

I am hoping I can help get everyone up to speed on the South Main project, as many have noticed the project has essentially begun with the removal of several trees. The South Main Reconstruction project really started in 2007 with traffic and parking studies. There have been several public meetings over the years and the most prevalent comment from the community was that cars tend to speed on Main Street and the desire to have outdoor living space downtown. With this in mind design began to completely reconstruct Main Street, sidewalk to sidewalk. This includes all utilities water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, and gas lines, all of which are 100 years old or more. The hope is that when the project is completed we will not have to dig up the road for anything. Further we are adding a number of "traffic-calming" measures, including narrowing the road. The only area that it will be wider is in the turning lanes in front of Rite Aid. This will allow for more cars to be in the left turning lanes, in hopes for better traffic flow. Also there will be new stop lights and better timing of lights through downtown. The trees that are being removed now are in direct conflict with the new utilities. They have to be removed between November 1st and March 31st per the DEC to protect the Long Eared Bat. Since the contract will be awarded mid-February there wouldn't be enough time to allow the contractor to remove the necessary trees before the dead line, which would then delay the project. All the trees will be replaced with new trees. They won't be full grown, but they won't be seedlings either. We will replant trees and where there are existing power lines, we will have smaller trees that will not grow over the lines and have to be cut up every 10 years to avoid the power lines. Over the last year there have been several more public meetings to get input on everything from new LED streetlights, to bike racks, flower planters, etc. We have tried to communicate as best we can all of these aspects through public meetings, press releases, Facebook, our website, and other means and will continue to do so. We realize that this project will be inconvenient and even painful at times. Our hope is that at the end of the two year project we will have a Gateway to our community that we can all be proud of, whether you live here, just driving through, here for business, or owning a business here! As always if you any concerns or questions please reach out to me via email at [jtaylor@villageofnewark.com](mailto:jtaylor@villageofnewark.com) or 315-331-4770.