

17 Oct 2016

Development Review Board (DRB)  
Hardwick, Vt 05843

Brenda Bolieu  
268 Richardson Rd  
Hardwick, Vt 05843

Dear Board Members,

I purchased my home at 268 Richardson Rd in 1999. A key reason for choosing this location include it being a quiet, retirement type area away from downtown business and traffic, but still within a very short walking and even shorter driving distance to anywhere in Hardwick center.

As we know, NECKA/Head Start has recently decided to move from their current location in the Masonic Temple and have moved forward with a plan to purchase a single family detached home at 192 Richardson Rd, and ultimately convert it to an "early education center." As a retired teacher and para-educator, I surely support anything even minimally to do with education; however, the Richardson Rd neighborhood simply is not suitable for this type of facility nor was it ever intended to be. The road, which is an extremely steep, narrow dirt road with ditches on one or both sides, poses substantial safety concerns. During the winter and subsequent mud seasons, the road can be hazardous, if not perilous, especially if icy. Trying to navigate the muddy ruts or slippery snow and ice is a challenge; meeting an oncoming vehicle poses additional challenges. Driving in these conditions and in close proximity to children or adults walking up and down can, and will, sooner or later, surely yield deadly consequences.

The town has also recently undergone a tax assessment which has resulted in, for most people, a substantial tax increase. NECKA has and will continue to ask for certain new costly accommodations and changes that don't already exist in order to properly run their program: increased water pressure, paved roads, additional lighting, sidewalks, parking areas, road frontage, road maintenance, and any additional safety and operationally related items. All of these requests and essentials will unnecessarily further burden the residents of Hardwick to the point of near tax suffocation.

The Masonic Temple has openly expressed a willingness to work with and help NECKA; however, the general impression is that NECKA would like to have their own facility. One can't judge this as being a bad endeavor of course; however, choosing a location such as this one that will be so costly, unsuitable and for several months out of the year, extremely dangerous, can be viewed as very impractical. I urge you to re-evaluate this proposal not only in the interest of the residents of Hardwick from a taxation standpoint, but much more-so, for the safety and convenience of all involved.

Respectfully,



Brenda Bolieu

October 18, 2016

Town of Hardwick

DRB

Hardwick, Vermont 05843

Dear Board members,

I, William "Bill" Thompson live at 194 Richardson Road in Hardwick. To the naked eye Richardson Road seems very serene, and it is at times. However, along with the good comes the difficulty, the change of seasons.

During the winter there is nothing to stop the pelting wind, the blinding blizzards and the icy roads. Where to plow and pile the snow can be very challenging as everyone should to be mindful of his neighbors. Traveling the hill without 4 wheel drive, can and is near impossible. If you have to stop on the hill for any reason, trying to resume the drive the rest of the way up the hill is difficult to impossible. Equally difficult is trying to go down the hill, as the road is slippery making it impossible to make a sudden stop to avoid an accident. It would be beyond devastating to hit a vehicle and injure a child or anyone in that vehicle or to hit a child or parent who might walking up or down the hill.

Spring also brings weather related problems: run off from the melting winter snow and receding frost line causing deep ruts as vehicles travel up and down. The warm days and freezing nights of spring also brings danger many mornings.

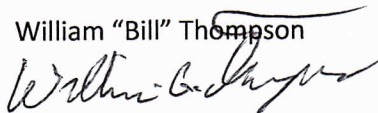
I work long hours and have been very ill. There is no way that I can walk up this hill if the road is blocked for any reason.

Families should not be expected to have to travel this road. In my mind, it is horrific to think that anyone could expect a mother to walk her three to five year old child up this road at any time of the year. The road is too steep.

NEKCA should rethink this area for a pre K. education center. The uphill travel to this location is just not safe. Put the children first.

Respectfully,

William "Bill" Thompson

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William B. Thompson", written over the printed name.

D.R.B Board  
Hardwick, Vermont 05843  
RE: NEKCA/Head Start Program

Dear D.R.B. Board

Hello, I am Mary Thompson. My husband William and I live at 194 Richardson Rd in Hardwick. We are concerned with the road to our home being congested due to the increase of traffic that would be caused by NEKCA on a daily basis not to mention when there is a function. The parked cars will make it nearly impossible to pass down the narrow road to my home.

