

The Newport Daily News

75 cents
NewportDailyNews.com

NEWPORT ♦ MIDDLETOWN ♦ PORTSMOUTH ♦ JAMESTOWN ♦ TIVERTON

Tuesday
March 8, 2011

MIDDLETOWN

Roundabout solution?

An islandwide study will address the town's biggest traffic problems.

By **Matt Sheley**
Daily News staff

Putting roundabouts at several of Middletown's busiest intersections to ease traffic congestion is among the recommendations resulting from the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study.

A roundabout at Two Mile Corner, where East Main and

West Main roads meet, another at Coddington Highway and West Main Road, and a third at Aquidneck Avenue and Valley Road are among the recommendations in the preliminary report that was presented to the Town Council on Monday night.

"Several of them will be part of the final plan," said Tina Dolen, the executive director of the Aquidneck Island Planning Commission. "They're so different from rotaries, where traffic goes slamming in and bouncing around. Roundabouts are shown to be safer,

slow traffic down and are encouraged by (the state Department of Transportation)."

Consultant Bill Ashworth of Vanasse Hangen Brustlin Inc. — the group handling the study for the planning commission — said the \$4 million proposal for a roundabout at Two Mile Corner would go a long way toward slowing traffic and reducing accidents.

The \$500,000 study was launched during a July 2009 press conference by then Gov.

SOLUTION A8

Solution

Continued from A1

Donald L. Carcieri, with the aim of improving the local traffic flow. A timeline released Monday indicates a final copy of the report is expected to be completed by the end of April, with a formal presentation sometime in May.

Dolen and Ashworth said most of the proposals need local support and funding before they can move forward.

In addition to the round-

abouts, the Aquidneck Island Transportation Study recommends constructing a new north-south route on the west side of Aquidneck Island, linking Burma Road to Coddington Highway through Naval Station Newport to the south and Stringham Road in Portsmouth to the north.

Ashworth said plans to give East Main Road a "road diet" were tied into that project, one where the number of travel lanes for cars, trucks and buses would be reduced from four to two from Aquidneck Avenue north to Turnpike Avenue in

Portsmouth. East Main Road would have two wide travel lanes along with a new corridor for bicyclists, he said.

When combined with the Burma Road project, the two proposals carried up to a \$56 million price tag, Ashworth said.

"You wouldn't be losing any lanes," he said. "You would just be shifting a couple of lanes to Burma Road."

Send reporter *Matt Sheley*
e-mail at
Sheley@NewportRI.com.

