

OLD

UNDERHILL ROAD POLICY
UNDERHILL, VERMONT

Adopted March 200~~1~~²

Underhill Selectboard

Stanton Hamlet

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INTRODUCTION

The 2002 Town of Underhill Road Policy is based on the 1999 Underhill Town Plan, the current Underhill Road Study by the Chittenden County Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the Vermont Statutes Annotated.

It is the responsibility of the Selectboard to ensure that the construction specifications and standards of this road policy are designed in order that all roads are constructed such that they can be properly maintained to provide reasonable access for emergency and service vehicles.

DEFINITIONS

See Appendix I, "Definitions for Underhill Regulations, Ordinances and Policies".

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

The Vermont town highway classification system (19 V SA 302) classifies town roads as follows:

Class I: Town highways which form an extension of a state highway route and which carry a state route number. The Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTTrans) determines which highways are class I.

Class II: Those town highways selected as the most important highways in each town. The Selectboard, with the approval of VTTrans, determines which highways are class II.

Class III: All traveled town highways that are not class I or II highways. The Selectboard, after a conference with a representative of the Vermont Transportation Board, determines which highways are class III.

Class IV: All other town highways. The Selectboard determines which highways are class IV.

A trail: is a public right of way that is not a highway. The right of way for a trail is three rods unless otherwise properly recorded.

A pent road: is a town highway which, after written authorization of the Selectboard, is gated but not locked.

RECLASSIFICATION, DISCONTINUANCE, AND ACCEPTANCE OF A HIGHWAY

The procedure is essentially the same in each case and is as follows:

1. PETITION- The Selectboard may be petitioned by the freeholders (property owners) of a town to reclassify or discontinue a road. The petition must be signed by at least five (5) percent of the freeholders of the town (19VSA708). (In the case of a petition for a road acceptance, a developer or adjoining landowner may petition the Selectboard).
2. It is the policy of the Town not to reclassify private roads as public roads.
3. The receipt of any petition requires the Selectboard to hold a public hearing to discuss the proposal. The public hearing must be held forthwith after receiving the petition and requires thirty (30) days notice to all affected property owners (19VSA709).
4. The Selectboard can call a hearing without the receipt of a petition if they deem the need to be in the best interest of the town.
5. At the public hearing the Selectboard will receive testimony and participate in the discussion regarding the proposed change. They are not required to defend or support the proposal nor are they prohibited from doing so. They are required, after hearing testimony etc., to make a written decision on the subject of the petition including the reasons therefore. The decision will be made at a duly called meeting of the board of selectmen and will be announced promptly.
6. In the case of a petition to accept a road, the Selectboard will, prior to making the written decision, inspect the road and cite any inadequacy. The applicant must correct all inadequacies before the process can continue. Inadequacies must be corrected within six (6) months of the inspection or the process is terminated and must be petitioned again. (19VSA710)
7. A decision to accept a road means that the Selectboard will accept and operate the road for a trial period of no less than one-year. During the trial period, the applicant will be responsible for correcting any inadequacy over and above routine maintenance. At the end of the trial period, provided the applicant has corrected any and all inadequacies in road construction, the road will be classified and become a part of the town highway system.
8. Any person aggrieved by the decision can bring an appeal of the decision via the court system.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PUBLIC ROAD MAINTENANCE

The Town must keep Class I, II, and III highways 'in good and sufficient repair during all seasons of the year'. The Selectboard may decide not to plow a class II or III road in winter based on the safety considerations for the traveling public and municipal employees. A class IV highway may be maintained to the extent required by the necessity of the town, the public good and the convenience of the inhabitants of the town. Accordingly, the town is not required to regularly maintain a class IV highway. The town shall not be responsible for any maintenance of a trail. (19 VSA 302 (a)(5))

Summer Activities -

In order to provide safe and convenient passage, maintenance and repair of town roads is the first priority of the Underhill road crew. Reconstruction and road upgrades will be scheduled, subordinate to maintenance and repair activities. Town resources for reconstruction and road upgrades will be allocated considering such factors as safety and average daily traffic,

Winter Activities -

All class II and III roads will be plowed as often as possible in order to provide safe passage of standard passenger vehicles. The Town cannot guarantee the time of day that a road will be plowed.

Road sand and salt will be applied only as required to provide safe passage for vehicles. Underhill does not have a "Bare Road" policy and expects travelers to drive with respect for winter conditions.

TRAFFIC CONTROL

The Selectboard of the town of Underhill shall adopt speed limits and provide traffic control signs as needed for safety for town highways.

