NE2 Turn Restriction dispute

Background

This dispute involves a turn restriction in Disneyworld Florida, at the World Drive and Buena Vista Drive interchange, with the southbound off-ramp from World Drive to Buena Vista Drive, the southbound on-ramp from Buena Vista Drive to World Drive, and the intersection joining the two roads.

Paul Johnson and NE2 disagreed over the legality of proceeding from the north off-ramp to the south on-ramp through the intersection. In the image below, the data in gray is what was preferred by Paul Johnson while the active data at the time of the image capture is what was preferred by NE2.

Reasons for the DWG to consider this case

This case differs from the typical cases considered by the DWG, but we have decided to consider it none the less. The behavior in question in this dispute is not unique and is having significant negative consequences on the community, as well as resulting in a significant number of conflicts and reversions. Both parties involved referred this case to the DWG and there have been multiple[1,2,3] requests on the

[1] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010348.html

lists for the DWG to intervene, despite this case somewhat falling between the gaps in the traditional working group roles.[4]

For these reasons and the fact that there is no other more suitable working group the DWG is considering this case. This case is unique, without significant precedents.

Principles considered by the DWG

1. Local knowledge – Locals are generally more aware of an area, the conventions for the area, and the ground truth
2. Community – OSM is a crowd-sourced project and it is important that editors are able to communicate with each other and work together

Status of the turn restriction

The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) was contacted[5] for an opinion if it was possible to legally proceed from the off-ramp to the on-ramp. They said it was not legally possible for two reasons

1. The off-ramp is marked as a left turn only lane and the maneuver in question is not a left turn
2. The turn lane to the on-ramp has a solid white line, preventing a lane change into it

Given the FLHSMV opinion and the consensus on the mailing list, the mapping for this intersection shall reflect that you are unable to legally proceed from the off-ramp to the on-ramp unless new evidence is presented.

Past conflicts

Paul Johnson and NE2 have conflicted in the past, with a 2010 request for community mediation from the DWG to the US community[6] concluding that continuing or provoking an edit war by either party could result in a ban.[7] NE2 expressed the view that he was willing to edit-war to get an issue discussed[8] and expressed a willingness to "go out with a bang and take Paul with [him]"[9] Unlike the current dispute, this one involved the appropriateness of tagging partially subjective bicycle information.

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[2] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010349.html
[3] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010366.html
[4] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010315.html
[5] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010353.html
[6] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2010-October/004432.html
[7] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2010-October/004602.html
[8] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2010-October/004453.html
[9] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2010-October/004598.html

NE2 has been involved in mass-retaggings of highway classifications, overriding local practices, particularly around highway=trunk.[10] There is not a country-wide consensus in the US on the appropriate use of highway=trunk.

There are numerous other conflicts with NE2 pushing views on tagging where there is no consensus and he is not familiar with the area. A complete listing of cases is not necessary, but they show a consistent pattern of NE2 taking a sometimes controversial viewpoint and forcing it on others.

Timeline

Paul Johnson added a turn restriction in June 2012.[11] The turn restriction remained without comment until February 8th 2013, when NE2 sent a message asking if Paul Johnson if he had been to the intersection and seen the turn restriction.

Paul Johnson responded that the basis for the turn restrictions was the markings visible on Bing imagery. NE2 disputed Paul Johnson's interpretation but did not dispute the accuracy of the imagery.

They argued about the legal status of the markings, referencing the Florida Traffic Engineering Manual and US MUTCD.

NE2 deleted the turn restriction and Paul Johnson sent a message to the US mailing list on the 8th about the matter.[12] NE2 replied to Paul Johnson via message, but Paul indicated he was unwilling to accept input outside of the mailing list. NE2 said he could not do so (NE2 is banned from the mailing list) and said by "refusing to discuss [Paul] forfeit". Paul Johnson replied that he wasn't going have the discussion with NE2 where NE2 could "unilaterally declare victory."

The mailing list conclusion was that the turn restriction belonged in place, but the discussion turned to NE2's habits when interacting with others. As NE2 is banned from the US mailing list he posted a rebuttal in his user diary[13] on the 10th. On the 11th, Paul Johnson reverted the deletion of the turn restriction. NE2 then reverted with the message "revert vandalism from armchair mapper who has never been here"[14]

The previously mentioned FLHSMV was then obtained and the public arguments diminished.

On the 11th both Paul Johnson and NE2 referred the issue to the DWG.

Statements from Paul Johnson and NE2

Statements were sought from both parties on the issue.

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[10] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2011-May/005904.html
[11] http://www.openstreetmap.org/browse/relation/2249811/history
[12] http://lists.openstreetmap.org/pipermail/talk-us/2013-February/010297.html
[13] http://www.openstreetmap.org/user/NE2/diary/18600
[14] http://www.openstreetmap.org/browse/changeset/14989711

NE2's statement

NE2 took the view that

- he was converting tags in a different but valid representation
- Paul Johnson was at fault for refusing to communicate
- His statement that "If I ever get bored with OSM I can go out with a bang and take Paul with me" was not a serious future plan
- Any remedies should wait until the FLHSMV changed its drivers manual to agree with the law
- There was no need for the DWG to intervene

Paul Johnson's statement

Paul Johnson's statement was that 2010 was the only edit war between himself and NE2 and NE2 was unwilling to work with others and should be banned. Aside from that, it was a re-iteration of previous statements.

Conclusions

- NE2 has shown a consistent pattern of being unable to work with others. This latest incident is consistent with previous behavior and shows a long-standing pattern of being unable to work with other mappers. Being unable to effectively interact with others is a serious problem in a crowd-sourcing project.
- NE2 being banned from the talk-us@ mailing list is not relevant to this case. There may be some cases where there are good reasons why a mapper cannot use the means the local community uses to communicate, such as if the local community used Facebook and the mapper did not wish to use Facebook, or if there is a language barrier. This is not one of those cases. NE2's mailing list behavior is consistent with his behavior in private communications. In any case, NE2 found an alternate way to communicate with use of diary entries.
- Previous efforts at resolving disputes between NE2 and Paul Johnson have failed to solve the problem long-term.
- There is no indication that Paul Johnson attempted to trigger this conflict. Weight is placed on the significant gap between the mapping of the turn restriction and the conflict.

Remedies

- The DWG requests that NE2 shall be indefinitely blocked from editing. This would apply to the person behind NE2 and not be account-specific. This would impact both the NE2 and NE3 accounts.
    - Note: This is an indefinite block from editing, not an infinite block from editing.
- The DWG does not believe that an indefinite ban is necessary for Paul Johnson at this time.