

CLASS V ROADS STUDY COMMITTEE  
TUESDAY, March 27th, 2018  
08:30 AM  
TOWN OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM  
Approved

Present: Mike Smith (arrived at 835), Sue MacKenzie, Kevin Sahr (citizen advisor), Karen Henry, Ernst Kling, Frank Bowles, Dan Brand

**Agenda**

Minutes from 3-6-18

The meeting was called to order at 830 am.

The minutes from 3-6-18 were approved.

Sue explained that Kevin was present to help guide the Committee as we move forward with a strategic plan. Our biggest challenge is to develop a longer term more global strategic plan in order to repair and maintain our Town roads so that they are functioning well most all of the time.

There was some discussion of the fact that we have a handle on priorities at present and that we have more knowledge about the state of our paved roads than about our unpaved roads. Frank pointed out that the Town Highway Department has implemented improved practices over the last few years such as using higher quality gravel in repairing unpaved roads. Karen pointed out that asset management systems exist that might be applied to helping manage the Town roads. Dan emphasized that it is important to communicate the importance of preventative maintenance to the Town residents. Frank mentioned that asset management tools require skill and personnel and use of such a system will be challenging unless the road crew works with the Town to make sure that Highway crew activities are in an appropriate database. Mike said that we are better off with daily records in regards to efficient operation of the Highway Department. Sue pointed out that the detailed records are important for the acquisition of grant funding for repair and reconstruction projects.

Kevin stated that we have started the strategic planning previously by virtue of documenting known problems with the Town roads and then prioritizing them (approximately 1 ½ years ago). Karen pointed out that we are still in the process of responding to “very urgent” needs for repairs. Kevin stated that this is how the Highway Department is functioning right now—working on very urgent projects vs. being able to get ahead enough to do preventative maintenance. The strategic plan involves both addressing known problems as well as preventative repairs and maintenance. Sue pointed out that the SADES process, which is based on the Pavement Condition Index and is pavement oriented, addresses the specific construction steps that need to be accomplished – e.g., add gravel, add drainage, etc., including cost estimates so that we can best spend our Highway budget as well as apply for grant funds. Frank said that portions of River Road that are paved are so degraded right now, that it might be easier to convert it back into a gravel surface road. This might be an example of activity that would fit into our strategic plan. Mike stated that a temporary “dirt road” was often acceptable while waiting for the funding for paving...the use of MgCl is helpful. The length of time that the road is in this “temporary” unpaved condition could be highly variable. Ernst stated that removing pavement and treating with MgCl worked well on Upper Baker Hill Road. The use of “stay pack” (also referred to as twin pack, hard pack or ledge pack – a combination of crushed bedrock sand and fines that

packs well with equipment) was helpful. Discussion ensued to explain to Karen what “stay pack” means.

Sue pointed out that it would be good to identify one problem area that can be more permanently repaired this spring as a START. Frank asked for a quick tutorial on geogrid vs. geotextile.

Kevin brought us back to the theme of the meeting – developing a strategic plan and then formalizing it. The Committee discussed that the state of the roads includes (in addition to paved and unpaved road surfaces) culverts, bridges, drainage (including ditches), tree and brush cutback (and other roadside maintenance). Karen asked if other Towns had strategic plans for roads. Ernst commented that Canaan does a great job of road building and maintenance. Sue suggested that Ernst ask Canaan whether they have a strategic plan for the Town roads. Ernst asked if whether we have a road repair inventory of culverts for example, in case of emergency. Having an inventory of “emergency” repair materials would be a part of the strategic plan.

As an interim measure, Sue suggested that we grind and repave the River Road from Grant Brook to East Thetford Road.

Kevin drew out the strategic plan process on the board (see attached figure), explaining that there will be a tool (e.g. an asset management program) that helps us track where we are with respect to where we want to be. This process will help with long term and therefore annual Town Roads planning. Mike pointed out that the Budget Committee needs to be able to anticipate 2-3 years in advance (at least) so that the Roads Committee can interact with the Budget Committee to help with the planning aspects of carrying out activities according to a strategic plan. We left this topic with how to define our “vision” as the first step in our strategic planning process. Sue suggested that we can also list the tools we currently have available for development and implementation of a strategic plan.

## PROJECT UPDATES

Grant Brook Area – JJ Nott Excavating is likely to start the repair in June.

Hewes Brook Bridge – Frank provided an update on this project in handout form. Erin is pursuing DES in permitting. Frank said that DES is overwhelmed with permitting. Right Angle engineering is hoping to get the construction bid contract out in early April, and bridge construction in August. There has been some delay in utility relocation due to the purchase of Fairpoint Communications by Consolidation Communications. A project timeline is currently being developed. There was some discussion about how to bid the construction of the bridge, and how to “count” prior experience with construction of timber bridges.

Closed Area of River Road – Karen reported that the Geotechnical Site Investigation is scheduled to start on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Current thinking on the three River Road projects is that we should repair the Grant Brook Area first, then construct the bridge over Hewes Brook, then the reconstruction of the closed section of River Road will occur.

There was discussion about whether to recommend the repaving of River Road from Grant Brook to East Thetford Road at the end of this project. The process would be to regrind the asphalt, apply emulsion and then pave for about a ¾ mile section of River Road. Ernst asked whether there are likely to be problems with culverts or slope stability in the near future. There was also discussion about whether funding will be available for this. We never came to a

decision on this. Mike asked about whether anyone has discussed the upcoming project with Bill Weeks. Karen volunteered to tell Bill what is going on with the project.

Kevin asked whether construction might be conducted to avoid the cost of a temporary bridge and bypass at Hewes Brook. This is not likely to happen.

Dorchester Road – Karen pointed out that we have been calling the address of the culvert in question as 393, but it's address is actually 383. We discussed whether to include the culvert at Smart's Mt. Trailhead, and the Committee agreed to explore this possibility with Right Angle Engineering. Karen will discuss this with Right Angle Engineering. Karen asked about how to obtain information on the placement of the existing culverts. Town Reports and Jimmy and Roger Jenks were suggested as the best resources for this.

Army Corps of Engineers Project – Still in the planning phases. They (the US Army Corps of Engineers) think that they will exceed the \$100K estimated for the plan of this project. They are seeking a 50% commitment for the Town for any costs exceeding the \$100K. A staging location has been selected. The Committee discussed the importance of capping our contribution should the costs exceed \$100K, but a final number was not agreed upon.

Baker Hill Project – Right Angle Engineering has developed a design to be constructed completely within the Town's Right of Way. We are currently waiting for that plan.

WHAT WENT WELL THIS MEETING – Good agenda, writing on the board, discussing road issues, accomplished a lot, met the goals of the meeting

WHAT WE CAN DO BETTER – Get to agenda right away, put “side track issues” aside until the end of the meeting, time management, some past work regarding strategic planning can be brought forward from the past few years.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.