

Take Back the Byway

Virginia Routes 231 & 22 (Gordonsville Rd/Louisa Rd)
Albemarle County

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Scenic Byway

Scenic Byway defined by Virginia legislation: ***a road designated by the Commonwealth Transportation Board having relatively high aesthetic or cultural value leading to or within areas of historical, natural or recreational significance.***

For years Routes 231 & 22 in Albemarle County were labeled as a Scenic Byway, as one of the 10 most scenic landscapes in America (Scenic America Magazine), as one of only two National Scenic Byways in Virginia being part of The Journey through Hallowed Ground (Skyline Drive the other) and as a major entrance corridor into Charlottesville.

Despite the many accolades, this Byway has become less of a scenic drive through an agrarian wonderland and moreover a speedy cut-through from Point A to B with smartphone GPS pointing the way.

We want to Take Back the Byway

We ask the County and VDOT to work with the Community and meet the Byway designation criteria: **to reasonably protect the aesthetic and cultural value of the highway.**

Community Residents present the following issues, concerns and suggestions regarding traffic along Routes 231 & 22:

Enforce the Restricted Route

On 12/31/1988, these Routes were designated "Restricted Routes" - *No Tractor Truck Semi-Trailer combinations over 65' total length.* (VDOT).

Over 32 years later, restricted vehicles over 65' continuously travel these Roads. I travel this Road daily and always see trucks greater than 65' both north and south bound lanes. Last month I saw an automobile transporter traveling north on 231. An automobile transporter is designated to travel STAA access routes only in Virginia.

www.GPS.gov states you can report violations of posted restrictions by providing a plate number and company name for each incident. (Difficult to gather info while driving.) The website stated: *"maximum federal penalty for failing to comply with a posted route restriction is \$11,000 for a company, \$2,750 for a driver.* This should be a deterrent if could report/enforce? Advise residents and the Community to report? A different form of Neighborhood Watch?

Recently ACPD posted a sign at the Keswick Post Office regarding no truck over 65'. I applaud this effort as signs on I-64 or 250 are ignored or overlooked.

From the north, I noticed there is sign posted above the Gordonsville Circle and in front of the Food Lion re: 65' trucks restricted route. However, once into Albemarle County, there is a flashing light to indicate a left turn onto Klockner Rd, but there isn't a 65' Restriction Sign.

This would be a good place to post a sign and allow trucks to detour/reroute over to VSH 15.

Take Back the Byway - Enforce Restrictions, Post Signage and Remove Trucks over 65'

Posted Speed Limits

Currently, Louisa Road is posted 45mph. Just past Cismont Store traveling north Gordonsville Rd., the speed limit increases to 50mph right before the entrance to Historic Grace Episcopal Church. This seems absurd to encourage drivers to increase their speed as they approach the Church entry! There should be signage to slow traffic in front of Church entry and the entire route should be posted 45mph.

Take Back the Byway - Maximum posted speed 45mph. Post slower speeds on curves.

Property Owners own the Road(231/22)

All property owners fronting along 22 and 231 own to the middle of the road and VDOT has a 50' easement. These property owners are victims of speeding traffic, increasing traffic volumes, destruction of property from accidents and hit-and-run drivers, road noise, blocked ingress/egress to property when accidents close the road, road rage from speeding drivers, reckless drivers passing on double-yellow lines, inability to access mail from roadside mailboxes, roadside trash/litter, devaluation of property, unsafe conditions for farm vehicles, no safe access for pedestrians and cyclists, (long gone are the days to cross the road on horseback) and a lack of safety when enter/exit between private drive and Road.

There are a total of **141** private drives fronting Louisa Rd (5miles)/Gordonsville Rd (8miles) Many of these serve multiple dwellings. (i.e. Springer Run = 5dwellings, Malin Ridge = 5dwellings.) Calculates an **average of 11 drive entrances per mile on this Road**. Residents pulling on/off 231/22 risk near accidents each time as through traffic often exceeds the speed limit of 45/50mph which reduces/eliminates driver reaction time to slow or stop.

This two-lane rural road of 13-miles (SR 22/231) has 141 private drives to multiple dwellings, 16 State secondary road crossings, 32 curves and crests, commercial entrances to a Post Office, a historic Church, a Country Store, an Equine Vet Clinic and a Winery.

Take Back the Byway - Implement all efforts to calm traffic, reduce speed and increase the quality of living in a rural Community.

Reduce the Traffic Volume

Compare 2014 vs 2019 traffic volume estimates by VDOT/Traffic Engineering Division:

The 8.11 mile section of Gordonsville Rd/Rte 231 from Louisa Rd to County Line reported Average Daily Traffic Volume of 4900 vehicles/day in 2014, increasing to 6200 vehicles/day in 2019, a **27% increase in daily traffic over 5years.**

In 2019, over 3% of the 6200 vehicles/day were TRUCKS! On average, over 186 trucks travel this Road on a daily basis. This does NOT include pickup trucks or vans. It counts Trucks as 2 or 3+Axles or 1-2Trailers.

Take Back the Byway - Restrict all Through Tractor Trailers.*1 This road is narrow, has no shoulder, contains 32 curves and 141 residential private points of ingress/egress. Tractor Trailers have safer alternatives to travel VSH 15 or VSH 29.

Let's review the CTB Guidelines to restrict Through Trucks.

If cannot restrict Through Trucks, suggest the Restricted Truck reduce from >65ft to >58ft

*1 Albemarle Board of Supervisors has requested numerous times over the years to which VDOT rejects.

Journey Through Hallowed Ground

Routes 22/231 were made part of the 180-mile JTHG in 2009. Just last month, 11 years later, I saw the first JTHG sign on 231 in front of Hopewood Farm!

**Take Back the Byway
More Signs, More Actions and More Resolutions
that Support this Gift
of a
Scenic Byway.**