work on things to improve the transportation [of Route 236]," said Terry Oliver, the Public Works Director of South Berwick and also a member of the Route 236 Corridor Implementation Committee and a representative of South Berwick in KACTS.



Terry Oliver is the Public Works Director of the town of South Berwick. *Photo by Magen Petit*

Besides focusing on the dangerous intersections and speed limits, Oliver said there are other issues that will be appointed.

"We want to work on access from all points," said Oliver. "It would be better to have either limited access or a service road.

We are also working on improving the flow of traffic and safer highways."

Another issue the committee faces is the number of over width trucks traveling in South Berwick.

"We want to see the loads get shifted to the Maine Turnpike so they don't have to go through the towns," said Oliver. "Or at least have them come through the town at a different hour, not when it's rush hour."

The committee also wants to focus on the high crash areas such as the intersection at Academy and Vine Streets in South Berwick and other intersections like that one.



The intersection of Academy and Vine Streets on Route 236 are a concern for the Corridor Committee. *Photo by Magen Petit*

Oliver also pointed out that modifications for the landscape might help improve Route 236.

"When the street is wide open and clear of trees, people tend to go faster," explained Oliver. "Maybe by putting some trees up, it might slow people down."

Oliver said the committee's goal is to keep making improvements. He also said that definitive decisions should be made within 12 to 14 months.

As far as thinking short-term, Oliver said some safety would probably happen soon.