

*Town of Atkinson
Board of Selectmen
Public Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2013*

W. Baldwin opened the Public Hearing of Monday, October 21, 2013 at 7:01pm in the Atkinson Town Hall.

Highway Safety Committee Members Present:

W. Baldwin, Selectman
F. Beckwith, EMS Captain, Atkinson Fire Department
Sgt. P. Caggiano, Acting Chief, Atkinson Police Department
S. Killam, Planning Board Chair
M. Murphy, Chief, Atkinson Fire Department
E. Stewart, Road Agent

Others Present:

M. Garceau, 30 Coventry Road
P. Gulezian, 2 Washington Road
D. Hammond, 2A Coventry Road
J. Livingston, 20 Coventry Road
A. Pettoruto, 22 Coventry Road
K. Pettoruto, 22 Coventry Road
P. Porter, 2A Washington Road
D. Robicsek, 24 Coventry Road
M. Suriani, 28 Coventry Road
P. Suriani, 28 Coventry Road
G. Tobin, 32 Coventry Road
M. Toomey, 26 Coventry Road

William Baldwin, Selectman

Mr. Baldwin explained the purpose of this Public Hearing is to seek public opinion concerning re-addressing/re-naming of some street addresses proposed by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Baldwin also explained the meeting will be informational and that no decisions will be made at this time. Mr. Baldwin concluded by introducing the Highway Safety Committee members present and explained that any proposed street address changes are sent to the Highway Safety Committee for their review, and that recommendation is made to the Board of Selectmen for further action.

Frederick Beckwith, EMS Captain, Atkinson Fire Department

Mr. Beckwith addressed the public by explaining that E-911 performed an assessment of the streets in the Town of Atkinson and found several areas in the community with non-standard addresses such as similar sounding street names and alpha-numerical street numbering. These non-standard addresses could impact the safety of residents during an emergency response situation. The goal of the Highway Safety Committee is to take recommendations made by E-911 and address them one at a time rather than all at once. In reviewing the list provided by E-911 of all non-standard addresses in town, the Highway Safety Committee made the decision to start with Washington Road and Coventry Road first. The following are recommendations made by the Highway Safety Committee to correct non-standard addresses on Washington Road and Coventry Road:

| Current Address: | Will Change to: |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 20A Coventry Road | 22 Coventry Road |
| 22 Coventry Road | 24 Coventry Road |
| 24 Coventry Road | 26 Coventry Road |
| 26 Coventry Road | 28 Coventry Road |
| 28 Coventry Road | 30 Coventry Road |
| 30 Coventry Road | 32 Coventry Road |
| 32 Coventry Road | 24 Coventry Road |
| 2A Washington Road | 1 Martha Way |
| 2B Washington Road | 2 Martha Way |

William Baldwin, Selectman

Mr. Baldwin opened the floor to the public for comment on the proposed changes to Washington Road and Coventry Road.

Michael and Patricia Suriani, 28 Coventry Road

Mr. Sariani of 28 Coventry Road appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express concern about the proposed changes to Coventry Road and explained that he and his wife are opposed to them. The Sariani's are in agreement to the proposed changes to Washington Road because a shared driveway could cause a safety issue. Mr. Sariani claims that over his past 20 years of residency on 28 Coventry Road, there has never been a safety issue as a result of the current street numbering. Mr. Sariani is also concerned about the street numbering alignment on either side of the street and how they will be misaligned if the proposed changes were to be made. Mr. Sariani believes as long as residents on Coventry Road clearly mark their house and mailbox as per the town ordinance, there should be no concern for safety.

Karen Pettoruto, 22 Coventry Road

Ms. Pettoruto appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express her concerns regarding the proposed changes to Coventry Road and that she is opposed to them. Ms. Pettoruto explained her address, of 22 Coventry Road is not just a number to her, it is an emotional commitment. Ms. Pettoruto went on to explain she and her husband have been battling address changes to Coventry Road since the request was submitted by Mr. Hammond and that the proposed changes do not align with the RSA's. Ms. Pettoruto is also concerned about misalignment on the street if such changes are made. Ms. Pettoruto questioned the criteria followed by the Highway Safety Committee in determining which streets needed changes and why the Committee chose to start with Coventry Road. Ms. Pettoruto challenged the Committee to stop cherry picking and to rethink their process for determining what streets needed change and suggested the Committee redesign a reasonable plan for the residents.

