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Williams Hill Class 4 road

1 message

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Hello Christine,

I am writing to echo many of the concerns that have been brought forward by many of my neighbors, share some information that I wrote to Josh early in the process, and provide personal concerns about the trail committees desire to create a trail along the Williams Hill Class 4 road.

I have not been very vocal or involved in discussions surrounding this topic, because I naively thought that the topic would be dropped by the trail committee when they learned that the majority of our Richmond neighborhood and the neighborhood on the Hinesburg end were not in favor of the project. Instead, I was surprised to see that the committee has continued a confrontational tone towards my neighbor who owns the adjacent land and they have switched positions on a variety of topics, including who the intended users are and whether or not there will be parking. It is unclear why these positions are changing, but they do little to reassure the 2/3 of the neighbors that oppose this project, that this project will be well thought out or designed if it does proceed.

The ongoing discussion that previous maps and GPS can, and will be, used for guiding the trail building has repeatedly established as flawed by people that use utilize techniques and technology to determine boundaries and do construction for a living.

The trail committee has apparently gone back and forth about the anticipated use of this trail, originally stating it was for the neighborhoods (which again is 2/3 opposed) and not in need of parking, but now are discussing establishing parking. The topic of parking was discussed during the meeting and it was clearly stated that Williams Hill is a very narrow, dead end, dirt road that barely accommodates the road crew and first responder's needs. If one car were to park along the end of our road, it would prevent any of these vehicles from turning around or adequately responding to fire in the neighborhood. Many of the driveways toward the end of the hill would require a fire truck to turn around and approach the residence by backing up the driveway, in order to provide equipment and resources adequately.

This is an email that I sent to Josh on May 6th, following the first zoom meeting I attended.

"Hi Josh,

First of all, thank you very much for hosting the Zoom meeting this afternoon. It was helpful to hear everyone's opinions, ideas, and stances on the proposal.

My name is Joe Linn and I have grown up on Williams Hill Rd. I briefly lived in Burlington and Essex before getting the wonderful opportunity to move back onto the hill in 2003. My wife and I are raising our four children near the peak of the hill. I also am a trail walker, hiker, and mountain biker.

I would like to add my voice to the list of neighbors who oppose the idea of opening even a trail through to Hinesburg. I echo many of the concerns that Lauck and my brother (John) voiced during the meeting.

After hearing the members of the trail committee compare this idea to their work connecting Snipe Ireland and Snipe Island roads, I drove over there after the meeting today. Several of my concerns were quickly confirmed, as I found a car parked on the side of the road near the trail head and a couple people walking with an off leash dog. These concerns were noticed on a Thursday evening, so I can imagine there may be more traffic on a weekend.

I had the good fortune of speaking with one of the people that lives on Snipe Ireland, who happened to be walking the road, and was able to discuss his opinions on the trail that was created on their road. He did state that they haven't actually had many issues, but said that the landowners at the end of the road needed to work with the trail committee members, because they were cutting trails off of the right of way and onto his private land in several locations. The right of way was described as much more obvious than what they will find on Williams Hill Road, so this seems to reinforce Lauck's stance that a survey is absolutely necessary. He also stated that there were several rogue bikers who started developing their own trails off of the trail committee's established trail. You can imagine how this will go over with the closest land owners on this hill.

As previously stated, my concerns mirror everything that has already been stated, with emphasis on traffic at the top of this very narrow road where my kids play and ride daily. We also free range chickens and, after 3 dog attacks, have educated our neighbors to respect the need for leashed dogs as they walk by our house. Additional traffic, walking or biking with off leash dogs, only adds to this concern and the potential devastating attacks that our kids have observed.

Thank you for your willingness to obtain feedback,

Joe Linn and family"

I appreciate all of you taking the time to read my thoughts.

I would ask that those involved can take a minute to step back from the procedural steps and respect that the majority of Richmond residents directly involved in this small scale trail, oppose moving forward in any manner to create a trail. I would hope that this information alone could lead to the discontinuation of moving forward with this project.

Joe Linn

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