

9/25/21, 8:49 AM

Gmail - Road Closure Request



beth peterson <peparapro@gmail.com>

Road Closure Request

3 messages

beth peterson <peparapro@gmail.com>
To: steve.taylor@benhillcounty-ga.gov

Thu, Sep 2, 2021 at 8:46 PM

I am emailing you as I have Daniel Cowan concerning the dirt portion of Westwood Rd being closed off to public use.

I have attached a detailed statement of the issues that we as property owners are plagued with basically on a daily basis. We want to stop the public from using the dirt portion of Westwood Rd because it was never meant to be used for public use. All this is clearly stated in the statement and pictures of what we are tired of having to deal with concerning people thinking our property is their personal dump site and recreational playground

I spoke with the county manager about what we needed to do to get the road closed off and he said for me to contact the county commissioners.

I spoke with John William Mooney by phone concerning the issue and that as property owners want to be done.

2 attachments

Road Closure Request by Peterson and Cowan.docx
18499K

Notartized Road Closure Request.docx
2616K

June 13, 2024

Ben Hill County Commissioners:

I am writing you this letter in reference to an email/letter that was sent to County Commissioners(John William Mooney, Steve Taylor and Daniel Cowan) on August 15, 2021. This email was a letter explaining why Frankie Cowan, Kris Peterson and myself(Beth Peterson) was requesting and wanting to close off the dirt road portion of the road known as Westwood Dr.

The letter clearly states our reasons. The letter was also notarized. The letter also included pictures of all the trash and destruction of our property at the hands of other people.

This road was NEVER meant to be used by the public. It was a PRIVATE drive/road that runs through the middle of our property that we use for access to our far land and our personal/private use.

Closing this road will not cause people to be cut off from going to the Westwood Community. They have Preston Dr. and the Rebecca Hwy to go to Westwood. Also, there is not that much traffic that uses the road due to the road being narrow and the condition of the road(especially when it is raining.) I have spoken with a bus driver that runs a bus route for that area. They said the buses don't use the road because it is narrow and when it is raining, they stand the chance of getting stuck. So, the buses using the road is not any issue because they don't use it. The ones who are using the road are 4 wheelers, dirt bikes, ATVs and trucks. They destroy the road by cutting doughnuts and fish tailing down the road. They power break in trucks and leave deep holes in the road. On (3-21-24), a pick up truck sitting on 37 inch tires, sat and power braked until he had the rear axle touching the road. He was stuck and couldn't get out. One of the sons pulled up next to him, told him to get the truck out of the road and not to come back. ATVs and wheelers are driving up into our fields and going bogging due to the rain we have had recently. The entrance into the big field is so torn up from people cutting doughnuts it is RIDICULOUS.

Not to mention the number of times I have had to take the tractor over there and push all the bags of household garbage and household furniture over to the edge of the road that has been dumped out in the past year. I used to drag it to the edge of the road by hand, drag it with a log chain hooked to the truck but now I have a tractor with a bucket on it that I can push or pick it up with. I SHOULD NOT HAVE TO DO THIS. MY PROPERTY IS THE BEN HILL COUNTY DUMPSTERS OR LANDFIELD, but people seem to think it is. They go to dump their trash at the dumpster down the road which is full or the trash or what they have is not allowed to be put in the dumpsters, so they just come back and dump it ALL ON MY PROPERTY.

The trash issue continues to get WORSE. I caught two teenage boys throwing furniture in the creek. I pulled up behind them. I got out my vehicle and told them they had two choices: get the furniture out of the creek or I was calling the law. I took a picture of their tag number. They decided they would rather go down into the creek and clean up their crap. That is just one of the MANY incidents we deal with on a REGULAR basis. In the past two weeks, a LARGE amount of crap has been dumped on my property where we have a drive that connects 2 fields(there used to be a house trailer that sat there but it was burnt down, arson. Not just throwing out trash and all types of crap but they actually burnt down a trailer that was being remodeled.) Just in the

I am including the original email/letter that was sent in 2021 along with this letter. The original letter gives details and pictures of the issues up to the time the letter was sent. In the past 3 years since the letter and request for closing the road was sent the issues have got WORSE. We are letting you know in writing that since you did not respond to the initial email and letter we have decided the action we need to take.

I have had police reports done concerning the illegal dumping but nothing is done about it even when people's trash has personal mail in the dumped trash stating where they live. The last report I had done back in April, the officers showed up, took pictures and said they would do a report on the trash dumping if approved. One officer said that the road is actually your private road so closing it off will be the best thing to do and the only way to stop this. He said this is ridiculous. Another officer told me that officially the road does not exist on maps. It was given a name because of 911. I know the road does not exist as a public road because it is not. On Google Maps from my house on Adamson Rd down to the run of the creek across from the Manley's pond from Adamson Rd west back to entering Westwood is listed as 144 Adamson Rd.

