Proclamation

***WHEREAS,*** access to mobility is a fundamental part of health and community connection, allowing Bethlehem residents to reach education and employment opportunities, medical services, shopping, recreation, and visit friends and family, and

***WHEREAS,*** as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the cost of owning a car is approximately 60 cents a mile, with average household spending on transportation reaching $9,465 a year in 2020, too many Bethlehem residents cannot afford the cost of a car, and too many of the people residing in the Town of Bethlehem do not have a driver's license, either because of their age, economic ability or a condition that does not allow them to drive; and

***WHEREAS,*** transportation represents the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions, and in order to meet greenhouse gas emission reduction goals, we must reduce emissions in our transportation sector; and

***WHEREAS,*** in addition to greenhouse gas emissions, cars also create tire dust that can enter watersheds; have necessitated freeway expansions that have been detrimental to neighborhoods as well as the animal population and natural eco-systems; and require impervious surfaces for parking, with an estimated 3 .4 parking spaces for every car in the United States, all of which have contributed to transportation being an important environmental justice concern; and

***WHEREAS,*** going a week without driving is great way to: understand how those that cannot drive struggle to get around doing what those that can drive take for granted; bring attention to how we can improve our current transportation system to better meet the needs of Bethlehem and area residents; and improve and enhance transportation options such as transit, biking, and walking pathways as key strategies in our decarbonization efforts;

***NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Selectboard of the Town of Bethlehem in the State of New Hampshire***, do hereby proclaim October 2-8, 2023, as

***Week Without Driving***

in Bethlehem, New Hampshire, and we encourage all people in our Town to join me us this special observance.

Signed on this \_\_\_ day of September, 2023

Bethlehem Selectboard