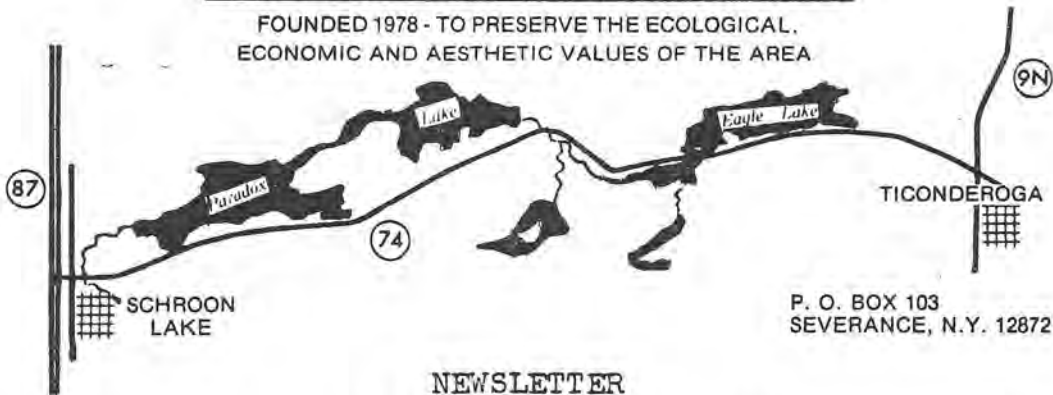


THE ROUTE 74 ASSOCIATION

FOUNDED 1978 - TO PRESERVE THE ECOLOGICAL,
ECONOMIC AND AESTHETIC VALUES OF THE AREA



NEWSLETTER

Vol. III, No. 1

Whitman Daniels, Editor

July 1980

Continuing concern with the Route 74 problem was spotlighted this spring at a county-sponsored meeting in Ticonderoga. As reported by the Sentinel of April 15th, "Improved access between Ticonderoga and the Northway at Schroon Lake was voted the top priority problem (underlining ours) facing the Ticonderoga area."

The meeting was one of a series being held in communities throughout the county by members of an Essex County Community Planning study in an effort to capture the residents' opinions of the most pressing problems facing their community.

In all, 22 separate problem areas were raised. The most important of these, as voted by those at the meeting: a new road between Ticonderoga and Schroon Lake. According to the Sentinel, "This problem was placed at the top of the list because many other difficulties raised which faced the area could be better addressed if Ticonderoga - and IP - had adequate access to the Northway."

Responding to subsequent inquiries as to why it wasn't moving ahead now with construction relative to Route 74, the Department of Transportation cited opposition by "The Lakefront Association." It said protests have also come from hunters and environmentalists.

The Route 74 Association was not identified as "The Lakefront Association" or one of the other objectors to action now but in order to forestall any misunderstanding in the public mind your officers moved immediately to set the record straight. First vice-president Charles T. Whitney and directors Graham Davis, Ted Dobbs and Louise Haberly prepared a letter to the editor of the Ticonderoga Sentinel. (Reproduced on next page) Further, they met with the Sentinel's editor, Peter D. Koryzno, and explained fully the concerns and aims of The Route 74 Association.

A Happy Ending

With reference to the "Phase 1-thru-4" study started by DOT last November the Sentinel declared, "There is, however, a happy ending" and stated editorially, "The 18-month study now in progress will give, when completed, the DOT the power to pursue whichever method it feels is best to improve Route 74. The Federal Government will have been satisfied by this last study and the DOT will have more than adequate records and legal sanction to fend off the law suits which will invariably be filed against the DOT by some disgruntled party."

From The Ticonderoga Sentinel - Tuesday, May 6, 1980

Route 74 Association not at fault for delays

Dear Editor:

In regard to your editorial of April 15, 1980 entitled "Improving Route 74: A reality in Autumn of 1981," we, the Board of Directors of the Route 74 Association, wish to go on record that our association was founded in August 1978 with the following 3 fold purpose:

1. To serve as a channel of communication between the State and all the people concerned about the future of Route 74 so that we will be kept informed of the State's planning as it progresses and the State will have the continuing benefit of our views.

2. To encourage the State to improve and

maintain Route 74 as a scenic automobile travel corridor and to construct another route for truck traffic which would better serve the truckers and reduce the noise, air and water pollution caused by the heavy vehicles traveling Route 74.

3. To give unified and effective representation to all persons wanting to preserve the aesthetic, ecological and economic values of the Route 74 area and of Paradox and Eagle Lakes and to safeguard the qualities of life which we enjoy here.

The Route 74 Association does support immediate improvement of Route 74 as urged by our President Whitman Daniels in his July 14,

1979 letter to Mr. Charles Carlson, D.O.T., from which we quote

"I would like to stress that, in our concern relative to a satisfactory solution of the longer-range problems surrounding Route 74, we do not want to delay urgently needed improvement and maintenance of the existing road. Conditions presently warranting attention require resurfacing, repainting the lines, and elimination of dangerous curves and poor drainage areas.

It is a rather widely held view here that modifications to achieve greater safety for auto traffic and the routine upkeep have already been too long deferred.

A safer Route 74 is of prime importance to our members; those vacationing here as well as those commuting over the road year round."

In the long range we sincerely hope that the studies now being conducted by the D.O.T. will result in an alternate route that will preserve the aesthetic, ecological and economic values of Route 74.

