

Beaufort County conducted an in-person Public Meeting on January 10, 2023 in conjunction with a Virtual Public Meeting from December 28, 2022 through January 25, 2023 for the proposed Alljoy Road Sidewalk Project. This was the fourth public meeting held for the project.

The proposed 6-ft Alljoy Road Sidewalk project is located within SCDOT’s present 37.5’ right of way. Exhibits were prepared and represented the proposed 6-ft sidewalk to be constructed on the north side of Alljoy Road from Burnt Church Road to Shad Avenue and on the south side of Alljoy Road from Shad Avenue to Thomas Lawton Drive. These were shown at the public meeting and published on the website.

Meeting Summary:

Time Period:

- Public Meeting 4: January 10, 2023 from 5-7 pm at the Bluffton Recreation Center, 61B Ulmer Road, Bluffton, SC – An informal, drop-in format meeting hosted by Beaufort County Engineering along with representatives from J. Bragg Consulting, Inc. and Infrastructure Consulting and Engineering, PLLC. Citizens were provided an opportunity to review the exhibits and have a one-on-one question/answer session with project representatives.
- Virtual Public Meeting: December 28, 2022 through January 25, 2023 – 29-day virtual meeting hosted on www.BeaufortCountyPenny.com

Advertisements:

- E-mail Newsletters – sent to 558 recipients on December 28, 2022, and 587 recipients on January 11, 2023
- Press Release on January 4, 2023
- 10 Yard signs placed on the project corridor on December 28, 2022

Public Comments:

45 total comments were received by submitting the comment form during the public meeting or from an online comment form, mail, and e-mail. Comments with a valid mailing address will receive a mailed response to their comments. The following is a summary of comments received:

- 24 comments were submitted at the Public Meeting.
- 16 online comments were submitted (1 was a duplicate).
- 5 comments were emailed to Beaufort County Engineering.

On the Comment Form, they were asked if they were “In Favor Of” the project by answering “Yes” or “No”, if they resided near the sidewalk “Yes” or “No”, and if they would utilize the sidewalk “Yes or “No.” This is a summary of those who responded to the questions:

Questions	Yes	No
Are you in favor of the proposed 6’ sidewalk?	31	12
Do you reside near the proposed 6’ sidewalk?	41	3
Will you utilize the proposed 6’ sidewalk?	33	9



Note:

- A comment submitted at the in-person meeting was also submitted through the online comment form.
- A “Yes” or “No” answer for the “In favor of” question on one comment form was not selected.
- One email was sent with no response to the questionnaire.
- Another comment form had a “question mark” for the “would utilize” question as they did not support the sidewalk because they felt the speeding on Alljoy Road was dangerous.
- On another comment form, both “Yes” and “No” were selected for the utilization of the sidewalk due to width of the sidewalk not being smaller.
- One comment had “No” selected for all three questions.

Other highlights from the public meeting:

- Some citizens were expecting a formal presentation, based on past meetings, even though the meeting announcements stated no formal presentation would be conducted.
- Prior to the public meeting, an e-mail request to the first e-mail newsletter asked “What staff will be in attendance at the January meeting at the Bluffton Rec Center?” A response was provided with “Thank you for your interest in this project. Mr. Eric Claussen and Ms. Ciara Hall will be in attendance for Beaufort County Engineering. We look forward to seeing you at the public meeting.”

During the public meeting, other attendees were overheard stating they were told the Councilmember, County Administrator, and Assistant County Administrator would be at the meeting, or they asked project representatives if they were there. Councilmember Lawson did attend the meeting, but was not present at the beginning due to other commitments.

- During the public meeting, citizens asked about orange paint markings along Alljoy Road and showed photos of the markings on the south side of the road. Project representatives were unaware of the markings. The markings were observed and photos taken on January 11, 2023 when the signs were collected. Various signs had spray paint markings on the ground circling the sign. The paint was also on the road with “arrows” pointing to the shoulder and “Path 15’”. Other markings were on the shoulder with same marking or with horizontal markings showing boundary of 15’. These markings were on the south side of Alljoy Road from Burnt Church Road to the end of the project. They were placed by someone who was not part of the project team with incorrect dimensions and on the wrong side from Burnt Church Road to Shad Avenue.
- The sidewalk width was discussed with various citizens. There were a few who wanted the width reduced and others who wanted it increased.
- Citizens also stated another accident happened at the end of Alljoy Road. A vehicle crashed through a wood fence instead of “making the first curve onto the loop”. The broken fence was witnessed on January 11, 2023.

