

The Londonderry Street Naming System Task Force held a meeting on November 1st, 2011 in the Moose Hill Room of Londonderry Town Hall. The Meeting began at 7:00 pm.

Present: Task Force Members: John Vogl, Karen Marchant and Brian Johnson

A list of concerned residents in attendance is attached

A list of handouts given to residents is attached

J. Vogl introduced himself and members of the Task Force. He spoke about the Task Force mission and reason for the public workshops. He explained that the Task Force had approached the Council for guidance on resolving Harvey Road and that they had opted to keep that street name unchanged. He explained the next steps that would occur and offered that the Task Force members were open to alternative names to consider. He said they had received 5 suggestions from one resident; upon review, members decided that 3 did not meet the naming standards. The acceptable suggestions included 'Duncan Road' and 'Highview Road'. J. Vogl said that the Task Force would further review each name.

Curtis Boles (57 Hovey Rd) asked if the Task Force had learned from the last meeting with residents and why were Task Force members presenting the same information? J. Vogl responded that two meetings were scheduled to allow flexibility for people to come to either meeting, since the Task Force anticipated a high turnout. He said that there were different people at the two meetings and that he did not intend to present anything different to either group. J. Vogl said that the next step would likely be a hearing at the Council. C. Boles expressed skepticism that the Task Force would adequately describe the comments expressed at this meeting and the 10/24 meeting. J. Vogl replied that the Task Force felt a responsibility to remedy a known problem. As the Council had made a decision on Harvey Road, the Task Force felt they had no choice but to move ahead with changes to Hardy and Hovey. J. Vogl further explained that the Task Force understood neighborhood objections and that they understood how residents felt Harvey Road got preferential treatment. K. Marchant explained that Harvey Road businesses got to speak to the Council because our recommendation at that time was to change their street and thus any decisions would have only affected Harvey Road properties. B. Johnson said that he told the Council all the issues regarding safety on Harvey Road but that they made a decision counter to the Task Force's recommendation. He expressed that his position and the Chief's position were to change Harvey Road. B. Johnson explained limitations on firefighter personnel based on current staffing levels and explained the need for mutual aid responses. He said that confusingly similar names are especially problematic in mutual aid responses. Residents asked what they could do to defeat any proposed changes. B. Johnson said they would need to speak to the Council. C. Boles asked if he should start a petition. B. Johnson said it might help, as a petition did during the discussion over contracting with Derry for fire dispatch service. C. Boles strongly expressed a desire to speak before the Council. Mike Hebert (125 Hardy Road) agreed. A. Chiampa (28 Wedgewood) said that she didn't think that Hovey Road should be on the list for changes at all. She said she always spells the road names and has never experienced any problems. Laurie Riedel (29 Hardy Road) inquired about ways the Town would assist with transitioning to new addresses. J. Vogl informed her about what actions the Town takes in notifying parties and what actions the residents are expected to do. He said that if she has ideas about better information, please offer suggestions to him.

K. Marchant said that the Task Force members will speak to the Town Manager about the next steps. Ann Chiampa asked what other streets were in the mix. Task Force members presented a list of the proposed streets. J. Vogl said that residents would receive notification regarding the next meeting. It will likely be a Council meeting. He will speak with Town Manager Dave Caron to seek his advice on scheduling.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes recorded by John Vogl

MEETING ATTENDANCE NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Name	Address	Phone/Email (optional)
CUATIS BULLS	57 HONEY ROAD	432-3474 CP143 PAOL.COM
Linda Bulls	57 Honey Rd	432-3474
JOE MINIHANE	69 HONEY RD.	434-7621
Sumner Minihane	69 Honey Rd	434-7621
Michael Hebert	125 Hardy Rd	434-3173
Laura Hebert	125 Hardy Rd.	434-3173
Rick Riedel	29 Hardy Rd	434-2368
Laurie Riedel	29 Hardy Rd	434-2368
2) Maurice & Robert Knopp	101 Hardy Rd	Knopp@comcast.net
ANN CHIAMPA	28 WEDGEWOOD DR	a.chiampa@comcast.net

Street Naming System Task Force

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Street Naming System Task Force?

The Task Force was created by Resolution 2009-15 in response to a 9-1-1 memo defining street names that are non-compliant with addressing standards and is charged with providing oversight and informing and directing strategies to correct duplicate or confusing street names. The Task Force reports to the Londonderry Town Council and Town Manager until project completion and acceptance.

Members include representatives from the Londonderry Fire Department (James Bilodeau, 9-1-1 Coordinator), Police Department (Cynthia McCann, Dispatch Supervisor), Assessing Department (Karen Marchant, Town Assessor) and Community Development Department (John Vogl, GIS Manager).

Why was my street chosen?

The town of Londonderry received a memo from NH 9-1-1 in June of this year identifying a list of streets that had names that were non-compliant with addressing standards. These non-compliant names may potentially cause delay in locating a given address in an emergency. The list included several types of conflicts, such as duplicate names, similar sounding names, confusing prefixes or suffixes, streets with an ambiguous start or terminus, and streets containing duplicate numbers.