William has some health issues, and quite often needs to sleep during the day. He is not well enough to walk up the hill if necessary. The road doesn't hold up well during mud season, our cars bottom out and struggle to make it up the hill. An influx of cars would only make it worse. In the winter time the road can become very slippery and at times cannot be traveled without all wheel drive. The increased traffic will make a low priority road even more unsafe to travel and possibly make it so we are unable to reach our home at the end of the day. Because of the grade of the hill and the road being narrow you need to get momentum to make the hill and try to stay to the center of the road in order to make it. With more vehicles on the road you will need to stay closer to the ditches which you could slide into or have to slow when you meet a car causing you to lose momentum and not make the hill. With the winter snow banks the road would become more narrow, and with cars parking on the side of the road going around them would be impossible and very dangerous during winter conditions.

The red light in the center of town is congested and makes navigating up the hill tricky. The increased volume of cars trying to go up the hill is going to make the intersection even more congested. Cars trying to turn up the hill will back up the cars in front of the elementary school because they can't see down Wolcott street to see if cars are coming. Cars coming up Wolcott street cannot turn down main street because turning cars are blocking the corner. Cars in front of the diner cannot move through the light because cars are stopped in the middle of the road trying to turn up the hill. Coming down the hill by the elementary school in the morning and afternoon is very dangerous as well. Parents are dropping off and picking up students. There is not much room there for any cars to pass by while that is happening.

Allowing NEKCA to buy the property at 192 Richardson road is just going to cause a driving DISASTER.

Concerned Neighbor and Tax Payer



Mary R. Thompson



October 15, 2016  
Hardwick, Vermont

Cynthia Moulton  
P.O. Box 723,  
Hardwick, Vermont 05843

Dear DBR Board,

I am concerned about the possible changes which may take place in our neighborhood. I live at 166 Richardson Road.

I am a taxpayer, own property in Hardwick, my children were educated here. I have no issues with attempting to educate and enrich youngsters.

My issue is with the probable changes to my neighborhood. You see it is a quiet, dead end road with little traffic. Deer, fox and turkeys reside along with us here. It is a neighborhood of single family homes.

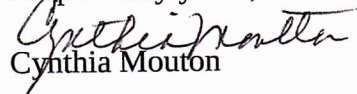
The whole complexion of the neighborhood will change. There is a proposed large fence being added to the adjoining property and a parking lot. There will be an increase of traffic and noise. This hill is very steep; at least a 10% grade. There are no sidewalks for pedestrians. The road is dirt and as such, gets slick with rain, very muddy with runoff in the spring and high banks with decreased visibility when there is snow. When there is a hard rain, gravel washes from our road on to the pavement ending at the Elementary School. Sometimes, the road is impassible with snow, (if you don't have four-wheel drive. Decreased lighting also as a result of the town decreasing the number of lights.

At the entrance of our road is the Hardwick Elementary School. Cars continue to park where there is no parking. Often times during events such as sports, practice or concerts, parked cars make it nearly impassible or one lane.

On icy days, either attempting to enter or to exit onto South Main, can be very dangerous. There is pedestrian traffic combined with vehicle traffic. There is the blinking light at that intersection, increasing the congestion at this location. With the proposed increase of traffic up this road it can only add to the danger.

While I can understand anyone's wish to change their environment for something they believe will benefit them. You should likewise respect and understand my desire to live and reside without your proposed changes to my neighborhood.

Respectfully yours,

  
Cynthia Moulton

October 17, 2016

Development Review Board (DRB)  
Hardwick, Vermont 05843

Gary Richardson  
P.O. Box 604,  
Hardwick, Vermont 05843

Dear Board Members,

I currently reside at 166 Richardson Rd, next to the proposed location for NECKA's early childhood education center. While I surely am not opposed to NECKA's efforts or their education of young children, I am absolutely opposed to the specific proposed location.

NECKA's facility should not be located at the top of a hill with a 10% grade, which raises substantial safety issues. This is an extremely steep hill, starting at the Elementary School, and winds three tenths of a mile to the top where the house is located. You previously stated the children walk to your facility, which means your plan is to make children walk or parents drive up a very dangerous, unpaved hill with no sidewalks. It's difficult enough to walk up this road in the best conditions, like now when it's fall with just a cool breeze. Come mud season, the difficulty will be multiplied, and during the long winter months, it will become downright dangerous. Banks are very high, forcing people to walk in the road itself. On icy days one can barely stand in the road, and it's also not unheard of to lose control of your vehicle; imagine an out of control vehicle sliding toward a child or staff member. I cannot stress enough the potential for a death or serious injury due to the conditions. This is also a dead end road that was simply never designed to safely accommodate people, especially small children, walking up and down regularly, or the amount of traffic this will produce. Every resident in this neighborhood owns a four-wheel drive vehicle, and for good reason.