Also attached is PowerPoint of photos of what has been dumped since March on my property. People continue to dump out their trash on a weekly basis and the trash pile is continually growing.

Effective as of the date(June 13, 2024) of this letter, you, the County Commissioners, are being notified that the dirt road portion that is referred to as Westwood Dr. is being closed off from public use. We will be putting a fence across the road(over the creek) entering Westwood and a double gate at the cross roads of Westwood Dr and Adamson Rd immediately. Signs will be placed on the fence and gates stating is a PRIVATE drive/road and will no longer be used by the public. We have waited ENTIRELY to long for a response from the letter/email that was sent to you in 2021. So, we as the owners of this property(Kris and I who own 90% of the property/right of way that sits of both sides of the road) are making sure that the public will no longer be using our private drive/road through our property that was meant to only be for PRIVATE USE not for the public.

Sincerely,

Beth Peterson and Kris Peterson

144 Adamson Rd

Fitzgerald, Ga 31750

petersoncrew81283@gmail.com

229-424-8492

Beth Peterson Kris Peterson

8-15-2021

Ben Hill County Commissioners:

Frankie Cowan, my son(Kris Peterson and myself(Beth Peterson) are putting a request in writing concerning closing the road(referred to as Westwood Drive: the dirt portion) to be closed off from public use. As you can see by the map I have included, we(Beth Peterson and Kris Peterson) own the majority of the property on both sides of the road. Frankie owns a very small portion of property adjoining the road. I have also attached a signed and notarized statement from Frankie Cowan and ourselves stating that we are all in agreement that we want the road closed to the public.

The road which the public has taken upon themselves to use without permission. This road was never meant for public use. Originally, before it was a road it was the AB & A Railroad Line that ran to Ocilla. When the rail service was discontinued and the railroad took up the tracks, my Grandfather(Grover C. Adamson) left the railroad bed as a private drive/road between our fields. Originally, the drive/road stopped where the wooded area begins just before you get to Westwood. In the late 1960s, my Grandfather decided to clear a path through the woods for a drive/road for our private use. Over the years people have took it upon themselves to use it for their own use.

You may be saying why has it taken so long for something to be said or done about this issue. Make a long story short, following the passing of my grandparents and their children, there was 6 grandchildren who now owned an interest in the farm. Let's just say that trying to talk to or with my cousins about anything was impossible. My cousins ages are in the 80s and 90s. I am nearly 40 years younger than they are. In 2019, my son(Kris Peterson) and myself bought my cousins' interest out of the farm. Now, my son and I are the sole owners of my Grandparents' farm. Once we were the sole owners of the farm, our intentions have been to have the road closed off so that the public can no longer travel through our property or use what is actually a private road. In the early 1990s, the county tried to find a deed to the road, but they were unable too. The county has never been deeded the rights for the road to make it available to be used for public use.

We are aware that the county has scraped the road for many years. No one ever told the county to scrape the road. The Shelton family lived and worked on the farm for my grandparents. The house they lived in was located on the farm. The way to get to their house was down the drive/road between the fields. One of the Shelton's sons worked for the county running a road scrape. When he would be scraping what is now known as Adamson Road, he would scrape the drive/road down to where his parent's house was. He did that on his own. No one told the county to start scraping our drive/road between our fields.

The reason the Frankie Cowan, my son and myself want the road closed off from public use it because all the crap we have to deal with. People think our property is the trash dump, a shooting range, a place to ride and cut doughnuts on their 4 wheelers, trucks, motorcycles, Polaris and

paved ways into Westwood. Back in February and March the portion of the road we want to close off was closed off from public use due to being washed out and extremely boggy. People were getting their vehicles stuck and had to be pulled out. 4 wheelers, dirt bikes, Polaris and Razors would go around the barriers closing the road off and go bogging in that portion of the road. They destroyed that portion of the road. So when the road was closed off, people used the others ways to go to Westwood with no issues at all. Recreational vehicles use the road more than motor vehicles do. Also no one lives on the road.

Closing the dirt portion of the road off would mean that the county would no longer have to do any upkeep on the road or clean up all the various typed of trash that is constantly being dumped on a daily basis. That would save the county lots of money.

