

Present: William J. Keller, Jr. (Chairman), Lisa Eggleston, Christopher Morely,  
Michael Hunter, Jody Kablack (Planner)  
Absent: Michael Fee, Eric Poch (Associate)

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 p.m.

***Scenic Road Bylaw Public Hearing – Newbridge Road***

The Town Engineer/Department of Public Works Director, Bill Place; Tree Warden, Scott Taylor; Town Manager, Maureen Valente and School Committee members were present.

Bill Keller read the hearing notice into record and reviewed the file documents.

John Brackett, Superintendent of Schools, discussed the previous application which had been denied by the Planning Board on March 24, 2004. He submitted to the Board copies of 3 letters which were sent to neighbors in preparation for the new bus access project from the Principal at the Nixon School, the Sudbury Police Safety Officer and Mr. Brackett. A letter from the School Committee had been sent to residents on New Bridge Road (which they obtained from the List of Persons) as well as a letter to the Town Manager stating that there were not any replies from residents.

Bill Braun, from the School Committee explained the need for the egress was a safety concern. It would be used for 20-30 minutes in the morning and 20-30 minutes in the afternoon. The egress will be closed by a gate; three main considerations for the location of the gate included:

1. minimal aesthetic disruption
2. to provide egress as far west on New Bridge as possible
3. to provide a reasonable passage for buses

Had the egress been any further west, the buses would not have been able to maneuver.

Pascal Chesnais, 152 New Bridge Road:

He did receive the mailing referenced by Mr. Brackett, however, it did not articulate that the matter was open for discussion. New Bridge Road is a narrow road; snow plows have difficulty when there is traffic. If the egress and gate are in place, will it be designated as a school road and if so, will there be signage identifying that?

Also, according to the bylaws, isn't there a requirement for a public hearing process for driveway regulations?

Jody Kablack: Driveway regulations do not require a public hearing; this is the public hearing required for the Scenic Road Bylaw.

Bill Keller: What is the posted speed limit?

Maureen Valente: 30 m.p.h., if not posted.

Bill Keller: Will it be 20 m.p.h. during school hours?

Bill Braun: There is no plan to change it because the speed limit is close to what we would have normally. Incremental safety would not warrant the cost.

Pascal Chesnais: Disagrees. New Bridge Road is also the last place that gets plowed, which is an added safety issue.

Chris Morely: The paper trail addresses this for emergency access. It is not every day?

Bill Braun: No changes in thought other than: 1) providing a second access means and 2) to decongest the area by allowing the cars and buses to exit separately. There will be 10 routes going in, only a couple of routes would enter by Concord Road; all would go out onto New Bridge Road which would take approximately 15 minutes.

John Brackett: The gate would be attended by a custodian.

Paula Adelson: Will there be a sign for allowance of use? If there is a problem, who do we speak with?

Bill Braun: Your first contact would be the principal, Rita Bissonnette-Clark; then Superintendent, John Brackett and then the School Committee. The school always has the presence to direct and check safety.

Helene Simon, 158 New Bridge Road:

She is concerned with the exit at the end of the day. Has anyone reviewed the issue of the buses leaving for Nixon and the High School together being problematic?

Bill Braun: The School Committee has not looked specifically at that, however, does not believe that is a good enough reason not to do this proposal. If any drivers are safe drivers, it should be school bus drivers. In addition, the High School children are older aged. Although they did not do an analysis it is their judgment that it is okay.

Helene Simon: Opines that does not sound practical.

Lisa Eggleston: It means you will need to stop for a few minutes while they go and then you continue.

Pascal Chesnais: Will there be a person directing traffic on the access drive (at New Bridge and Concord)?

The School Committee will address.

Lisa Eggleston: You stated there would be 2 buses entering in from Concord Road?

Bill Braun: Of the 12 routes, there were 2 that could enter that way. At this point, it is not a plan to enter there.

Lisa Eggleston: Is it a one way egress at the 18' paved portion?

Bill Place: Yes.

Paula Adelson: You commented that drainage and stormwater systems were in place?

Bill Place: They wanted to avoid having additional water go onto New Bridge Road. The drainage design was ½ in the parking lot and ½ on New Bridge Road so that no water from the rounding would go onto New Bridge.

Carole Wolfe: Would like to request as few stones be removed from the wall as possible.

Bill Place: They will do the rounding with stones which are already there. It will remain dry wall construction.

James Hollister, 188 New Bridge Road:

How will the drainage work? The change caused by this egress will directly affect his house.

Bill Place: They will install a catch basin and 30' of sand at that location. Any excess water will go into the catch basin.

Lisa Eggleston: Mr. Hollister, this will actually improve infiltration for you.

Bill Braun: The intent was to be sensitive to the neighborhood. He invited people to talk with the principal of the Nixon School as soon as they have any issue or question. This egress is necessary, at minimal for safety.

Paula Adelson thanked everyone for their input and this opportunity to ask questions. Chris Morely spoke to the School Committee saying the Planning Board had been taken by surprise initially. The Board had not heard of any plans and the driveway was built without consent. That situation was an element in the Planning Board's denial of the previous application.

Lisa Eggleston: If this is approved tonight, what is the timeframe?

Bill Braun: It is their hope to be completed by the end of the year.

Bill Place confirmed the probability of that timeframe.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To close the public hearing on the Scenic Road Bylaw Public Hearing for New Bridge Road.

On motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To approve the removal of the 5 trees and 40' of stone wall on New Bridge Road as written in the Public Hearing Notice, with the provision as few stones be removed as possible and those that are be used as fill-in.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.