

August 16, 2026

Bristol Selectboard
Bristol, VT 05443

AUG 17
TOWN OF

Dear Selectboard,

Thank you for all you do to help find the best solutions for our town and its townspeople. Often a thank you is a volunteer job.

I am writing in response to Santo Santoriello's letter of concern over the Lord's Prayer Rock.

I have been a resident of Bristol since 1971. The history behind the Lord's Prayer Rock is amazing. Years ago, the road narrowed around that area, all along that roadway through what's known as the Rockydale section until the twin bridges. It is not made for pedestrians and with the river to the north and the mountain to the south, it would be impossible, in my humble opinion, to widen the road for a pedestrian path.

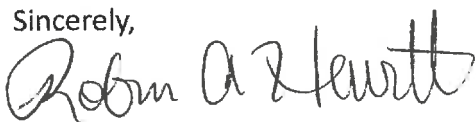
I used to bike that road every day to Starksboro and back. Navigating the narrows up the hill into to take the middle of the road and pedal as hard and fast as I could but not leaving room for anyone to pass me in an unsafe location. Also, the speed limit is 30 m.p.h. there and I have no problem navigating that road with my vehicle.

This rock is an erratic boulder left behind by the glaciers many millions of years ago. Who knows how long it has been there. The carving on the Lord's Prayer Rock has a long history when it was first carved and painted in 1890. It was commissioned by Dr. Joseph Greene of Buffalo, NY who grew up in this area. He was concerned about the loggers as they made their way up the road with loads of logs on their way to the local sawmill. He wanted to maybe discourage teamsters from using heavy profanity when struggling through this area where there were no zoning permits required. Anyone who doesn't like to read what it says, as they say in the area, just "scroll" by. It is not a billboard; it is a historic marker. And it was there many years before the building of the 1960's. As far as children run out by it, there are guardrails in front of that picnic area there so as to dissuade children from going near the road. I have never seen or had any incidents of this happening.

The only major accident I am aware of was 12/12/1976 when a young teen with a muscle car was driving at excessive speed with a friend as the passenger. My understanding was that December night they were in the left lane, hit a patch of black ice going around the Rock, and slid into tree on the right in the parking area. The life of the passenger in that car. That passenger was Michael Bedell, a dear person in many people's lives. His death wasn't due to the Rock but the poor judgement and recklessness of the driver.

My suggestion would be to place a yellow warning sign with a reduced speed limit (25 mph) around the Rock before and after the rock starting at the top of the hill in town; a right-of-way sign for bicyclists in the area. There are too many unknowns in trying to move the rock or alter it in any way. I would not support that.

Sincerely,



Robin Hewitt

12 Pleasant St. Bristol, VT 05443