

Date: November 6, 2016 at 7:13:54 PM EST
To: estabrookcommittee@concordma.gov
Subject: about the access to Estabrook Woods

To the members of the committee:

I was sorry to miss the meeting on October 24, but I could not attend due to work obligations. Although I completely sympathize with and understand the frustrations of the local residents at the lack of respect and consideration shown by a minority of Concord residents and non-residents when walking their dogs, and while I was horrified to learn that one of their own dogs was killed by a careless driver, it is not warranted to allow residents to take the law into their own hands.

Through some mistake made 70 years ago, a small portion of Estabrook Road was sold to a private citizen, thereby cutting the portion of it that is now a trail off from the road that is used for driving. This most probably cannot be undone, but what is left is what must be considered a public Right of Way. Access of the public from one part of the road to the other is the very reason for the legal use of the right of way. To have the local residents dictate who can walk through this right of way or under what circumstances would be contrary to the principles of the government. Without exaggeration, it is along these lines that people in third world countries are required to pay a bribe to terrorists for safe passage along a public highway.

Although it would be a courtesy to keep dogs leashed on this 200-300 yard path, one which I feel everyone is likely to observe, it should not be a requirement. Nor is it any of their business to restrict the number of dogs allowed to each owner to pass into the woods.

As in other sites around Concord, it would be a good idea to provide people with bags and disposal receptacles to pick up their dogs' droppings.

The street, as far as I know, is a public way. There is no justification in restricting the number of parking spaces, as long as parked cars do not present a hazard or violate any street codes.

I have been walking my dogs for many years in most of the accessible conservation land in Concord. In my opinion, Estabrook is one of many options, and I have explored all the trails that can be taken from this area. It is a great privilege to be able to use these trails, and I have been a donor to the Concord Land Conservation Trust. These woods are what is most dear to me about Concord, and in spite of a busy work schedule I spend a lot of time in the woods with my dogs, walking an average of 25 miles every week.

As a resident of Concord, I consider it my right to enter these woods, as long as I continue to be respectful of those whose properties border the conservation areas. To allow a few residents to dictate to the rest of us how or whether we can walk when we please simply because they want to abolish a public right of way is going too far and sets a bad precedent for any future similar issues.