

WLLA Road Committee Report

February 20, 2021

The Road Committee met on February 9, 2021, via Zoom.

Winter Operations

- At the meeting, the road committee discussed the state of the roads in Walker Lake, especially the gravel roads off Birch which were narrowed by about 3 feet of snow fall in a two-week period with little melting due to low temperatures. The contracted plows could only push so far based on their size. Michael expressed concern with the roads being narrowed, and if we were to get another big snowstorm there would be no room to push the new snow and further narrow roads. Failure to plow the roads wide enough could affect emergency vehicles, such as a fire truck or ambulance, to travel the roads. Also, impacted could be the quality of life necessities vehicles such as oil, propane, and garbage trucks being able to access roads. Worst scenario of all if residents got trapped in and cannot get out of the road.

Bigger equipment would be needed to push back the snow. Empire State Excavating gave a cost of \$6,000 for a backhoe with a heavy-duty 11-foot road plow use to the snow heavily accumulated snow back to widen the road plus a plow truck to “mop up” behind the backhoe as well as clear the entries to the driveways that would be plowed in. While plowing in of driveway entries is a normal and unavoidable practice in a snow event, it is not normal practice to do so after the original storm is over, and plowing is completed.

The road committee agreed to take a wait and see attitude while looking at the extended forecast to see if would be necessary to widen the roads.

Outcome

Checking the extended forecast daily throughout winter, on Thursday morning, February 11, 2021, Michael DeVita, notified President John Weber of coming freezing rain and sleet. Michael advised John of the importance of plowing the snow back to widen the roads prior to freezing rain or sleet, because once the snow gets wet and refreezes it will be extremely hard to move and cost more money because it would take more time.

After a discussion in which John asked pointed questions said he would put it to a board vote via e-mail. See the minutes of February for the board vote which passed to allow Empire State Excavating to do the widen the gravel roads.

Empire started on February 12, 2021. The snow was still soft and with the backhoe equipped with tire chains and the 11-foot heavy-duty road plow along with the ability to move the plow and down with the backhoe lift arms, Empire was able to make exceptionally good progress. Seeing this, Empire added a second plow truck to help with the clean-up as the backhoe was moving faster than the “mop-up” truck. Once the gravel roads off Birch were completed, Empire moved to the asphalt roads and completed the entire community of Walker Lake on February 13, 2021. There was no additional cost beyond the \$6,000.00 to complete the entire community.

Walker Lake received a freezing rain, sleet, plain rain event on February 15, 2021.

- We received a second load of ClearLane salt on February 2 and a third load on February 16, 2021. We received a load of anti-skid on February 17, 2021.
- The winter operations cost is now \$6,000 over the budgeted cost. Plus, we have used most the budgeted money of \$8,500 for winter materials. These were necessities to serve the community. However, the amount budgeted for spring – summer road repairs will have to be adjusted downwards to account for the winter operations cost to keep the road budget in balance.

Gravel Roads

- Empire State Excavating completed the road repairs, improvements, and installation of a culvert pipe at Erie and Birch. Instead of a 12" culvert pipe, Empire placed a 15" culvert pipe at the same cost.
- Warner Excavating has not started the ditch cleaning and improvements along Birch yet. They will not be able to do so until the snow melts.
- The road committee is looking into an inexpensive way to divert the storm water that runs from a rock ledge on Seneca. This water is part of the continual erosion problem on Seneca near Birch. Road committee will have a recommendation for the March Board meeting.
- Gravel roads will be regraded when the winter season is over. A road inspection for this work will take place after April 15, 2021.

Asphalt Roads

- Discussed tentative which asphalt roads to repair and improvement in the Spring 2021.
 - The amount of money available will need to be adjusted downwards due to the cost of the winter operations.
 - Potholes will be filled once the winter season is over.
 - Roads to be inspected for work priorities after the winter season is over. What will be done will be done in accordance with the adjusted downwards budget.
 - Plan to acquire bids for both paving, and chip and seal for areas to compare merits of which would be better for Walker Lake at this time.
 - Look into hot crack sealing several areas of roads to extend pavement life if money is available.

Gravel Road Regrading 2020 Proposal of Neversink between Birch and Maple Woods.

- This item was not discussed at the February 9, 2021, Road Committee Meeting.
- This item remains on hold to the Spring of 2021 at which time we will continue to work with the two resident landowners to find an affordable solution to fix the continual erosion problem of this road.
 - From the 9/19/20 report: On the evening of 9/17/20, Michael held a Zoom meeting with owners of 119 and 116 Neversink and RJ from Empire State Excavating to share information and brainstorm for a possible affordable fix to end the continual erosion problem on Neversink off of Birch to the woods towards Maple). This road has needed to be repaired continually the past couple of years and once again has erosion issues since erosion repairs were made after Tropical Storm Isaias. An onsite meeting with the two homeowners along with RJ will be set up.
 - From 7/18/20 report: Michael have been communicating with the owners of 119 Neversink and 116 Neversink about repairing the portion of this road (Neversink from Birch to woods towards Maple) properly to stop the continual roadway erosion. The owners are involved because there may be a need to put culvert pipes under their driveways which they would be responsible for the cost. No final plan or decision has been made as this in the planning stages. This road continually washes out and to continue to put "band-aid" repairs is just wasting money.
 - From 6/20/2020 report: Neversink Road between Birch Road and the woods towards Maple Drive will need additional work this summer. The roadway is very narrow and the drainage is non-existent on the middle portion of the roadway. The sides of the roadway are already washing out with the few rain storms we received since June 5, 2020.

Signs at Walker Lake Entrance Points

- The new entrance signs have been delivered. They will be erected in the spring of 2021. Will be looking for volunteers to assist with this.
- Looking into using the new green u-channel posts we have on-hand that was purchased some years ago.

Roadside Drainage

- Once snow melts, we will start looking at ditch lines and notifying those landowners who ditches have been neglected to be cleaned in what appears as several or more years.
- John had previously spoken to one of the Shohola Township Supervisors about possible ditch cleaning remedies within Walker Lake.
 - This is no-go as the township cannot rent us their equipment or employees.
- Leaf Mulching Program as suggested by and discussed briefly by Bill Boehme at the November BOD meeting
 - Update: Steve DeMaio notified Bill Boehme that he located a local landscape company that does clean-up mulching of leaves.
 - This will be on hold until we get closer to Spring when Bill and Michael along with Steve (if he volunteers to do so) will work out a few more details to discuss the feasibility of recommending such a program to the BOD.

Speed Humps

- Will continue to see if this is a feasible option to slow down vehicles on certain roads. But the cost might be prohibitive this year due to budget changes caused by winter operations.