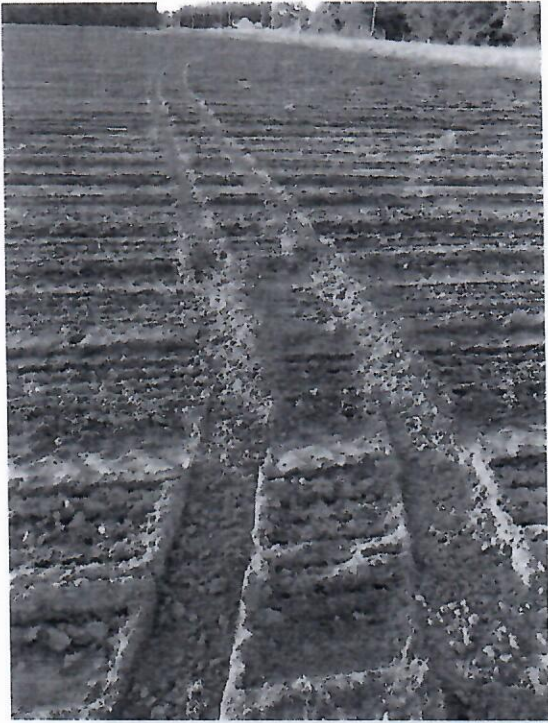
To ensure that the public would no longer be able to use the road once it is closed off, we would be putting up locked gates up at Adamson Road and at the creek entering into Westwood. We would put gates up so that Frankie, Brent Brown(he farms both of our farms) and ourselves will still be using the road for personal and farm use. We would give Fitzgerald Utilities, Mediacom, Windstream and Oglethorpe keys to the gates upon their request. Also by closing the road off, it will save me a considerable amount of money. I will only have to buy gates for both ends of the road and tpost and cattle fence to put up all the way from the gates to the run of the creek on Adamson Road. If the road is not closed off, I will have to spend a lot of money fencing off the fields on both sides of the road and 5 sets of gates.

The bottom line is that Frankie and I want the road closed off to public use and go back to being a private drive/road like it is supposed to be. We are both tired of people using our property as their personal trash dump, as a shooting range, as an off road recreational vehicle park, an unwanted pet drop off and their party spot. Also riding across the field destroying crops.

The next pages are of pictures to show exactly why we want the public to no longer to be able to use the road.











GOLD AREAS: Fields 1, 2 & 3 where people have been cutting doughnuts in the fields and riding across cross with trucks, 4 wheelers and various types of ATVs.









Pictures of trash in fields 1, 2 & 3, ditch bank on both side of the roads and trash in wooded area going into Westwood.



