



**Office of the Board of Selectmen  
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**NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**DATE: MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2021**

**TIME: 7:00PM**

**LOCATION: NEWTON TOWN HALL, 2 TOWN HALL ROAD and  
ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

**PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES**

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 7:01pm. In attendance were Selectmen, Matthew A. Burrill; Chairman, Lawrence B. Foote; Vice-Chairman, Lisa L. Gonyer, Charles R. Melvin Sr., Town Administrator Nancy J. Wrigley, and Selectmen's Secretary Diane M. Morin and members of the public. Utilizing Zoom Conference Call was Selectman Kathryn Michaels.

Chairman Burrill read the following:

**The Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 beginning at 7:00pm at the Newton Town Hall, 2 Town Hall Road, Newton, NH, and Zoom Conference Call for the following:**

**To take public input on a proposal from the Town of Merrimac MA, to exclude heavy commercial vehicles on Wentworth Drive, Hadley Road and West Hadley Road.**

**Zoom information:**

**+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)**

**Meeting ID: 818 7979 5674**

**To attend via Zoom, click on the link below.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81879795674>

To summarize the Town of Merrimac approached the Town to consider allowing them to place no truck signage at the beginning of Wentworth Dr, Hadley, and West Hadley Roads on the town's side. Large commercial trucks have been using those streets that were not built to handle such large vehicles and therefore causing the road to fail prematurely.

We have asked the Road Agent, Police and Fire Chiefs for their opinions. Those can be found in minutes dated January 18, 2021 and February 2, 2021 on the Town's website. The representatives from Merrimac provided the Town with their proposal and drawing of an alternate truck route, which would be on paper only. The route shows the utilization of Amesbury to Bear Hill Road from Route 108. The representatives have provided their proposal to NH DOT and have been approved with a stipulation that no signage be placed on Route 108. There will not be any signage on Amesbury or Bear Hill Roads indicating the preferred truck route. Nor any signs on MA route 495.

Mr. Alan Cloutier of World Tech Engineering will be presenting the Town of Merrimac's proposal.

Mr. Cloutier went through his presentation which is attached at the end of the minutes. He reviewed the problem with allowing heavy commercial vehicles on those roads. He explained that the roads were never built to handle such vehicles. He explained that MASS DOT needs to approve, or it would not be enforceable. As part of the process, a viable route must be defined for these types of vehicles. If the route goes through another town, then support is needed from that town as well.

He went on to explain that the proposal was approved by MASS and NH DOT. NH DOT will not allow any signage on the State-owned roads. He went on to show where signs would be posted in Newton and Merrimac.

The reason for this public hearing is to get approval from the Town for the truck exclusion and to allow the Town of Merrimac to install the signs.

Chairman Burrill explained that the Town of Merrimac approached the Board with the proposal. The Board decided to hold a public hearing prior to making a decision.

Selectman Michaels stated that the Board spoke with the project manager for re-configuration of the intersection of route 108/Amesbury Road/Maple Ave and that this change would not have an effect on the project.

Ms. Rose Dennis of Wentworth Drive addressed the Board and described how tractor trailer trucks try to make a right hand turn from route 108 on to Wentworth Drive and are not able to negotiate the turn. She has seen them back up onto route 108. She is in favor of the Town supporting Merrimac's request.

Selectman Melvin asked how this will be enforced. The DPW Director from Merrimac has been working with their Police Chief and Mass State Trucking Unit who told him it would be enforceable once they have the approval to exclude trucks. Chief Jewett stated that education would be the first thing to do followed by reaching out to local trucking companies and informing them of the changes. He believes he knows where the trucks are coming from and will reach out should the Town approve the proposal. He would work with the Town of Merrimac MA, and NH and MA trucking units. Signage could be placed on the Town side and would make it easier to enforce. Road Agent Pivero stated with the proper signage it will lessen the number of vehicles going down those roads.

Selectman Michaels asked if Thornell Road is considered one of the preferred routes. RA Pivero stated that he met with Merrimac's DPW and that was just a suggestion. Mr. Cloutier stated that when he looked at Thornell Road he found that most of the trucks were coming from that road. RA Pivero stated that depending on when the survey was done, they are no longer using Thornell Road.

Mr. Baker asked if Merrimac Road was included, and Mr. Cloutier stated no. Mr. Baker expressed concerns that there would not be signage indicating the route trucks should take and why would no signs be posted. The DPW of Merrimac stated that NH DOT does not allow for signage on state roads. Selectman Gonyer stated that the Town would not be placing "trucks allowed" on every road in town as that would not be feasible. RA Pivero informed Mr. Baker that both Merrimac and Bear Hill Road are State roads therefore no signage can be placed on it.

**Selectman Foote moved to draft a letter of support to the Town of Merrimac MA for excluding heavy commercial vehicles from Wentworth Drive, West Hadley Road and Hadley Road. Seconded for discussion by Selectman Melvin.**

Selectmen Michaels asked if Bear Hill or Merrimac Roads are damaged due to heavy vehicles, the Town would not have to pay for the repairs. RA Pivero stated that is correct.

Mr. Richard Dupree stated that at a previous meeting RA Pivero stated that the State was going to transfer ownership of state roads to local municipalities. RA Pivero stated there was a conversation 6-7 years ago that did not result in any plan to transfer ownership.

Mr. Dupree asked if the Board is writing a letter of no opposition or of support. Selectman Foote said whatever the Town of Merrimac needs. Selectman Gonyer stated that the Board did not inform the resident that the letter would be in support but rather a letter of no opposition.

Selectman Gonyer asked if there is any difference between support or no opposition. Mr. Cloutier stated there is no difference.

**The motion passed with a unanimous vote.**

II. Adjourn

**Chairman Burrill closed the public hearing at 7:42pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin  
Board of Selectmen Secretary