

Carolina Beach Town Council votes to reverse 'road diet' plan

By Marissa Jasek

June 15, 2011 3:19 AM



CAROLINA BEACH, NC (WWAY) — The Carolina Beach Town Council voted 4-1 Tuesday night in favor of reversing Lake Park Boulevard back to four lanes. With so many complaints and overwhelming opposition to the “road diet,” many are saying its about time that the road goes back to the way it was.

“Council acknowledged that narrowing the road to three lanes was a mistake and four lanes is the right thing to do to satisfy and curb the frustrations people are experiencing,” said Dennis Barbour, a former mayor of Carolina Beach.

Last year, the town of Carolina Beach replaced the four-lane pattern on Lake Park Boulevard with two lanes, adding a dual-purpose turn lane, bike lanes, and diagonal parking spaces. Severe congestion problems, safety of bicyclists, and small business sales suffering are just a few of the problems the diet has caused.

“If the traffic is backed up, people can’t turn into the businesses, they can’t park. It’s just really hard,” said Steven Cole, who owns a business on Lake Park Blvd.

Instead of the original estimated cost of \$500,000, a new plan by the Department of Transportation to re-stripe the road is in talks at a cost of about \$160,000.

“That is costly, no doubt about it, but we have a situation now that we just can’t live with,” said Barbour.

Barbour owns a tackle shop in Carolina Beach and says business owners have suffered from the “road diet,” but says he thinks the damage can be undone.

“Whether it takes three months, six months, whatever, I think they’ll be encouraged and they’ll eventually come back the business we’ve lost,” said Barbour.

Though Lake Park Boulevard will return to four lanes, it may not be exactly the same as it was before.