



**BOARD OF ROAD COMMISSIONERS
TOWN OF DUNSTABLE
TOWN HALL, 511 MAIN STREET
DUNSTABLE, MA 01827-1313
(978) 649-4514 X227
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Minutes
September 30, 2016

The meeting began at 9 a.m. In attendance were Chairman Mike Martin, Commissioner Peter Gove, Foreman David Tully, Town Administrator Tracey Hutton, Town Engineer Jeff Rider and Secretary Terry Atwood.

Peter made a motion at 9:07 a.m. to start the meeting. Mike seconded, meeting opened.

Discussion followed regarding driveway/road construction requirements and regulations. Jeff Rider suggested showing underdrains in cross-sections of Planning Board regs. Mike and David felt that drains are a nuisance and should be taken out.

Mike expressed that road construction requirements need to be amended so the town doesn't have to repair the road for at least 10-15 years after construction. He would rather have it done correctly, even if costly, at the time the road is constructed. It was noted the poor condition of Adams St. and Sky Top Lane. Jeff stated that since Adams St. was built there have been changes to the regulations. The Board of Road Commissioners currently doesn't have authority on the streets until it's been accepted at town meeting. Peter noted Alexander Way as an example. Peter referenced an incident where a contractor told him he didn't have any right to tell him to make changes to the road. Jeff wants a list of changes to be brought up to the Planning Board to give Highway the authority to control the building of roads. David noted that the Board of Road Commissioners could deny road acceptance at town meeting. Jeff stated that it could be made part of Planning Board's approval that the town engineer/road commissioner be added to the Planning Board's authority to approve/inspect the construction of roads. Mike noted that Planning Board doesn't go out to roads being constructed, but Highway does. Jeff stated he inspects Alexander Way (but not Chapman due to a conflict of interest).

The poor condition of Adams St. and Sky Top Lane were discussed. Peter stated that the Board of Road Commissioners accepted Sky Top Lane even though the road is in horrible condition. Mike stated that it was accepted with exceptions - that all the legal matters were cleared up. Peter stated that the road is still in poor condition. David noted that both Adams and Sky Top Lane have a high water table and are wet. Jeff agreed that there is a high silt content holding water on those two roads, but Alexander Way is sandy and dry.

Mike would like to see soil/compaction testing done before and after a trench is installed. Jeff stated that compaction tests every 100' is reasonable. Mike would like them closer as developers could potentially jump over sections of ledge. Jeff stated that borings 100' or as directed by 'inspector' (as directed by Planning Board) could be added to the regulations.



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Jeff and Tracey talked about the state's 'Complete Streets' program. The program includes state standards with contract sensitive designs for road construction, meaning town plans would be evaluated to see if they are appropriate for the individual community. Dunstable has recently adopted the 'complete streets' program.

Jeff noted that currently Planning Board requirements require sidewalks on both sides of streets for new developments and that he would like to be able to waive a sidewalk with a developer and put money into an account to use elsewhere. Discussion followed regarding potential legal implications. David and Mike gave an example as saving money on granite curbing.

Fire requirements for driveways were briefly discussed noting space is needed for fire trucks but the space doesn't necessarily need to be paved. It was noted that access road passage becomes restricted when snow accumulates.

Tracey asked if the driveway bylaw needs amending as the Selectmen are currently reviewing bylaws. Board would like a couple of changes. David noted that the town of Harvard has a good policy and includes a swale at the bottom of the driveway with a bump to divert water. Terry will get a copy of Harvard's bylaw.

Board also noted that Chapman, Alexander Way, and Bear Hill (Hall St.) need to require headwalls as they are easier to maintain.

Jeff talked about current Planning Board regulations being based on rainfall data from TP40 which is 40 plus years old. The University of Connecticut has updated this information because of the intensity of storms increasing. Board agreed to use the University of CT's data. David stated that bigger means more maintenance but Jeff stated that a builder puts a Homeowners Association in place with a lien against homes until paid so that the town will not have to maintain. Tracey stated that Fincom is looking to allocate \$300,000 over the next couple of years for stormwater regulations. David doesn't think this is enough money as a machine alone costs \$100,000 plus.

Peter brought up the Alexander Way easement. Jeff explained that the emergency access cuts across part of lot 11, the last house on the left on Alexander Way. Also, an easement for the culvert is piped across the property. The homeowner is responsible to maintain this culvert or the town will go in and maintain it but bill the homeowner. If the homeowner does not pay, a lien is put on the property so the property can't be sold until the lien is paid.

Mike also wanted Jeff to add to the road construction regulations that a road has to go through a winter before it is accepted at town meeting so changes can be made if needed.



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Jeff talked about a developer not being able to sell lots until improvements are made or a bond is posted. The Planning Board is supposed to release the bond when improvements are made, but sometimes there is a lag between the time the bond is released and the street is accepted. A maintenance bond could be required to cover this lag time. Board agreed.

Driveway permits were discussed again. David noted that they can't be required on common drives on private roads. Mike agreed and Terry will return 2 checks recently submitted for 2 driveways for River St. driveways on a private drive. David and Mike would like driveways included in development regulations as the Board of Road Commissioners have no jurisdiction on driveways currently until the road is accepted at town meeting. Tracey also suggested putting in the Planning Board regulations that driveways need to be approved by the 'inspector' (as defined by the Planning Board).

Mike also would like to make sure that driveways are 'crowned'. Jeff said that drainage swale requirements would take care of that issue. He will review the driveway regulations to see what would be appropriate to put into the Planning Board regulations. Tracey said the Board of Selectmen will review the Driveway and Entrance Bylaw on Wednesday. Peter also stated that the \$1500 inspections and fees retainer needs to be included. Discussion followed regarding an escalation clause.

Terry will update the driveway permit application to include an email address.

The minutes of 6/6/16 were accepted as written.

Jeff left the meeting at 10:17 a.m. Tracey asked who would be paying Jeff's bill for his attendance at this meeting. Highway will pay it.

Peter brought up David's time working for the Water Dept. He feels the Water Department should pay for fuel or contribute something for David's time.

The next meeting is to be determined.

Peter moved to adjourn the meeting. Mike seconded.

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Atwood
Highway Secretary