Daryl Robicsek, 24 Coventry Road

Ms. Robicsek appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express her concern on the proposed address changes to Coventry Road due to the cost and possible breach of privacy. The cost of renewing licenses, updating mortgages, and granite posts can be very costly to residents. Ms. Robicsek is also concerned about the accuracy of a one digit change on street numbers and how this could jeopardize her privacy in the event her mail is accidentally delivered to the wrong address, which is more likely to happen if the proposed changes were implemented. Ms. Robicsek completely understands why a change needs to be made to Washington Road, but is opposed to the proposed changes to Coventry Road.

Mary Toomey, 26 Coventry Road

Ms. Toomey appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express her concern on the proposed address changes to Coventry Road due to the disruption it would be to her and her family. Ms. Toomey is very familiar with the challenges and cost involved in making an address change. Ms. Toomey asked the Committee to reconsider their proposed change.

Paul Porter, 2A Washington Road

Mr. Porter appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express his opposition to the proposed changes to Washington Road. Mr. Porter explained he recently purchased his home in June and is still in the process of changing his address and that the cost has been incredibly high. Mr. Porter also explained he does not understand why this is happening now since the addresses have been this way for 25 years.

John Livingston, 20 Coventry Road

Mr. Livingston appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to support the proposed changes to Coventry Road. Mr. Livingston explained while he understands the burden this could be to residents, he trusts the Town

has done it's due diligence on this issue and believes the change would reverse the safety issue on Coventry Road.

Dave Hammond, 20A Coventry Road

Mr. Hammond appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to support the proposed changes to Coventry Road. Mr. Hammond is concerned with alpha-numeric-street-numbering when it comes to emergency response time. He shared a story regarding a time he called 911 due to a car crash in front of his house and how the dispatcher misunderstood his address of 20A Coventry Road for 28 Coventry Road.

Peter Gulezian, 2 Washington Road

Mr. Gulezian appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to support the proposed changes to Coventry Road. Mr. Gulezian believes that residents who are opposed to the proposed changes to Coventry Road do not understand the potential safety issue involved. Mr. Gulezian shared a personal experience where in 2005 he called 911 because his wife was having a serious diabetic problem and even though his house and mailbox are clearly marked, the emergency responders went to his neighbor's house. When the emergency responders could not back out of the driveway, they had to run across the snow in order to get to Mr. Gulezian's home. This event caused a delay in the emergency response to his wife.

Gary Tobin, 32 Coventry Road

Mr. Tobin appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to ask questions regarding the process used to make the decision to make changes to Coventry Road. Mr. Tobin asked about the 3 action items that came out of the first meeting and whether or not they have been completed. Mr. Tobin agreed there are safety issues regarding the current street numbering in town. He challenged the Committee to think about their current plan, which is to not make changes globally but rather in pieces and how, if the situation is not thought out clearly enough, this could lead into being a temporary fix, which could have the need to be redone.

Mike Murphy, Atkinson Fire Chief

Chief Murphy responded to Mr. Tobin by explaining the 3 action items that came out of the first meeting have been completed. Chief Murphy also explained that he does not see this issue to be a town-wide problem and that the Highway Safety Committee are simply picking away at some of the priorities on the list provided to them by E-911.

Michael Garceau, 30 Coventry Road

Mr. Garceau appeared before the Highway Safety Committee to express his concerns regarding the proposed changes to Coventry Road. Mr. Garceau questioned how Coventry Road made it to the top of the list. He also expressed concern with his 11 year old daughter and how she would be very confused with an address change and if she ever had to call 911 for an emergency, she may forget the new address.

William Baldwin, Selectman

Mr. Baldwin responded to Mr. Garceau by explaining the Highway Safety Committee has a total of 6 sheets of recommendations made by E-911 and the Committee plans to address each one. Mr. Baldwin also explained there is a process to ensure all address changes are updated in a database through E-911 for emergency responders to know what a person's street address is, even if the person is confused when calling 911.