USE OF HIGHWAY RIGHT-OF-WAY

Any proposed use of any portion of a town road right-of-way must receive written approval from the Selectboard. This includes, but is not limited to, the installation of fences or poles, or the installation of public or private utilities. No use of the town road right-of-way may be approved if it will reduce road sight lines, obstruct pedestrian traffic, create a potential obstruction for vehicles traveling within the right-of-way or is deemed to be detrimental to the general health, safety and welfare of the public. No material of any kind that will obstruct culverts or reduce drainage ditch capacity will be deposited in or near the town road right-of-way.

ACCESS APPROVAL

Before any site work or construction begins on a proposed road or driveway, the Selectboard must approve an access permit. On State Route 15 the Vermont Agency of Transportation shall handle the permit.

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DESIGN

All driveway and road designs must comply with the standards and specifications outlined in this Road Policy. All roads must be designed by a registered surveyor, engineer, or qualified individual as approved by the Selectboard.

When, in the judgment of the Selectboard, an applicant and/or a qualified driveway/road designer has demonstrated that a proposed driveway/road cannot meet one or more of the standards of this policy, the Selectboard may grant a waiver of a particular design standard. The Selectboard will conduct a site visit and consult with the Road Foreman, Zoning Administrator, Planning Commission, and fire and safety departments as appropriate. The Selectboard may request that local fire protection and safety agencies be asked to submit a written statement of their concerns regarding the appropriateness of the proposed driveway/road for the safe passage of their vehicles.

DRAINAGE

All proposed drainage facilities shall be sufficient to carry runoff from the road surface and divert water away from the road without causing sedimentation, erosion, or result in the impounding of water. Any change in drainage patterns as a result of driveway/road construction or other excavating work associated with development must not adversely affect existing roads, road drainage facilities or any other property in the area and may include the grassing over of banks that border roadways. A builder or developer shall be responsible for supplying an accurate and detailed plan of the topography and drainage patterns as a part of the road design approval process. The builder or developer shall also be responsible for correcting any problems that occur as a result of road construction. Bonding for that purpose may be required.

UTILITIES

A plan of the utility line burial must be approved and filed with the Selectboard prior to construction. Installation of proper conduit is required under a town road. Notification of any excavation of town roads must be given to all emergency services. Work must be scheduled so as to have a minimal impact on normal traffic flow. All underground utility lines, such as electric, telephone, television, water etc., that are installed within the road right-of-way must be at sufficient depth as to allow ditching and culvert replacement.

PAVING POLICY

The Selectboard may limit the paving requirement to portions of the road exceeding 8% grade. All roads that are to be taken over by the town and classified Class III or better, as well as roads with a projected Average Daily Trips of 500 or more trips, must be reviewed by the Selectboard in order to determine if road paving will be required. Determination of a road-paving requirement will be based on road construction and drainage, estimated maintenance costs, and public opinion. A bond or some other funding device may be required.

UPGRADE OF DRIVEWAY OR ROAD

When a driveway or existing road is extended to accommodate a second or third dwelling on a lot formed after 2002, the shared traveled way must be constructed or upgraded to the standards of this Road policy. This does not apply to single lots in existence and recorded prior to adoption date.

ROAD DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION APPROVAL PROCESS

Layout Drawing / Sketch

An applicant must submit a sketch of the plot indicating lot lines and the proposed driveway/road right-of-way. The sketch must include landmarks and dimensions such that the path of the proposed driveway/road can be easily identified.

Site Visit

An applicant must flag, at 50-foot intervals, the centerline of a proposed driveway or road and schedule a site visit by the Zoning Administrator and Road Foreman. For a new road the Planning Commission will also conduct a site visit.

Correspondence

The Zoning Administrator and /or the Planning Commission will write a report within two weeks of the site visit. The review of the site visit will identify specific requirements such as design, width and construction requirements. It will also identify site limitations and issues regarding construction timing and scheduling.

The Selectboard will review the report with the Zoning Administrator and conduct a site visit. If it appears that there are significant site limitations, the Selectboard may require engineering sketches that define the site topography and proposed driveway grades.

Design Approval -

A letter indicating road design approval/rejection will be sent to the applicant. Road approval will include an access permit.

Road Design Drawings

A set of design drawings by a registered engineer or surveyor shall be filed with the town. It shall include a road right-of-way and layout showing all radii of curvature, a slope profile, road cross sections indicating road construction and drainage management, with grade readings (100 foot intervals unless a smaller interval is requested by the Planning Commission), location of utilities and details of road termination and/or intersection.

Construction Inspection -

A member of the Selectboard or their agent may inspect road construction at any time. Should the inspection result in questions or concerns regarding the construction methods, quality or the amounts of material, the Selectboard will send written notice to the parties involved and, if necessary, order work stopped. No additional work shall commence until all concerns have been addressed.