Town staff reviewed the 9-1-1 recommendations and finalized a list of street names to be adjusted. The Task Force was charged with implementing those changes and has done so by bringing forward changes to a couple streets at a time.

What other streets are changing?

The working list of street names that require correction can be found in this [memo to the Town Council](#).

Why can't we leave things as they are?

Having been made aware of potential public safety concerns, the Town has a statutory duty to act and clear up similar sounding or confusing road names. Confusing names risk potential for service delay as precious time may be taken up clarifying a response location rather than sending vehicles on the road. There have been numerous examples throughout town where unnecessary delays have occurred. Most recently, the situation was made clear when mutual aid support from Derry arrived at the wrong street during a fire event. The particular street was identified by the Task Force as needing correction since it contained multiple, unconnected segments, all bearing the same name.

Similarly, a 2002 court decision referred to as the Swanzey Decision found the town of Swanzey at fault for being made aware of but failing to correct known naming ambiguities. This decision provides an indication of how courts might rule in future cases.

It is important to remember that 9-1-1 calls originate from Concord, where dispatchers do not have the acute knowledge of streets that local residents or responders do. Given the prevalence of cell phones, emergency calls can originate from anyone, anywhere, often by people who do not know the area and who may inadvertently mis-communicate confusing addresses. It is to everyone's best interest that confusing or duplicate street names be resolved.

What is the process for changing a street name?

Name changes are carried out by the Town Council, per [NH RSA 231:133](#). A change occurs as a Council Resolution which may be adopted after a public hearing.

The Task Force has opted to hold workshop meetings with affected property owners prior to developing resolution language. We hope to achieve consensus on name changes during these meetings. The next step includes a first and second reading during Council meetings. The second reading, scheduled a minimum 2 weeks after the first, includes a public hearing where public comment is taken.

How will I be notified?

Residents will receive notification of the workshop meeting by certified mail, the council public hearing by first class mail and will receive final notification of their new address by certified mail once the changes become official.

Is changing my street name really a “done deal”?

The change becomes a done deal at the time the Council adopts the new name. Members of the public are free to advocate for any resolution they desire at the time of public hearings.

Is the Task Force correcting all the streets at once?

No. The Task Force expects to roll out changes over three years.

How long will residents have to carry out address changes?

Name changes become official 60 days after adoption by the Town Council. Residents will be notified by certified letter of the action and the changeover date. The US Post Office will be notified by the Town, and will automatically begin transitioning to the new address. The Post Office will hold both addresses (old and new) for up to 1 year. A NH driver's license and vehicle registration require notification within 10 days of the change. Residents should provide notice to banks/utilities/credit cards/magazines/etc as soon as possible.

How do residents notify utilities/banks/credit cards, etc?

Resident should use the address notification form available on most billing statements. Additionally, change of address cards are available at the US Post Offices and can be filled out and submitted to vendors.

How do I change my drivers license?

Persons licensed to drive a motor vehicle and within New Hampshire and experiencing an address change must notify the Director of Motor Vehicles in writing of such change within 10 days. Request forms are [available here](#) and must be filled out and submitted to the Division of Motor Vehicles within 10 days of the date your address change becomes

effective. A separate form must be filled out for each licensed operator who resides in your household. Copies are also available at the Londonderry Police Station.

You may either mail the completed form to the address below or bring the completed form(s) to any Motor Vehicle Licensing Station.

State of New Hampshire
Department of Safety
Division of Motor Vehicles
33 Hazen Drive
Concord, N.H. 03305-0999

When will street signs be changed?

The Town will post new street signs after adoption of the resolution. Signs will label the street by it's new name.

Do I have to change my property deed?

No. Deeds are drafted to reference points on the ground and do not need to be updated to reflect street addresses.

How do street names get assigned; Who decides on them?

At the start, developers submit street names at the time of subdivision. The names are part of the submitted plans and go through the Town's design review process whereby they are vetted by all the town departments.

At this point, where names are being changed, the Task Force is seeking suggestions from affected residents. We have some acceptable choices but will attempt to reach consensus with property owners before settling on a recommendation. We hope that names are suggested that tie to the agricultural history of Londonderry.

Do we have to change Passport information?

No. Passports do not contain addressing information and do not require changes or notification.

What defines the timing of changes? Will this affect the cost of doing business?

The Post Office will keep both addresses for up to 1 year. Some things, like vehicle registration updates are required by law. Other things like billing addresses are not mandated and should happen within the 1-year period or at the owner's discretion. Businesses that have letterhead or printed office supplies should use this time to run through excess supplies.

How do responders know where the houses are located on the street?

Londonderry responders utilize address maps that illustrate every structure and address in town. These maps are updated regularly and represent the best available information. It is up to the property owners to label the mailboxes or front doors appropriately so that responders or deliveries/visitors without address books can locate the structure on the street without confusion.

*Street naming conventions reprinted from Addressing Standards Guide, updated April, 2008.
Prepared by the State of New Hampshire Department of Public Safety Division of
Emergency Services Bureau of Emergency Communications:*

Street Naming

The BEC recommends that each street within a municipality, meeting the standards discussed previously, be given its own unique road name. If duplicate or confusingly similar street names currently exist in a municipality, the BEC recommends that new names be assigned to prevent confusion on the part of emergency responders.

