



Carol Holley
39 Pope Rd
Acton, MA 01720

Dean Charter, Tree Warden
Town Hall
Acton, MA 01720

July 26, 2005

Re: Removal of Street Trees, Pope Road

Dear Mr. Charter,

I strenuously object to the removal of street trees on Pope Road to allegedly improve sight line distance. Here are a few reasons for my objection:

1. I am a 31-year resident at 39 Pope Road. Over these years, both traffic speed (not counting the drag races that used to occur on weekend evenings in the 70's) and volume have increased noticeably.
2. Mr. Jim Kerkam, of 272 Pope Road in July of 2000 noted the increase of traffic at a meeting some Pope Road residents held with Police Chief Frank Widmayer. Note that this meeting took place even before the construction of the Brookside Shops strip mall on Route 2A.
3. At this meeting a little over five years ago, nine Pope Road area residents met with Chief Widmayer to discuss safety along Pope Road. Complaints were primarily about traffic speed and volume, lack of crosswalks, and inconsistent speed limit signage along the length of Pope Road. Sight line distance was never mentioned, even though one attendee was a Flagg Road resident and turns onto Pope Road from Brabrook Road.
4. If one is to cross Pope Road after dark (I have done so on several occasions), one sees headlights coming from a pretty far distance – and then they disappear. They reappear just before the trees slated for removal. Therefore, one could conclude that the sight line issue is not one of trees but of elevation – there is a marked dip in the road between Stoneymeade and Wingate. Removal of trees will not mitigate the change in elevation.
5. The East Acton Village Plan emphasizes pedestrian friendliness in along Pope Road. Removal of these trees will do nothing to enhance ease of pedestrian use; however, installation of stop signs, lowering of speed limits, and painting of crosswalks will.
6. Pope Road enjoys scenic road designation. The trees slated for removal are mature shade trees that, to the best of my knowledge, are healthy.

In summary, the removal of the street trees in question is counter to the scenic designation of Pope Road and will do nothing to mitigate the traffic issues encountered by area residents, present or future. Reduction of and more consistent speed limits and installation of stop signs at the Pope/Brabrook intersection are required to ensure public safety along Pope Road.

Sincerely,

Cc: Board of Selectmen, Planning Board