

Members of the Council,

I should like to add my voice to those supporting the update of the Rustic Roads plan forwarded to you by the Planning Board. The roads recommended for addition are excellent choices and should have been included earlier. Some of them have outstanding vistas and pass historic and cultural sites. I am familiar with most of the recommended additions and think the advisory committee and the planning staff and board should be commended for their judicious and sensitive selections.

I just want to add a brief comment on the importance of rustic roads to the character of the Agricultural Reserve. The roads are, in themselves, important historic and cultural artifacts, each with a story that helps illuminate the history of the county and the families who lived along them. They are also important in maintaining the Reserve as a working agricultural landscape, signaling its unique qualities and differentiating it from the suburban landscape it surrounds. It is not only what happens in the Reserve that is important, but how you get there and travel through it that helps protect and maintain it.

You will doubtless hear complaints that rustic roads may slow traffic. That is true and the point of them—to give residents and visitors, whether in cars, on bikes, horseback, or afoot a chance to see and wonder, and to assure those that till the soil, grow the food and fiber, and husband horses and other livestock that there is this island of stability and beauty amidst a fast-changing metropolis. These roads create some inconveniences for some farmers, which sensible management can easily ameliorate well short of obliterating their character.

I had expected to deliver these remarks in person but onset of a cold recommends against infecting anyone with anything other than enthusiasm for rustic roads. So, please accept this note as an appeal to your collective sense of stewardship for a treasure of the county by adding a few more gems.

Royce Hanson