

2. HIGHWAY MATTERS

A. FIRST BAPTIST DRIVE

As you may be aware, First Baptist Drive is a 0.44 mile private road in the Burdette area that serves seven (7) residences, some of which are more than seventy (70) years old. It is poorly maintained and, as you might imagine, becomes almost impassable during the freeze/thaw cycle of winter, to the point that it is a serious public safety issue for the residents. The road is eligible for inclusion in the secondary system of highways, which would transfer maintenance responsibility to VDOT under their "Rural Addition" program. The project has been on our radar for almost a decade – we had the right-of-way surveyed in 2001 and have been seeking donations of right-of-way since that time. We have worked with VDOT to escrow \$238,000 in secondary road funds over the last 8 or 9 years that will be used to initially bring the roadway up to VDOT standards.

I recently asked Mr. Railey for a status update on the right-of-way acquisition which is attached for your reference. There appears to be three unresolved parcels that are problematic for different reasons – one owner is unwilling to donate, one cannot be reached, and one is an estate with more than 4 dozen heirs. While it's always been the Board's policy to require donated right-of-way on these types of projects, for the reasons described above, that may not be feasible in this case.

Accordingly, I am seeking your consideration in allowing us to negotiate with the property owner who wishes to be compensated, and in allowing us to exercise eminent domain in the case of the other two parcels if necessary. We are required to certify the right-of-way to VDOT before the project can move any farther. Please note that secondary road funds cannot be used for right-of-way acquisition – accordingly, the funding required to acquire this right of way would be local funding. The amount of remaining right-of-way is less than 0.2 acres.

MOTION REQUIRED: If the Board is so inclined, a motion is required authorizing staff to negotiate the right-of-way on the property of Shirley Crum, and in preparing the necessary instruments for eminent domain on the Fann and Suiter properties.

B. MONTHLY STATUS REPORT

Please plan to share your local highway concerns with Mr. Lomax.