

Blowing Rock Traffic Troubles Start Today

Written by Steve Frank

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Speaking of traffic trouble, a couple of hundred Blowing Rock area residents did just that, crowding the upper meeting room of the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum late yesterday, meeting with state DOT officials and hearing from contractors about the four-laning of US 321—Valley Blvd.—through Blowing Rock. Residents, business operators and owners, and those whose lives will be affected over the next four years poured over maps, questioned the look of new retaining walls, and asked about the impact of blasting along the route. Mayor J.B. Lawrence has both the perspective of the town and an affected business owner, “We want to know what the impact on the businesses—the road closings a big concern—and the aesthetic value of the concrete walls is a big issue too. We’re hoping for the best and I think expecting the worst.” That project starts in earnest today, according to district engineer Doug Tetzlaff, with clearing of the path starting periodic lane closures, “We’ll have folks flagging the traffic, road closures will happen when we have blasting.” Signage is up warning that lanes will be closed from time to time as contractors are preparing the path for the real construction—and real traffic impairment—yet to come.