Recommendation:

Based on the comments received from the meeting and previous meetings, it is recommended that the County proceed to construction with the proposed 6’ sidewalk along Alljoy Road.





Comment Summary:

Note: Comments are copied as is with no edits.

(Submitted the form twice) I have been advocating for a sidewalk/bike trail on Alljoy Road for 26 years. Now that I am over 70, it is even more important that I be off the road when riding my bike because my balance is not as good as it once was!
Eventually I will be able to ride to Burnt Church Road and north to Fern Lakes to visit my grandchildren and vice versa. I am very happy that the trail will be built in spite of local opposition.

This project is a waste of resources and isn't doing anything to resolve current issues - drainage/sewage - but will certainly add gallons of fun for someone when there's a big storm...

You want people to be able to enjoy the river??? PROTECT IT! More trash, traffic, stormwater and pressure isn't going to help anything - This entire process really makes me reconsider penny tax and green spaces. This is a waste of resources and everyone's time. No matter how many say no its (unreadable remainder of message)

In addition to supporting the new sidewalk I would like to know where Kirk Bluff Rd. falls in the priority of getting paved.

We have needed a walk for a long time for safety. It would be better if it were 8' wide. It is necessary. That drainage be improved as well.

I can't wait for this sidewalk project! My family and I have lived off Alljoy for over 20 years. We have wanted a sidewalk the entire time! We could not walk our kids to school, we could not walk to church, we could not walk to the boat landing. With this project we will be able to access the beautiful downtown, the Bluffton Parkway and be safe exercising! We are so excited to see this finally happen! I appreciate all the changes you have made to the plans. I have reviewed them and feel that it will be perfect! Our family is in total support! We feel Alljoy will greatly improve in both safety and its appeal! I will not be able to attend the next meeting so I wanted to send my comments. Thank you for the upcoming sidewalk!

The only thing I'm concerned about is the crossing at Shad Ave - still wish it would end at Shad Ave & turn onto Shad Ave from Alljoy Rd.

After reviewing the Alljoy Road construction project drawings at the January 10, 2023, meeting, I feel potential changes can be made to safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists.

In the Alloy Road Proposed Sidewalk Within Present R/W* Typical Section Diagram (see attached) provided at the meeting, it shows that there is a 6-foot sidewalk, 5-foot grassed shoulder, two 10-foot travel lanes, and an undefined width for an existing shoulder. If this existing shoulder on the opposite side of the proposed 6-foot side walk is 5-foot, why can't a 4-foot paved shoulder be added to each side of Alljoy Road along with a 4-foot buffer and rumble strips located on the edge line to safely accomodate pedestrians and bicyclists? If the existing should is less than 5-foot, why can't each side of Alljoy Road have a 3-foot paved shoulder to accomodate bicyclists? Paved shoulders on the edge of roadways serve as a functional space for bicyclists and/or pedestrians to travel. Bicycle share the road signage and painted pavement markings for bicycles needs to also be added along Alljoy Road after construction.

At number 69 on map, stop signs along with a high-visibility crosswalk with raised pedestrian crossing, retangular rapid flashing beacon, and/or yield/stop here to pedestrian signs needs to be considered and added to enhance pedestrian crossing on this section of Alljoy Road.

I think a sidewalk would be a great improvement and is needed for safety reasons.

This is an excellent project and we're very glad that the County is moving forward. We live one block from the proposed sidewalk, and we believe that this project is very necessary for increased safety along Alljoy Road.

I am in favor ot the sidewalk because it provides a safe path to walk/ride bikes from Alljoy to Old Town.

I am so excited! If there is any way I can help or support, feel free to contact me!