Not only are you asking to re-locate but I assume you will also be asking to make improvements to the area and road, such as paving the road to somewhat improve the safety concerns I noted above, adding essential lighting which was recently reduced and possibly putting in sidewalks, as well as increased water pressure and any other additional items. There would also have to be increased maintenance of the road because of the increased volume of traffic and upkeep, which will in turn again increase the already high tax rate, which was just increased.

There simply could not be a worse, more unsafe and unsuitable location for NECKA's facility. The money that would be spent on this proposed location would go very far in building a new facility in a much more accessible area, or buying another building in the same more accessible area. At the least, to save the residents of Hardwick from bearing the unnecessary tax burden's this would create as well as avoiding very serious, viable safety concerns and incidents.

Respectfully yours,



Gary Richardson



# Petition to Deny Change of Use at 192 Richardson Rd. Due to Increased Traffic Volume & Traffic / Pedestrian Safety

<b>Petition summary and background</b>	Northeast Kingdom Community Action, INC., has submitted an application to the Town of Hardwick Development Review Board for a change of use at 192 Richardson Rd. This application would allow the change of use from a single family residence to an Early Education Center that would be licensed for 20 children with a staff of 5.
<b>Action petitioned for</b>	We, the undersigned, are concerned citizens who are fearful of the negative impacts to traffic in our neighborhood(s). These concerns would be a direct result of the additional traffic (approximately 90 vehicle trips per day) if a pre education center was permitted in the small <u>residential</u> neighborhood at 192 Richardson Rd. Approving this change of use at 192 Richardson Rd., would cause severe congestion in the vicinity of Richardson Rd., Holton Hill., and near the intersection of S. Main and Wolcott Streets. Richardson Road is a steep gravel road with some grades over 10% and no sidewalk. It should be noted herein that the condition of Richardson Rd will not support this proposed level of traffic without significant upgrades to drainage, road surface and safety improvements to prevent extreme mud in the spring, dust year round and pedestrian safety features such as sidewalks, lighting, speed enforcement / limit and improving sight distance.

Printed Name	Signature	Address	Comment	Date
GARY RICHARDSON	Gary Richardson	166 Richardson Road	TRAFFIC - 10% GRADE MUD SEASON	10/10/16
Brandi Bolin	Brandi Bolin	268 Richardson Rd	no sidewalks Traffic concerns	10/10/16
Cynthia Moulton	Cynthia Moulton	166 Richardson Rd	Increased Traffic Safety concerns	10/11/16
JAMES DAVISON	James C. Davison	60 Perry Lane Hill	Increased, speeding traffic,	10/10/16
Vanessa Davison	Vanessa Davison	60 Perry Lane Hill	Increased Speeding Traffic	10/11/16
BILL THOMPSON	Bill Thompson	194 Richardson Rd	Traffic Steep HILL	10/11/16
DIAN R. HALL	Dian R. Hall	60 Elm St. Hardwick	NOT PAVED - Steep Hill Snow Run off	10-11-16
Mary Thompson	Mary Thompson	194 Richardson Rd.	Getting to and from my Home in Winter and mud Season	10/11/16
Lillian Richardson	Lillian Richardson	14 Dewey St. Hardwick	traffic No sidewalk	10/11/16
LEDRICK L. LEPAGE	Ledrick L. Lepage	19 DEWEY ST	Traffic	10/17/16
ROSS GOUIN	Ross M. Gouin	124 Richardson Rd.	Rd needs improvements to handle current traffic	10/17/16
Jessica Gouin	Jessica Gouin	124 Richardson Rd	Mudseason Traffic	10/17/16
Doug Bevell	Doug Bevell	119 SPRING ST.	concerned citizen Traffic control	10/17/16

take traffic



October 18, 2016

Development Review Board (DRB)

Hardwick, Vermont 05843

RE: NEKCA/ Head Start/Program

Dear Board Members.

I am writing this letter to let you know my concerns regarding NEKCA's interest in moving from their current location at the Masonic Temple Building, on Church Street to 192 Richardson Road in Hardwick.

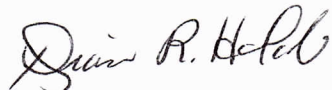
All of Hardwick's real estate has just undergone a tax evaluation; as a result, most everyone's taxes increased substantially. To date, NEKCA has not actually purchased this single family dwelling that they are considering, but they have already asked the Select Board for more water pressure to that site. So the "I wants" begin. I know for a fact the "I wants" will not end here: next, they will want the road paved, new sidewalks, extra lighting, water pressure to the fire hydrant, subsequent maintenance; all of this and more. There will be no end, and the people of Hardwick already are heavily burdened with taxes.