- Eliminate like sounding, similar sounding, or duplicate road names.
- Avoid family names or individual's names, especially living persons and politicians.
- If the road is continuous, avoid changing names at an intersection or a curve or some other point.
- Do not use the same name with a different suffix (e.g. SMITH RD, SMITH LN).
- A duplicate street name is one in which the main part of the name is shared by more than one street, even if the designators, or directional information is different. Road names can be duplicate even if they are spelled differently when they are phonetically identical. SMITH ST, SMYTH ST, SMITH RD, NORTH SMITH ST, SMITH ST SOUTH, SMITH ST EXT are all duplicate road names.
- A confusingly similar street name is one in which either a large part of the name is shared by more than one street, or the names of more than one street are phonetically similar. OLD COUNTRY RD and COUNTRY LN would be similar sounding road names, as would COUNTRY LN and COUNTY LN and LAUREL AV and LAUREN AV.
- Street names should not contain any special characters such as hyphens, apostrophes, or dashes.
- Street names should not contain any abbreviations. Abbreviations are only appropriate at the end of a street name in the street suffix or designator. RD, ST, and AVE, are examples of acceptable street suffixes or designators. Please refer to the United States Postal Service document entitled *Postal Addressing Standards, Publication 28* for a complete list of NENA approved designators.
- The BEC recommends that continuous streets be assigned only one name for the entire length of the street.
- Avoid the use of directionals and USPS standard suffixes as road/street names (e.g. EAST ST, NORTH BLVD, KEARSARGE MTN RD, COURT ST, AVENUE OF THE PINES).
- All words within the main body of a street name should be spelled out completely and not abbreviated. This includes valid street suffixes and cardinal directions which are part of the main body of the name, rather than modifiers of the street name. Examples of street names which meet this criteria include WEST ALTON MARINA RD (west in this street name refers to the locality of West Alton, rather than the western section of

ALTON MARINA RD), FIRE LANE 24 (LANE is not a designator in this situation), KEARSARGE MTN RD (KEARSARGE should be spelled out).

- Avoid the use of nonstandard street name suffixes which may be confused with subdivisions or commercial developments (e.g. Example Plaza, Example Place).

The following, RSA 231:133 describes the municipal responsibility for the naming of streets:

231:133 Names; Changes; Signs. -

I. In all towns, cities, and those village districts which maintain public highways, every highway and street under the control of the town, city, or village district shall have a name which shall be given it by the governing body. Said name shall be legibly marked on a suitable signboard or other marker and placed in at least 2 conspicuous places on said street. The governing body may change the name of any such street or highway at any time when in its judgment there is occasion for so doing. The governing body may change the name of a private street or highway when the name change is necessary to conform to the requirements of the enhanced 911 telecommunications system. In towns and village districts the governing body may at its discretion provide for public hearing and submit such names for approval at any meeting of the legislative body, and voters may submit a petitioned warrant article for such a name change under the procedure of RSA 39:3.

City and Town responsibilities similar or confusing for Street Name

On December 2, 2002 the Presiding Justice in Cheshire County, Judge John Arnold, issued a ruling on a request by the Town of Swanzey on a motion for summary judgment. Summary judgment was denied. Although that decision is not binding on other courts it certainly indicates how courts may rule in the future on the issue of a city or towns obligation to deal with similar or confusing street names. For a full copy of the ruling see Robert Adams, ET. AL. V. Town of Swanzey, Docket no. 01-C-042.

By way of background, the Bureau of Emergency Communications Mapping/Addressing Unit had supplied the Town of Swanzey with a list of street names that the Bureau believed should be changed for safety reasons. Three of those streets were variations of the street name "Grove". The Selectmen agreed to change two of the streets and held a public hearing to discuss the change. At that meeting citizens from the two streets to be changed voiced great displeasure and the Selectmen decided to turn the names back to the original names. Subsequently, there was a fire on one of the "Grove" streets and the fire department went to the wrong one. Mr. Adams filed a tort action alleging the Town breached its duty by declining to change the street name, and the Town moved for summary judgment based on discretionary immunity.

The following are excerpts from that decision.:

"Under New Hampshire law it is widely accepted that the municipalities are immune from tort for conduct that involves discretionary acts or omissions."

"-----while all planning decisions are discretionary and thus immune from liability, all operational-level conduct is ministerial, and thus subject to potential tort liability."

"In this case the Board made a decision to review the safety concerns regarding the street names. The Board was then under an obligation to correct any dangerous situations. Therefore, any act undertaken by the Board pursuant to a decision to the review of the safety of the street names is ministerial and not subject to immunity."

"Regardless of whether the board [sic] actually made the street name change and then revoked its decision or **simply considered the name change and failed to act, the town had a statutory duty to take action once it was made aware or [sic] public safety concerns.** Therefore, the town was required to change the street name and its failure to act resulted in the violation of the statute. The court finds that the doctrine of governmental immunity does not apply because the action complained of was not a discretionary function but instead a statutory duty."