I would like to address concern about storm drainage on Thomas Lawton and corner of Garrett St. There is a water leak, BJWSA says it's not their utility. Water has caused the roadway at the corner of Garnett and Thomas Lawton has crumbled and no longer their. Can someone please see why this is happening.





Besides sounding hideous looking, changing the area into a copy of anywhere USA that makes our Alljoy special does not appeal to me. We have owned here since 1994. We understand the growth around us. Pretty sure Alljoy isn't going to see a boom in new housing. My biggest worry is raising the height in my front yard. Currently, the road drains into my yard past my house into my backyard. Usually quite a pond. It affects our drain field which is only 5-6 years old.

I'm afraid as deep as it gets now it may come in the back of the house or pond differently in the front also.

What has been addressed to fix that? Some others passed me have it much worse.

Are drains being put in down the road Like Bridge st?

If so I may be in favor. Otherwise not interested.

No golf carts? I'll bet more golf carts use it than pedestrians.

The cyclists won't use it.

There is no reason to connect tourists to Alljoy boat ramp. Sidewalk is a great safety idea but not 11 feet wide. A smaller more normal size sidewalk (See Bluffton Parkway - 2 ft space, 3 ft walk) would be much more reasonable.

Garnet St keeps water from an old well that bubbles up and erodes the road. The asphalt has eroded away. Please fix.

Information on paving Kirks Bluff Road. Would like to find out if it's on the current list to be paved

It seems like the county is determined to move forward on this project without regard for the residents of this neighborhood. I have spoken to many neighbors and only one individual is in favor of it. Once it is complete, is the county prepared to maintain the whole right of way? I believe they bush hog the spots where the grass and weeds get out of hand a couple times a year now

I own a home in Old Town Bluffton and spend many months each year in Bluffton. I bike approximately every other day when in Bluffton, and regularly bike down Alljoy to enjoy biking on the scenic roads along Thomas Lawton and Pine Island Roads. The bike path along Alljoy will be a needed improvement to safety of those biking along Alljoy. I tend to bike in the morning as soon as the sun rises, so I am regularly on the roads during high traffic times. The cars drive very fast on Alljoy, so the bike path can help prevent serious accidents. Thanks you for planning this sidewalk addition!

Thank you for making this project happen! We walk this area most days and its very dangerous without the sidewalk. We look forward to the completion of this project!

Believe the proposed sidewalk will greatly improve the safety of the area with walkers & Bikers. Would suggest reducing speed on Alljoy.

I feel this path is unnecessary. I walk everyday on Alljoy. I live on Oyster St. There are not many walkers/bikers out. People bring litter, noise, more traffic, and we don't want this near our homes - right now we can't even get the enforcement to help control the speeding problem!!! And it is dangerous!

Nice addition to the area and will improve safety.

Yes, all towns need sidewalks! Alljoy is dangerous for anyone not in a car.

Other considerations, and it seems it would be a priority: .

Sidewalks to MC Riley on Burnt Church Road from neighborhoods of Fern Lakes, Lake Linden, and The Walk.

Sidewalk down Ulmer Rd from Burnt Church Rd to the Rec Center so that MC Riley students and Bluffton residents can actually make use of those facilities. Whe place seems woefully underused.

Is there a discussion for these improvements? Seems it was done for the neighborhood that uses Red Cedar Elementary, why not ours?

Why aren't we getting sewer 1st then sidewalks? Makes more sense. How much of my front yard is easement for the sidewalk!

Add to much traffic and people that don't live in the neighborhood Bluffton has to much high density building now this area should be left a small rural neighborhood.

Enlarge the sidewalk to accommodate golf carts. Extend sidewalk to Brighton Beach. Rehab Brighton Beach and boat landing
*Get it done!!!

Place a 4-way stop sign at Burnt Church & Alljoy.

Stop signs at Thomas Lawton & Alljoy





On the plans, it shows that LOT 50 has one driveway entrance. LOT 50 has 2 driveway entrances. PLEASE add another driveway entrance. I have two entrances that are concrete paved.

