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Date: Sun, 4 Oct 2020 21:14:07 -0400
Subject: Resident concerns re: Lower Washington St. safety/conditions

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Dear Select Board:

I am writing on behalf of many of my fellow abutters of the private way on lower Washington Street. A majority of us are concerned about the conditions and safety of the portion of the road adjacent to the bike path/opening to Brattle Street. We hope that we can work with the Town to address these concerns for the good of all in the community, especially in light of the recent accidents and subsequent fatality near Appleton St.

The portion of the road in question is an extremely narrow passage containing a hairpin turn that serves as a two-way through-street connecting two major thoroughfares (Summer Street and Mass. Ave.). This same portion also contains an entry-point to the Minuteman and is frequently used by both cyclists and pedestrians. Two cars cannot pass by each other unless one backs up considerably, and due to sharp turns in front of 32-34 Washington and onto Brattle Street, it can be difficult, if not impossible, to see a car, bike, or person approaching. We have repeatedly witnessed and experienced firsthand an alarming number of troubling encounters between varying configurations of cars, trucks, cyclists, and pedestrians. We have included several photographs of such incidents. Many of us living here do not feel safe traveling in this area and fear for the safety of fellow Arlington residents and visitors as well.

We believe that it is imperative to residents' safety that we discuss with the Town various measures, including but not limited to the introduction of appropriate signage, speed limits and/or speed bumps, a weight limit (the road is frequented by trucks and school buses despite the narrow turn), additional street lighting, and the possible designation of the road as one-way. We want to acknowledge here that preferences and concerns regarding these various measures vary among abutters, so we want to ensure that we are able to work collectively with the Town to find a solution agreeable to all of us.

Additionally, the condition of the road itself is dire, bordering on impassible—just today, we watched (from our quickly approaching car) a cyclist get stuck in not one pothole, but two. We recognize that abutters of private ways are responsible for repaving and similar maintenance. Because we see that the Town owns a parcel of land abutting the most deteriorated section of the road, it is our understanding that we would need to involve the Town in a vote regarding how to proceed with repaving. It is also our understanding that the MBTA owns the right-of-way on the Minuteman abutting this portion of the road, adding another layer of complexity to pursuing a repaving vote. Additionally, some of us are concerned that repaving the road will lead to an increase in traffic, which would make implementing safety measures even more essential.

Please let us know how we can begin a conversation regarding these concerns by contacting Regina Tavani of the 32-34 Washington St. Condo Association at this email address or at 603-557-3931. I have included on copy fellow abutters who wish to remain informed of all developments. We request that the description of our concerns about the road in this letter be included as correspondence received.

We look forward to hearing from you.

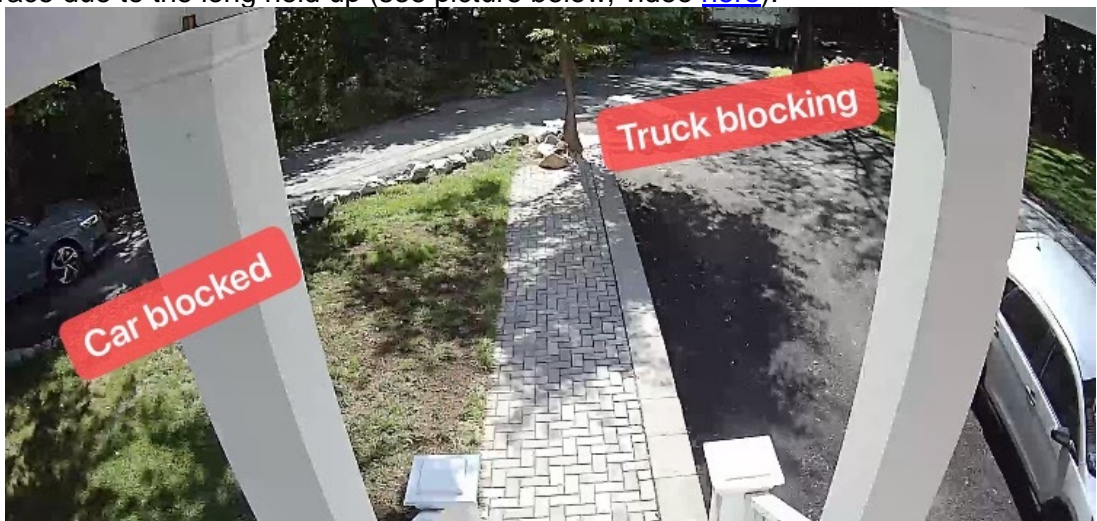
Sincerely,

Regina Tavani & Lower Washington St. abutters

Photos (below; additional photos attached)



July 23rd, 10:25am, Truck/car encounter (photo pasted sideways for sizing purposes; please rotate if possible): A big truck and a car only saw each other at the hairpin turn (video [here](#)). There is another car behind the truck going to Brattle St. After more than 20mins of argument between the drivers, the small car driver had to back up about 240 feet to Brattle Street to allow the truck to pass by. In the meantime, traffic behind the truck had to back up to Brattle Terrace due to the long hold up (see picture below, video [here](#)).



July 23rd,

July 27th, 10:58am, Truck backing up: truck approached the hairpin turn (video [here](#)) and realized it cannot pass through, had to back up all the way and go through Summer St (video [here](#)).



June 11, 05:21pm, Car on the curb of 38 Washington while trying to let another car pass.
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