



**Town of Mansfield
Agenda Item Summary**

To: Town Council
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager *MWH*
CC: Maria Capriola, Assistant Town Manager; John Carrington, Director of Public Works; Kevin Deneen, Town Attorney
Date: February 22, 2016
Re: Ravine Road (Unimproved Portion)

Subject Matter/Background

At the January 25, 2016 meeting, staff presented options to address the unimproved portion of Ravine Road. In addition, many citizens addressed this subject during the public comment period. At the conclusion of the Council's discussion of this item, Mayor Shapiro expressed his sincere desire to find a compromise solution that would address the needs of the key stakeholders, including those supporting the discontinuance of that section of the road with the land reverting to the primary abutter (Spring Brook Farm) and those supporting the reopening of the road for the neighborhood and public.

Following the January 25th discussion, on February 6th the Council conducted a site visit to Ravine Road. At the time of the site visit and in response to the Mayor's suggestion calling for a compromise solution, staff presented an additional option for the Council's consideration:

- Following the installation of guiderail and other safety improvements, the Town would reopen the unimproved portion of Ravine Road.
- The Town would install gates at each end of the unimproved section, which would be left in an open position.
- The Town would negotiate an agreement or other appropriate legal instrument providing designated personnel from Spring Brook Farm with the authority to close the gates when needed to conduct farming operations. The agreement or instrument would include specific criteria, such as specific time periods during which the gate could and could not be closed, the term of the agreement and other important matters. The Town's objective would be to provide the farm with limited opportunities to conduct agricultural operations without interference from vehicular traffic, while minimizing the impact of closing the road on the neighborhood and the public.

I have reviewed this concept in a preliminary way with the proprietor of Spring Brook Farm and other residents of the Ravine Road neighborhood, and have received positive feedback on this option.

Financial Impact

Staff's estimate to install the guiderails and to make other safety improvements totals \$110,000. If Council endorses the compromise solution, staff will include this sum in the Proposed FY2016/17 Capital Improvement Program.

Legal Review

If the Council chooses to endorse the compromise option, staff would work with the Town Attorney to draft a proposed agreement or other legal instrument for the Town Council's consideration.

Recommendation

At this point staff is seeking the Council's input regarding the concept of the compromise solution outlined above. If the Council wishes to pursue this option further, staff would begin working with the Town Attorney to draft a proposed agreement or other legal instrument for the Town Council's review. In addition, staff would include a sum of \$110,000 for Ravine Road improvements in the FY2016/17 CIP.

Attachments

- 1) J. Carrington re: Unimproved Portion of Ravine Road, 1/19/2016
- 2) J. Carrington re: Ravine Road Questions Answered
- 3) Maps