We invite you and your readers to join our association and would welcome your support.

Very truly yours,
Charles T. Whitney
Vice President
Board of Directors
Route 74 Association

Study Reports

The evening of June 3rd the DOT's regional director, Charles E. Carlson, came to Schroon Lake for a full discussion with your officers. Participating were Whitman Daniels, president; Charles T. Whitney, first vice-president; Robert R. Robinson, second vice-president; Ted B. Dobbs, treasurer; Graham Davis, director (Eagle Lake); Louise Haberly, director (Severance) and John Kelly, supervisor, Town of Schroon, who made his office available for the evening meeting. Also joining the group was Jane Jenks who drives a school bus over part of Route 74.

Commissioner Carlson reported that a first draft of the study is now completed. Several hundred pages in length, the study thoroughly considered nine alternate solutions to the Route 74 problem - and presented a detailed analysis of each. Planning must minimize, or avoid insofar as practicable, intrusion on wetlands and forest preserve. Grades and drainage and invasion of private properties are also major considerations.

Also considered are our concerns for preserving and enhancing the scenic qualities of the road, abatement of noise and air and water pollution and improvement of safety. "Noise will be no problem" Commissioner Carlson predicted.

A Likely Plan

The findings thus far of the study started last November, and our aim to initiate action on the road as soon as possible, indicate that the short range solution to the Route 74 problem is likely to comprise major

reconstruction of the first segment of the road - from Severance to Paradox - and lesser modification of other sections. The first phase would include reconstructing the bridge over the Schroon River, eliminating substantial curves, reducing grades and widening the road to two eleven-foot lanes with six foot shoulders.

However, prior to the adoption of any final plan we will have a public hearing - and prior to the hearing we will all have ample opportunity to review and weigh all the findings of the study relative to all alternatives.

Mr. Carlson has been receptive to our recommendations and assures us that the DOT "will try to accommodate to people's needs" and "to arrive at the most sensitive design with the funds available."

We have stressed our aim to see improvement of the road begin as soon as practicable and Mr. Carlson pledges the Department to "move aggressively" to the most acceptable solution of the whole Route 74 problem.

Relative to our expressed desire to preserve and enhance the scenic qualities of the road, Commissioner Carlson predicted that Route 74 will become "significantly prettier" than any road we now have in the State.

Federal Funding

The process leading to final decision on a precise plan for construction is necessarily a long one, involving a detailed and voluminous assessment of environmental impacts and approvals by a host of governmental agencies including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Adirondack Park Agency and the Adirondack Highway Council. Federal bodies whose approval must be obtained include the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the President's Council on the Environment. The end result will be federal funding. At present the State is allocating \$6 - \$7 millions, Mr. Carlson said. He added that this is a proportionately large share for Route 74 of the \$19 million total for all highway needs throughout Region I.

We Will Receive Report

Because we wanted to be brought up-to-date as soon as possible relative to DOT's study, Commissioner Carlson expressed his willingness to meet with us immediately even though he and his staff had not reviewed the study report. He further graciously assented to come to Schroon Lake in the evening (or early morning, if we so wished) so as not to impinge on the work day of several attendees. As soon as the DOT completes its review of the lengthy study report, final copies will be printed and made available to us. Accordingly we are promised sufficient number of copies to place them, strategically, within easy access of everyone of our members. Further we will provide every member with an executive summary.

Current Repair and Maintenance

Urgently needed repairs and maintenance along Route 74, as described to the DOT's resident engineer, E.D. Rielly, in our meeting with him last August 29, were started in September and have continued since then as weather and availability of material have permitted. This work has included relining the center of the roadway, blacktopping a large portion, cleaning ditches, repairing washouts, straightening guide rails and delineators and shoring up embankments which had become excessively eroded. Dangerous holes were filled and culverts were cleaned. Mr. Rielly, in

our conversation with him June 16, said that a couple of culverts will need extensions and that further lining will be completed. He also reported that they ran out of blacktop last fall and will finish the job this summer.

Both Mr. Carlson and Mr. Rielly have demonstrated a commendable willingness to consider our views and to try to achieve a solution to the Route 74 situation that will not only be acceptable but pleasing to all of us.

Membership

At a meeting of the directors of The Schroon Lake Association on June 7, our first vice-president, Charles T. Whitney, expressed our appreciation of that association's backing and support of our aims. But he also stated emphatically our need for individual memberships of Schroon Lakers and all others concerned with The Route 74 problem. This includes Paradox and Eagle Lake whose associations also are backing us but where we would like to see many more individuals join The Route 74 Association. Why? Because an association is measured by the size and interest of its membership. In numbers there is strength. Many people who are not members agree with what we are trying to do. But the best way for them to help us succeed is by becoming members of The Route 74 Association.

What the Department of Transportation does relative to Route 74 will have to be acceptable to at least 75% - 80% of the people immediately concerned with Route 74. Therefore by joining The Route 74 Association an individual ensures that his views will be considered. His dues payment is an investment in the future of the Route 74 area.

For your convenience in enlisting others as members of The Route 74 Association we offer the forms below.

Application for membership in
THE ROUTE 74 ASSOCIATION

Name: _____
Local Address _____ Phone _____
Other Address _____ Phone _____

Please send this application to Dr. J.R. Kane, Membership Chairman, Star Route, Eagle Lake, Ticonderoga, NY 12883, together with five dollars current dues for man and wife, or single person.

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