

10732 Route 116
Hinesburg, VT 05461

Monday, October 19th, 2015

Select Board
Town of Hinesburg
10632 Route 116
Hinesburg, VT 05461
Dear Select Board members,

RE: 10710 Route 116 - Parking

The purpose of this e-mail is to draw your attention to a parking & circulation issue that arose as a direct result of the sidewalk installation in 2014. Our concern is best illustrated in Drawing SK-1, contained in the attached information package.

In the pre-construction photo on Drawing SK-1, there is space for a Ford F150 to park on one side of the driveway and leave ample room for a second vehicle of equal or greater size to pass. This critical feature was lost when the sloped grass bank on the eastern side of the driveway shifted several feet to the west as part of the sidewalk installation.

In the post-construction photo on Drawing SK-1, a Honda Fit is parked in a very similar location to the F150. However, even though the Fit is a foot narrower in width than the Ford, there is not even room for a compact car to pass without travelling over the grass.

In the fall of 2014, this problem was brought to the attention of Rocky Martin. Rocky arranged for some additional landscaping at the southern end of the driveway, but these modifications did not meet our needs for two main reasons.

Firstly, and most importantly, at least half of the parking 'nook' created by Rocky falls on the neighboring land to the south. At some point in the future, these two properties will not be under the same ownership, and parking rights will no longer be assured.

Secondly, prior to the sidewalk construction, the driveway in front of 10710 Route 116 could provide parking for four cars and still accommodate a full passing lane.

Post sidewalk construction, there is only one parking space that falls fully within the property lines of 10710 and provides clearance for a car to pass.

The e-mail categorized as SK-2, which was prepared by the former zoning administrator, contains a summary of the town's involvement in the development of the Grillo property. I have highlighted three instances, one of which pertains to the current plan to open a Thrift Store, where it is clearly stated that a passing lane must be maintained to allow access to the former library. The associated sketch mandates a requirement by the Town of Hinesburg to maintain a 10.5' passing lane. How is it that the Town of Hinesburg can create a condition on one property that violates the very requirements that it is imposing on the developer of the neighboring property?

Since the fall of 2014, we have met twice with Trevor Lashua at 10710 Route 116 to present our concerns. Trevor has suggested that we consider blocking the horseshoe so that each party accesses the driveway from their own entry point. This suggestion appears to directly conflict with the passing lane requirements requested by the Town. It also gives rise to an untenable situation whereby tenants of 10710 would have to back on to Route 116 (there is no opportunity to create a space to turn around a vehicle without impinging on the neighboring property).

More than a year has passed since the completion of the sidewalk, so we have elected to bring this matter to the attention of the Select Board. What follows is a description of the corrective action we believe will produce the best result for the landowners and the Town of Hinesburg.

- SK-3 is a scaled drawing of the existing conditions. Note the choke point halfway up the driveway approaching from the south. Note also the widening of the driveway at the beginning of the approach; at least half of the parking nook created on the west side falls in the ownership of the property to the south.

- SK-4 depicts how the paved surface could be widened to allow a full passing lane and restore the original parking capacity. Some of the reclaimed driveway would be taken from the grass bank to the west and some from the

east. The concept is to avoid creating an asymmetrical grass bank next to the sidewalk, but also to avoid a steeply-pitched grass bank to the west.

- SK-5 shows the proposed solution with the new margins of the driveway marked with yellow stakes and string.

The reason the driveway configuration has not been a source of conflict over the past year is that there has not been a time when tenants simultaneously occupied both the old library and the Grillo property. When the “The Grateful Dog” occupied the ground floor, the old library was undergoing renovations. Shortly before tenants moved into the completed library, a fire forced all the tenants of the Grillo property to re-locate. This will all change when the Thrift Store opens in the next couple of months.

We are, and remain, solid proponents of town sidewalks. The right-of-ways requested by the town were signed and returned promptly, without conditions that might require the town to incur additional cost. However, we feel very strongly that the Town of Hinesburg needs to take-on these modifications and make us whole.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. D. Goldsmith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

James D. Goldsmith