

From: emkott@aol.com
To: [Laurel Evans](#)
Subject: Fwd: Paving S. Timberlee
Date: Thursday, October 29, 2020 1:17:36 PM

Hi Laurel, here's my letter. Thanks for you help!

Begin forwarded message:

To: rjoyce@leelanauroads.org
Cc: <jraymor@sbcglobal.net>, schristiansen@co.leelanau
Subject: **Paving S. Timberlee**

Hello Mr. Joyce,

My husband and I live on the paved side of S. Timberlee Drive in the Timberlee Hills/Leelanau Hills subdivision. Residents of our neighborhood received a letter this past weekend from Steve Christiansen, Drain Commissioner, stating that a public hearing will take place this Thursday, Oct. 29, to determine if a drain is "necessary and conducive to the public health, convenience, and welfare" of the residents. The letter was not specific about the reasons for needing a drain, and left us confused about the entire project. After doing some research and contacting people regarding this letter, our neighbor Jerry Raymor found out that this was actually referencing a paving project, which is why I am writing to you. It seems to me that the main question that needs to be answered isn't "Why is a drain needed?" but rather "Why does a section of unmaintained dirt road need to be paved?" I am hoping that you can answer the following questions for me.

1. This section of road has never been maintained. The county doesn't scrape the road, add dirt or gravel, or plow it in the winter. Why on earth would it suddenly need to be paved?

2. This section of road doesn't even have houses on it. Residences are located on Mount Josh, which is unpaved but maintained and is accessible to the residents who live there. Paving the uninhabited section of road in question would not enhance public health or well-being, especially to those living in our neighborhood. We do not want through traffic coming into our neighborhood. There are no sidewalks in our subdivision, and we have many young families living here with small children and pets. Few people adhere to the 25 mph speed limit as it is, and increasing traffic would only worsen the problem and endanger the children. It definitely would not benefit the residents here. Who asked to have the road paved?

3. Our Elmwood Township Planning and Zoning Administrator Sara Kopriva told me last year in a conversation regarding a different issue that Leelanau County is not adding any new stretches of public road, and that all new roads have to be private roads. The section of road in question is currently very rough, and at best would fit the legal definition of a private road in Michigan: “a privately owned and maintained road, allowing access to more than one residence or place of business, which is normally open to the public and upon which persons other than the owners located there on may also travel.” It is unconstitutional under Michigan law to use public funds to maintain private roads. It does not seem to me that this previously completely unmaintained stretch of road fits the description of a public road. Why would the public be asked to pay for any part of private road improvements?

5. Has this paving project already been approved? If so, why weren't the residents living adjacent to the project included in the decision-making process, or informed of the decision and its implications? Was there a public hearing on the paving project that we were unaware of?

I would very much appreciate answers to these questions before the Thursday meeting on the necessity of a drain. These issues have huge implications for us as residents, both financially and in terms of increased traffic through our neighborhood.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Kott

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Cc Steve Christensen
Jerry Raymor

Sent from my iPad