Final Inspection -

Prior to commencement of use of the property the Zoning Administrator and Road Foreman shall make an inspection of the driveway or road and issue a report to the Selectboard. Upon favorable inspection of the quality and amounts of material the developer or property owner will be issued a "letter of compliance" stating that the road was installed to all applicable specifications and standards.

ROAD AND DRIVEWAY STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS

This is a set of criteria to be used in the construction, maintenance and/or reconstruction of all roads within the town of Underhill. These specifications are designed to provide driveways and roads that are serviced year-round, safe for the passage of private and public service vehicles that will be economically reasonable to maintain and driveways that will intersect with roads in such a way as to cause minimum negative impact. All driveways shall be constructed to comply with the VAOT Standard 8-71 (as amended).

BRIDGES / LARGE CULVERTS

All bridges and large culverts (greater than four (4) feet in diameter) must be approved by the Vermont Agency of Transportation and designed or approved by a registered professional engineer. All bridges and/or culverts must be rated to support a load of at least 35,000 lbs.

CROWN

The crown or cross slope should be 1/3 to 1/2 inch for each foot of width measured from the center of the road to the outside edge of the shoulder.

CULVERTS

All transverse driveway and road culverts will be a minimum of eighteen (18) inches in diameter unless a different size is recommended by the road foreman based on natural limitations. Culverts must extend to the center of the ditch on each side of the road. All driveway access culverts shall be sized no smaller than 18 inches in diameter by 30 feet in length. The Selectboard may, in writing, defer the installation of a culvert until a specific need is evident. Culverts must be spaced no greater than four hundred (400) feet apart in one continuous ditch line unless, after inspection the Selectboard specifies a greater distance. All culverts shall be: corrugated, riveted, galvanized steel with a minimum of sixteen (16) gauge or corrugated polyethylene (smooth inner wall) of equivalent strength and properly bedded. Corrugated polyethylene pipes must be covered with a minimum of two (2) feet of approved granular road base material. All culverts larger than two feet in diameter must be covered with a minimum of one inch (1") of material for each inch of pipe diameter. Stone or concrete headers shall be built on all culverts.

CURVATURE

The radii of curvature of all roads shall be a minimum of one hundred (100) feet.

DITCHES

Ditches must be constructed according to Vermont Department of Highways Standards A-21 or A-22 (as amended). The Selectboard may require other construction details such as rip rap or paving.

GRADES

The maximum grade on any driveway or road constructed in the town of Underhill shall not exceed 10%. A 10% grade shall not extend over a distance greater than five hundred (500) feet. Exceptions to this policy will be reviewed by the Selectboard. The Selectboard may require the paving of portions of a road exceeding 8%.

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GEOTEXTILES

Geotextiles shall be used for separation, reinforcement, filtration, drainage, and moisture control in road and driveway construction. The use of geotextiles does not relax or reduce any road or driveway standard or specification.

INTERSECTION

Intersection of a driveway with any road will be constructed in accordance with the rural driveway specifications and VTrans Standard 8-71 (as amended). Intersections of roads will be constructed in accordance with the VTrans Standard 8-12 dated 12/71, (as amended).

RIGHT-OF-WAY

The minimum width of Right-of-Way, in which a driveway will fall, shall not be less than thirty (30) feet. The minimum width of Right-of-Way, in which a road will fall, shall not be less than sixty (60) feet.

ROAD TERMINATIONS AND INTERSECTIONS

Dead-end roads will terminate in a "Y" turn-a-round. The width of the legs of the turn-a-round must be the same as that specified for the road.

SURFACE

Driveways will have a minimum of twelve (12) inches of compacted sub-base on the traveled portion.

Gravel roads will conform to Vermont Department of Highways Standard A-22 (as amended) with a minimum base of twelve (12) inches (compacted) of clean, coarse, aggregate with a maximum stone size of four (4) inches. Roads must have a minimum top layer of six (6) inch (compacted) layer of top dressing of crusher run gravel with a maximum stone size of one and one-half (1 ½) inches.

Paved roads will be surfaced with a base coat or two and one half (2 1/2) inches of bituminous concrete (hot mix). Roads must be finished with an additional layer of one and one quarter (1 1/4) inches of top course hot mix.

WIDTH

All driveways will be constructed with a minimum of twelve (12) feet available surface for vehicle travel.

All roads will be constructed in accordance with the standard typical section drawings for town highways (Vermont Agency of Transportation Standard A-21 dated 06/82 (as amended) for Class III gravel roads, or Standard A-22 dated 06/82 (as amended) for Class III paved roads). The Selectboard, consulting with the Planning Commission, will determine the projected average daily traffic (ADT) and hence the minimum road width and sub base depth. For residential developments, the ADT has been determined to be 10.1 trips per household. The town may utilize the regional planning commission or any other recognized and suitable source for determining potential road impacts.