I am NOT against Head Start. However, as a taxpayer, enough is enough. It is getting harder and harder for the real estate owners to make all ends meet. When a town board is considering giving up the taxes on a piece of property, possibly paving dirt roads, adding sidewalks where none exist, extra water pressure, lighting etc., someone should pause and think. Let's go to the taxpayers at the next Hardwick Town Meeting and ask all of them to exercise their rights by using their vote as they will all be directly and financially affected.

The Masonic Temple space was cleaned and is safe due to the generosity of the Mason's and Paul Davis Restoration. NEKCA's current location in the village may not be perfect, but there are good sidewalks, adequate lighting, no water problems, ample space to park vehicles, great for walking children to and from Head Start as well as village outings.

Maybe a helpful first step would be to get a committee together of interested local people to keep watch for a suitable location in the village: a location that is easy to walk to, safe for all Head Start children with ample parking, etc. The current proposed property on 192 Richardson Road is none of the above. The existing neighbors know what the change of seasons brings to that steep and underdeveloped hillside and they are very concerned, with substantially good reason. DON'T RUSH to purchase the first property that comes along; wait and get the best property for the Head Start and NEKCA needs.

Concerned citizen and Tax Payer



Dian R. Holcomb



Hill, Denise &lt;dhill@nekcavt.org&gt;

**neighborhood**

1 message

**Eric Richter** <bigrockdmd@comcast.net>

Fri, Apr 29, 2016 at 10:10 AM

To: dhill@nekcavt.org

Lisa,

It was good chatting with you this morning. Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention. As you are aware I was a next door neighbor to the Head Start facility located in the Masonic Temple Building on Church Street in Hardwick. Granted I have not lived there for a lot of years, however for twenty years my wife and I had lived just up the street near my dental office on West Church street. I've lived in the neighborhood for nearly 40 years. I now reside in NH and commute on a nearly daily basis. I want the citizenry to know that in all the years I've been involved with Hardwick I have never heard of any adverse issues regarding the child center. You can check with the town clerk but I do not think there has been any devaluation of any property on Church Street. In fact the values have skyrocketed in the last 25 years. There has been no noise or adverse actions or crime in the neighborhood and as far as I'm concerned it's been rather calm and peaceful. The traffic has not been an issue nor has the parking. The new location may even be safer regarding traffic and children because it's more out of the way and not on a fairly busy street. The town needs this center to have early childhood education and in the process creating better citizens for the future. I think we all benefit from this. What's in it for us to deny these kids an even start in life. Issues can be much easier to deal with while these kids are young and waiting for future intervention can be problematic at best. Therefore I'm a big supporter of the head start center and think the move could be positive.

Eric Richter DMD



5-3-16

To Whom It May Concern,

I live across the street from the building where the headstart school is. I believe in the pre-school program for children. The children learn a lot there and the teachers do a wonderful job teaching them.

The children are well behaved and the teachers make sure they are safe. When they are outside the teachers are right there with them. They have fun, but they are not loud.

I do support the plan for them to move to a larger building.

Thank you for  
your time  
Sandy Lakus

To Whom It May Concern:

Sandy and I were neighbors of the Head Start Program for 5-6 years when we lived on Church St. We found them to be very quiet, and peaceful. The traffic and noise was never an issue for us, at all. We never saw any children in the street and when outside, they were supervised and very well behaved.

This is a great program for children, and we believe that they would be a good addition to the neighborhood.

Roger and Sandy Howard



## Wellspring Institute

PO Box 147, Hardwick, VT 05843  
802-472-6694 email: wellspringvt@gmail.com

Margaret A. McGuire, Ph.D.  
Clinical Director

April 29, 2016

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to address questions and concerns regarding Headstart as a neighbor.

I have lived and worked beside Headstart for the past 20 years. My colleagues and I have never once been disturbed or felt threatened in anyway by their presence, or by the people who participate in the Headstart program.

On the contrary, I enjoy the sounds of children playing on those occasions when they are outside (on average about 20-30 minutes in the late mornings, Monday through Thursday).

The rhythm of traffic is like this: a drop off period in the morning around 8-8:30 and a pick up period in the afternoon around 12:30-1 (about 30' each) Monday through Thursday during the school year – September through May.

Staff members are diligent in their attention to the children and parents, and maintain a very clear and loving approach to discipline.

I am happy to speak with anyone who continues to have questions or concerns about Headstart being a great neighbor.

Maggie McGuire