Michael Suriani, 28 Coventry Road

Mr. Suriani responded to Mr. Baldwin's comment by explaining that emergency responders would only know an address if the person was calling from a land line and not a cell phone. Mr. Suriani also expressed concern with GPS coordinates and how it needs to be updated as well. Mr. Suriani also made the suggestion that when a person with an alpha-numeric street address has the need to call 911, that person should be more clear when expressing the letter in their address and use terms like "a as in apple" when communicating their address.

Albert Pettoruto, 22 Coventry Road

Mr. Pettoruto made a comment about Geo-mapping and how if street addresses do not get mapped, emergency responders will have a tough time finding the right address. Mr. Pettoruto also questioned the “piece-meal” approach the Highway Safety Committee has taken in tackling non-standard addresses in town and why Coventry Road was chosen first. Mr. Pettoruto would like to see a cohesive plan where all issues are addressed.

Ted Stewart, Road Agent

Mr. Stewart made a comment about the plan being used by the Highway Safety Committee. Mr. Stewart explained the Committee is trying to follow a plan voted by the town in 1982 and revised in 1983.

Albert Pettoruto, 22 Coventry Road

Mr. Pettoruto responded to Mr. Stewart’s comments and questioned whether or not the plan in 1982 was just an E-911 adoption.

Mike Murphy, Atkinson Fire Chief

Chief Murphy responded to Mr. Pettoruto by explaining the plan in 1982 had nothing to do with E-911 and explained that at the time the town made a lot of changes to street addresses in order to clean up like-sounding street names and some non-standard street numbers.

Michael Suriani, 28 Coventry Road

Mr. Suriani responded to Chief Murphy by asking whether or not the plan in 1982 was part of a zoning issue.

Mike Murphy, Atkinson Fire Chief

Chief Murphy responded to Mr. Suriani by explaining that the plan in 1982 did not have anything to do with zoning and that it was strictly a safety issue.

Patricia Suriani, 28 Coventry Road

Ms. Suriani made a comment regarding subdivided lots and the impact that would make on street renumbering.

Sue Killam, Planning Board Chair

Ms. Killam responded to Ms. Suriani by explaining that if a resident has 400 feet or more of frontage, there is no way to prevent that resident from subdividing which could cause the same problem to occur again. Ms. Killam went on to explain that unless the town adopted the NENA Standard proposed by E-911, this problem could occur again. The NENA Standard would be a town-wide address renumbering change in increments of 50 feet and would be a 5 year project for the town.

Dave Hammond, 20A Coventry Road

Mr. Hammond made a comment regarding his property and how when he and his wife bought his house in 2002, they actually purchased 2 buildable lots. At the time, the Hammonds appeared before the Planning Board to ask for a lot line adjustment. The town realized they had made a mistake in the past and failed to assign an address to one of the lots. In order to solve the problem, the Hammonds were given the address of 20A Coventry Road. Mr. Hammond went on to explain that he and his wife did not create his address and that the town gave him this address.

Gary Tobin, 32 Coventry Road

Mr. Tobin made a comment about the changes he has seen over the past 33 years in the town of Atkinson. Mr. Tobin remembers the changes made in 1982 and said there were a lot of issues back then. Mr. Tobin explained this issue is not the Hammond’s fault nor is it the Gulezian’s fault. The non-standard addresses on Coventry Road are a result of a temporary fix made by the Town and in order to avoid doing that again, the Town needs to adopt a better plan of action.

Peter Gulezian, 2 Washington Road

Mr. Gulezian made a comment about the town of Barrington, NH and how the residents have had many problems with emergency responders getting to the right address. Mr. Gulezian explained that the town of Barrington has recently made many changes to their addresses in a successful manner and suggested the Highway Safety Committee contact the town to inquire about their process.

William Baldwin, Selectman

Mr. Baldwin addressed the public by explaining that when decisions are finally made, public safety will come first. Mr. Baldwin encouraged all residents to research the E-911 adoptions.

W. Baldwin closed the Public Hearing of Monday, October 21, 2013 at 8:08pm.