

To: Ryan Gibbons and Terry Green

Date: June 14, 2021

Subject: Proposed Widening of The Georgian Trail

You will find attached an email we sent to both of you last September 23rd regarding the width of The Georgian Trail and the prompt response I received from Terry. We appreciated the response and hearing your update this past spring about whether or not the widening we requested in specific areas along the trail would occur.

Last year's request was due in part to COVID 19 and the fact that with the narrowness of the trail it was very difficult to keep 6 feet apart while riding or walking the trail when meeting oncoming or passing traffic. While most people tried to distance there was a noticeable number people who ignored this and would not move onto the grass to achieve the 6 feet. This has not changed in 2021; some people still like to walk or ride 2 or 3 abreast even when approaching or passing others on the trail.

If we can assume the average person on a bike or walking takes up 2 feet of space and another person walking or riding and passing the first would take up an equivalent amount of space then there would be 6 feet between them, in total a trail width of 10 feet. As this doesn't happen a good deal of the time the distancing between individuals is challenged.

Also, most people seem to want to walk or ride on the graveled portion of the trail and won't move on to the grassed portion which we can understand because it can have a washboard effect. Not terrible if walking but a rough ride if on a bike and can be a bit dangerous for the senior sect.

Would the town consider adding signage regarding COVID distancing to the other signs regarding picking up after your pets, pedestrians have the right of way and no motorized vehicles allowed on the trail to advise people to go single file when approaching or passing others. While COVID seems to be lessening it has happened before and then come back with a vengeance; perhaps people will get used to a passing protocol that will carry forward to a time when COVID has been beaten. i.e. the signs would not have to quote COVID as the reason.

We have also noted that there appear to be a lot of faster bike riders on the trail and that these seem to be the riders who like to ride 2 or 3 across regardless of who else is on the trail – basically it appears that they are only interested in themselves talking and riding fast. The signage asking bike riders to advise their presence either by ringing a bell or vocally stating "on your left" seems to get forgotten and a lot of bikes don't appear to have bells.

Of course, there are also pedestrians and bike riders who have ipods in their ears and can't hear the approaching bikes anyway thus the need for educating all who use the trail on a proper approach for passing.

The email that was sent last September was basically due to the tree cutting of the Ash and that has left the trail decimated in a number of locations which is no fault of the TBM. Unhappily, the discussed replanting of trees has not started even though the TBM and Grey County are working on a tree conservation plan at this time. We are also concerned that there will be additional loss of trees due to the gypsy moth infestation.

When can we expect the replanting to start and what is the plan to carry it forward to replace other lost trees in the future? The environment is important and the loss of this many trees not only changes the appearance of the trail but can affect the adjacent water areas as well.

We appreciated the grooming of the Georgian Trail last winter, it made it a lot easier to walk and snowshoe than previous years. Can you advise how wide the equipment used to do this was? i.e. ten feet or five feet requiring two passes. Perhaps the trail can be widened to facilitate this process to the same width for the summer traffic.

We are also noticing a lot more e-bikes on the trail this year. Is this considered a motorized vehicle?

In summary we are asking the following with regard to the Georgian Trail:

- 1) Widen the trail to a minimum of 10 feet
- 2) Install COVID protocol signage to maintain distancing which will carry on even after COVID
- 3) Plant trees to reforest the areas along the trail so that we all can be proud of what the trail stands for – PROVIDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO GET OUT AND EXERCISE FOR ALL AGES EITHER WALKING, RUNNING, BIKING, WALKING DOGS, SNOWSHOEING or CROSS COUNTRY SKIING IN A NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.
- 4) We feel if the name is changed to Georgian Cycle & Skiing Trail it will attract people who are focused on speed and competition. Please leave the name alone.

The TBM's focus appears to be about sustainability which is driven primarily by the environmental aspects of the area. Farming and tourism based on the natural benefits of the ski slopes, Georgian Bay and the Georgian Trail support this goal. Please don't ruin one of those main attractions.

Thank you for all your time and efforts in the past keeping our community safe, green and beneficial for all.

Ann & Tim King