LETTER TO EDITOR

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To the Editor:

The horror and sorrow on Derry Borough Mayor Susan Bortz’s face as she addressed the media after the recent tragedy in Derry mirrored the looks on faces all over town – no more so apparent as on the faces of our first responders. I witnessed a fireman kneeling on the bridge; the look of horror and devastation he wore on his face told the tale.

There in the little sleepy town of Derry was yet another senseless tragedy, more lives lost to the trains, a problem that existed long before our time. Over the years there have been discussions and debates, finger-pointing and arguments as a solution to this problem has been sought. How can one get from the business side of town on foot to the residential side? Yes, the bridge has sidewalks for foot traffic; however, to reach those sidewalks for disabled folks or mothers pushing strollers is no easy feat.

Yes, there are steps behind Dollar General that provide access to the bridge, but they are useless to those folks mentioned above. It is more than the “time” that it takes to reach the sidewalks, it is a danger in itself. Mothers pushing strollers with other children on foot, disabled with canes, walkers or even those bound to a motorized device face danger from vehicle traffic as they attempt to gain access to the sidewalks of the bridge. Additionally, on days where the wind is gusting across the bridge, it is hard to drive a vehicle on the bridge. How could one cross on foot?

Sadly, Derry has experienced two tragic incidents within as many months, resulting in three precious lives lost.

We can not forget the horror and sorrow that resonates throughout the town each time one of our own is lost to the trains. We can not afford to sit back, let the heartache mend the horror of such tragedy fade and do nothing. We also can not live with the terror that will fill our minds each time a train comes to a screeching halt.

Now is the time for action. The sleepy town of Derry must wake up, come together and work toward resolving this problem now. With hard work and dedication I have no doubt a solution is possible.

It will take time and it will be costly, but nowhere near as costly as the loss of another life.

Denise Smith
Derry Township