

Bill Castine

From: Oneonta Town Supervisor [twnsupervisor@stny.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, August 14, 2006 10:05 AM
To: Bill Castine
Cc: Carleton Delameter; Richard Murphy; Marie Lusins; Janet Hurley-Quackenbush
Subject: Re: Bridge Access to the West End of Pony Farm Road

Mr. Castine,
 This is to acknowledge your e-mail of 8-11.

As I stated at the meeting, the town is well aware of the situation on Pony Farm Road. First, we've been through this before. I was supervisor and Councilwoman Lusins was on the town board when we constructed the bridge in 1991 at a cost of \$300,000. We were able to secure an easement from Mr. Trask in one day's time this year because he had given us an easement 15 years and was happy to help again. We acknowledge it is temporary and for emergency purposes only. Until the bridge is reopened, and we expect work to start shortly, it is the only avenue available. We understand the limitations of the situation, but bear in mind that we have been through an extraordinary flood. Things won't be perfect for some time yet.

I discussed with our engineer your suggestion that the bridge/approaches be raised. The cost to do so would be about \$1.5 million – it would be, in essence, a completely new bridge. Neither FEMA nor the state will fund that.

I am unaware of flooding, snow or construction work that has cut off access across that bridge except during a bona fide and declared flood.

Thank you for your interest.

Duncan S. Davie
 Supervisor

----- Original Message -----

From: Bill Castine
To: twnsupervisor@stny.rr.com ; amlusins@hotmail.com ; zadge_2000@yahoo.com ; deputydawg13820@yahoo.com ; murphyra@stny.rr.com
Cc: oneontaclerk@stny.rr.com ; jmeagher@tcmlaw.net ; hy-way@stny.rr.com
Sent: Friday, August 11, 2006 10:24 AM
Subject: Bridge Access to the West End of Pony Farm Road

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns to the board on the subject matter.

My Concerns are both as an employer & on behalf of my residential neighbors. Our business is located at 330 Pony Farm Road. There are several businesses (approximately 25 employees total) located at this address; Comminnovations, Village Printer, Solutions Integrators, AutoTech Electronics, UHaul & Century Storage. There are about a dozen residential homes along this portion of Pony Farm Road.

We are pleased to learn the repairs to flood damaged bridge on Pony Farm Road across Otego Creek have been authorized & we look forward to seeing this road reopened this fall.

Our business is being affected in many ways:

Fire & other emergency vehicles exceeding 15 tons are prevented from using this access & the emergency only alternate at grade access is often blocked by railcars for extended periods.

Delivery & construction vehicles exceeding 15 tons cannot reach us at all, compromising our ability to conduct business & jeopardizing livelihood of our employees.

I have discussed this situation with my neighbors & they are particularly concerned about the fact that the only route for fire & other emergency vehicles exceeding 15 tons is an at-grade crossing. This crossing is often blocked by stopped railroad cars. Even in an emergency, it would take several minutes for a train to clear this path. Many of my neighbors are elderly & the homes are older wood frame structures. I'm sure you appreciate the importance of unimpeded access for emergency services at all times.

Even before these floods we have seen the access across the Otego Creek bridge to this end of Pony Farm Road closed for periods of time due to much smaller floods than the recent occurrence. For this reason we would like to see the option for rebuilding the bridge & approach ramps at a much higher elevation than the current configuration.

Aside from floods, access across the Otego Creek bridge is sometimes blocked by road repair or heavy snow. For these reasons, the railroad bridge connecting Pony Farm Road to Route 7 is of vital importance to the residents, employees & businesses. This bridge was once rated as unlimited but is now restricted to vehicles under 15 tons. Loss of this bridge would cause the loss of jobs adversely affect property values on this end of Pony Farm Road. It would also deprive the Industrial Park of its second entrance.

Improved lighting at this bridge is important to improve safety. It is all but impossible to see the intersection at night! This should be an easy fix as we are a lighting district with no lights!

We were pleased to learn that you share our concern for this railroad bridge & that you will be working with Sen Seward & the CP Railroad. I look forward to attending future board meetings so that we can remain informed on your progress.

Regards, Bill Castine