

As a neighbor of 55 Waldingfield Road, I have probably ridden my horse hundreds of times across the road between the Bird Reservation and Appleton Farm. It is often a white-knuckle experience as lines of sight are poor, and cars go fast, as they use the road as a shortcut between Topsfield Road and Route 1A.

As the numbers of recreational users increase, either because of the increased trail access offered by Ora or because of growing awareness of Ipswich's recreational assets, I hope the town will implement some commonsense measures to ensure the safety of those using these trails. I think the major problem is drivers are not aware that riders or walkers may be in the road

A crosswalk between Bird and Appleton, with signage warning drivers of horses and pedestrians in the road, seems like an obvious solution. There is a similar crosswalk between Appleton Farm and Biolabs on Route 1A, which I have also used many times. A more visible one between Willowdale State Forest and Bradley Palmer State Park warns drivers at Topsfield Road, and others warn drivers at bike trail crossings at Route 1 and Route 97.

As for the Ora project, I doubt it will have a large effect on road safety. On some occasions, the current owner would host events at the property, and I felt those made crossing the road easier, as cars turning in the driveway slowed traffic down a bit. The problem is not the volume of traffic, but fast cars, poor sight lines, and lack of awareness, and those are the issues the town should address.

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