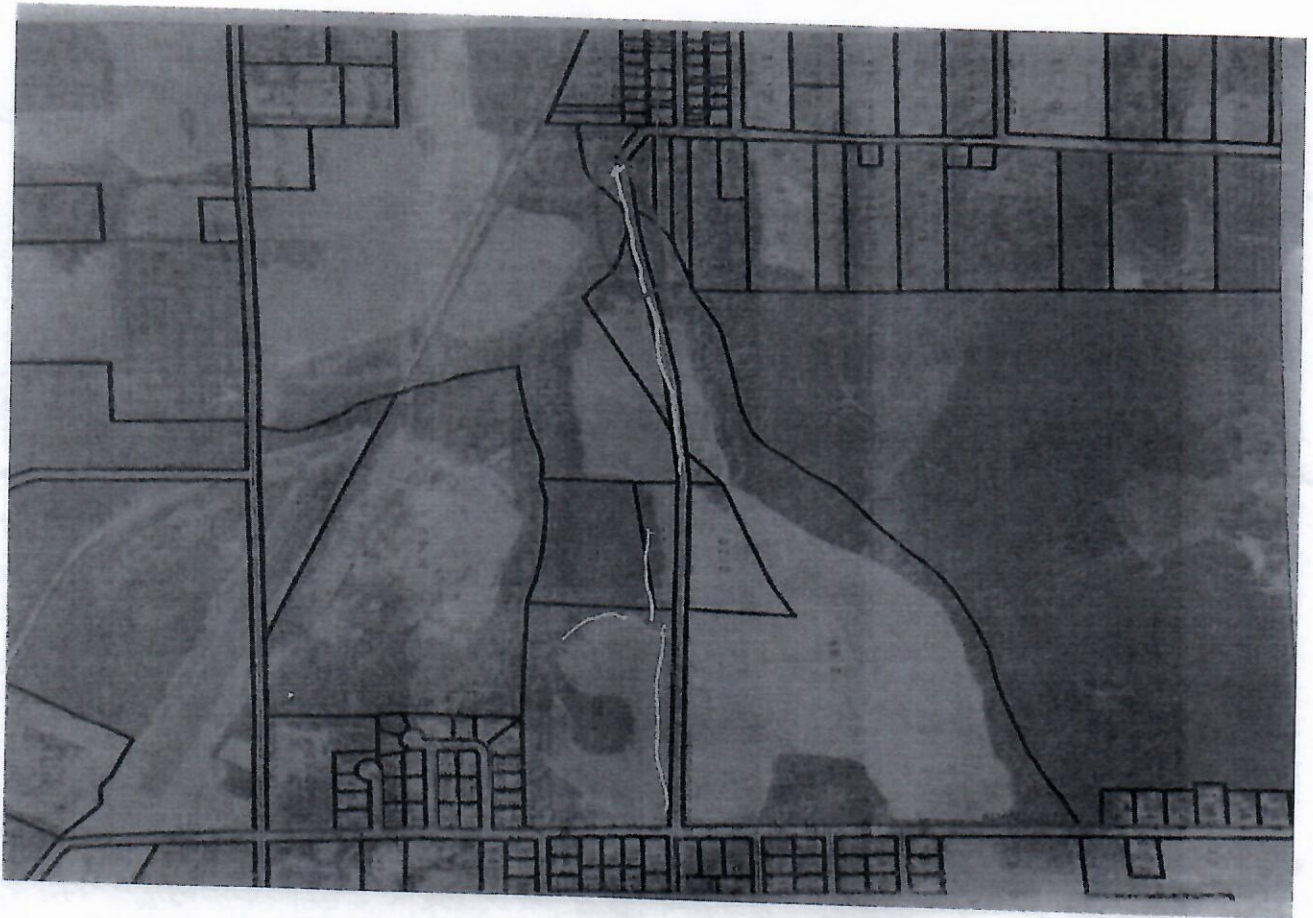


My intentions are to purchase the 10 acre track where the blue line is from Frankie. Once I purchase that portion of land, I will own 100% of the right of way on the entire road.



Gold Areas that trash is being constantly dumped.

The wooded area(circled in pink) heading into Westwood is the worst area for everything you can imagine to be dumped.



Road Closure

I, Frankie Cowan, own property adjoining the property that belongs to Mary Beth Peterson and Kristopher George Peterson, which is located on Westwood Road. I have discussed with the Peterson's about closing the dirt portion of the road referred to as Westwood Road. The Peterson's own the majority of the right-a-way on both sides of Westwood Road. I am in agreement with the Peterson's to close the road off to public use. Closing the dirt portion of Westwood Road would remedy the issues that we as property owners have to deal with on a daily basis(trespassing, dumping of all forms of household trash, dumping yard cleaning debris, using the property as a shooting range, all types of ATVs(destroying crops, bogging in the fields, messing the road up to the point that it is unable to be traveled on) using our property as a place to have parties(leaving all types of alcoholic containers on the ground), dumping all forms of trash in the creek, abandoning animals. The only way to stop people from destroying our property is to close the road off from being used by the public.

Those who live in Westwood have 3 other ways to get to the Westwood Community(Lilac Rd(dirt road), Preston Dr(paved road), and Rebecca Hwy(paved road).

Currently, the dirt portion of Westwood Road had been closed off to public use for 4 weeks. The road has a section that is impassable due to being extremely wet and boggy. Even though road blocks have been placed at both ends of the road, people are ignoring the road blocks. They the going bogging with the ATVs and trucks in the boggy portion of the road.

To ensure that people will not try to continue to use the road for public use, gates with pad locks will placed at Adamson/Westwood Rd and going into Westwood. The Peterson's have agreed to pay for the gates.

Frankie Cowan

Date: 6-7-21

Frankie Cowan

William Muse

Date: 6-7-21

Witness

Justin K. Phillips

Date: 5-7-21

Notary Commission Expires 20th Nov 2021



Mary Beth Peterson

Date: 5-7-2021

Mary Beth Peterson

Kristopher George Peterson

Date 5-7-21

Kristopher George Peterson

Cory Reynolds

Date: 5-7-21

Witness

Justin K. Phillips

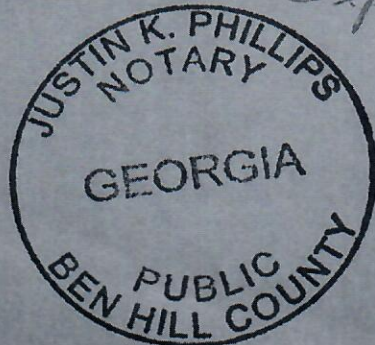
Date: 5-7-21

Notary

Commission

Expires

20th Nov 2021



Additional Photos of trash dumping on my property



