



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 20-323, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 5/20/2020

TITLE:

Miller School and Owensville Roads Through Truck Restriction Updates

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Update to the Board on the Through Truck Restriction Requests and direction moving forward

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Kamptner, Filardo, Rapp, McDermott

PRESENTER (S): Kevin McDermott

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: Throughout 2017, the increased frequency of large trucks using rural roads in the County had driven complaints from residents in rural areas of Albemarle County, causing high levels of concern related to the safety issues associated with this trend. These concerns were particularly prominent in areas surrounding and accessed by Miller School Road (Route 635) and Owensville Road (Route 678). To understand and address these concerns, on January 2, 2018, the Board authorized funding for a study to evaluate potential Through Truck Restrictions on these roads. On October 10, 2018, the Board of Supervisors held a Public Hearing on the proposal to restrict through-truck traffic on the roads. After considering the public comment and available information, at a meeting held on November 7, 2018, the Board approved Resolutions requesting that the Commonwealth Transportation Board set a restriction on the subject roads for Through Tractor Trailers, with an exception on Owensville Road for vehicles being used for the purposes of logging operations. At a subsequent meeting, the Board amended the exception for logging vehicles to an exception for all agricultural vehicles.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Rural Area Character: Preserve the character of rural life with thriving farms and forests, traditional crossroad communities, and protected scenic areas, historic sites, and biodiversity

DISCUSSION: In mid-2019, VDOT informed staff that a Through Truck Restriction was approved for Miller School Road, however, the Owensville Road restriction had not been approved because of the exception for agricultural vehicles. It should be noted that exempting logging vehicles was initially a suggestion from VDOT officials who manage the Trucking Programs for VDOT. Staff was also informed that the denial was not a result of the change from a logging vehicle exception to an agricultural vehicle exception. Staff requested that VDOT continue to evaluate the request to see if there was anything that could be done to allow the restriction and exception to move forward. In late 2019 staff was informed that the request would not be approved if it included the exception.

In addition to the problems with getting approval on the proposed Owensville Road restriction with the exception, it's been discovered that the signs for the Miller School Road restriction reference a Through Truck

Restriction instead of a Through Tractor Trailer Restriction. The County's request was clear, however, a mistake was made during the VDOT review and approval process, resulting in the mistaken approval of a Through Truck Restriction instead of the Through Tractor Trailer Restriction. County staff was informed that VDOT officials would not object to changing this to the originally requested Through Tractor Trailer Restriction, but they would like to confirm that is still the desire of the County before making any changes. It was also expressed that if the County would like to move forward with the Owensville Road Through Tractor Trailer Restriction without the exception for logging or agricultural vehicles, VDOT would support that.

For clarification, a Through Truck Restriction would apply to any truck or truck and trailer or semitrailer combination, except a pickup or panel truck, traveling the road without an origin or destination accessed from that road. A Through Tractor Trailer Restriction would apply to those that meet the following definition: a Tractor Trailer is a Tractor Truck with a trailer or semi-trailer connected, a Tractor Truck is defined as "a non-cargo-carrying power unit used in combination with a semitrailer (or trailer)." Under the Through Tractor Trailer restriction, Tractor Trucks would be able to travel these roads if they do not have a trailer or semi-trailer connected. Tractor Trucks are distinguished from pickup trucks, which are considered straight trucks and would be allowed with a trailer of any size.

BUDGET IMPACT: No anticipated budget impacts

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board:

- 1) Confirm that it continues to support a Through Tractor Trailer Restriction (instead of a Through Truck Restriction) on Miller School Road; and
- 2) Direct staff to either:
 - a) proceed with requesting a Through Tractor Trailer Restriction on Owensville Road with no exceptions for logging/agricultural vehicles, in which case a Resolution will be brought back to the Board; or
 - b) no longer seek any truck restrictions on Owensville Road.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A - November 7, 2018 Executive Summary
- B - Owensville Road Through Truck Restriction Study Summary
- C - Miller School Road Through Truck Restriction Study Summary