Online: Hey, Hope you are having a good week? I am emailing to anyone that can help with the new sidewalk project on Alljoy Road. I live at 181 Alljoy Rd, Bluffton, SC 29910, and I think the sidewalk is a great idea. I went to the town meeting and noticed that the drawing shows that I only have one driveway entrance. My house actually has two driveway entrances that go around my circle. Can you make sure that you add another driveway entrance, so when they are building the sidewalk they do not forget about my second driveway entrance. Please let me know if you have any questions and please email me back once you have received my email. Have a great day.

There is not enough pedestrian traffic in this area to warrant the expense. Bicyclists will NOT use the path. They will continue to use the road. Otherwise, we don't have pedestrian foot traffic in the area to justify this expense.

I walk or ride my bike regularly toward town and will definitely feel safer using the sidewalk. Thank you for this project.

New to Bluffton (from Hilton Head). Definitely all for sidewalk. Thank you!

The proposed plan does not take into a major outfall issue. The existing outfalls have not been maintained in a manner in which they will function with an additional 30,000 square feet of impervious surface. Regardless of the engineering calculations, the card is before the Horse. THIS PATH DOES NOT SOLVE THE DRAINAGE ISSUE, IF THE EASEMENTS ARE NOT GRANTED FIRST.

The plan for the sidewalks looks great! It's too bad it cannot extend all the way to Brighton Beach, however this is a good step forward. Thank you for all of your hard work on this. I know it has not been easy!

What is the reason for the orange paint (thru the properties) on the Southside of Alljoy rd- are they going to be digging for any reason on the Southside of Alljoy?

I live on the corner of Alljoy and Palmetto Beach Rd

I too have deep concerns about the proposed Bluffton Sidewalk/Bike Path Project. I am Susan Matthews and my husband Guy and I have lived at 80 Alljoy Road since July 1980. Alljoy Road is a quaint old residential community where many local "eccentrics", as the newspaper once described us, call home. It leads to Brighton Beach and The Landing. I lost my original Bluffton house in 2016 to Hurricane Matthew, but we loved the area and land so much we rebuilt on the same lot. Our community had considerable damage back then and we banded together to survive. I cannot imagine this scene with the proposed "Path." ALL privacy gone. There certainly would have been site seers and gawkers biking up to my house or walking in my yard in order to see the tree that had fallen through my house and cut it in half. ALL privacy gone. Most Alljoy residents, however, are concerned about the more obvious and pressing problems of drainage and septic. Residents know even a heavy rain can cause blocked ditches to back up. This project has not adequately addressed these issues. I looked at the IE Consulting and Engineering pictures online. If the existing driveways are to remain intact, what is the resulting status of the drainage underneath? I see the project as another unfortunate beginning: the beginning of the destruction of a quiet residential community and, quite possibly, the commercialization of a small adjoining beach. The everyday concerns of the local residents and the good sense of the local leaders who plan and govern it are being lost in the frenzy of the explosive growth of this area, an area now doomed, sadly, to lose its natural beauty and tranquility. And they call it progress.

Why can't this be 4'? Such a small area to begin with and so much space taken. I think the sidewalk is a good idea but design needs work.

I would love to see sidewalks on Burnt church. My kids and I love walking to old town and it's very dangerous coming out of Fern Lakes

This is a much needed project which my husband and I will use most days to walk safely from our home to old town. We're pleased that the path will not require any new right-of-way and will end at Thomas Lawton since "the loop" would not be a safe place for pedestrians as it can be chaotic and crowded when numerous boats navigating the boat ramp/parking/road around the loop, as well as with vehicles and pedestrians already visiting the beach. Our only other concern was the preservation of mature oak trees in the way of the path, but it seems that issue has been addressed with a plan for the path to meander around the trees. Thank you to the folks who have worked hard for us to have the path.

#1 Will create congestion that is unwanted. A sidewalk will only invite people who customarily would not come down alljoy or the boat landing. Not many people walk down Alljoy.

#2 The outsiders using the parking at Alljoy Boat Landing will be heightened as people become aware of the are, ie, the sidewalk.

#3 concern for the drug issue at Alljoy Boat landing. Sidewalk is an unneeded expense.

