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South Portland, Maine 04106
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March 18, 2019

Mr. Doug Fortier, Director of Public Works
Town of Windham
8 School Road
Windham, ME 04062

Re: Hall Road (Windham Center Road to Harding Drive) – Spring Conditions

Dear Doug,

We understand that the Town has received several complaints regarding the conditions of Hall Road from Windham Center Road to Harding Drive (about 1,760 lf). This is a gravel road and the road has become soft and rutted with the current spring conditions.

Gravel roads, especially if not built well, can be very challenging to maintain in the spring. This winter has been particularly difficult with the winter conditions beginning in early November 2018. With the recent spring conditions, including the daily freeze and thaw and recent rains, the upper portion of gravel begins to thaw creating a soft surface that tends to rut. Once this happens, the ruts hold even more water which then refreezes at night creating an impossible situation to maintain. We understand that Public Works spread some additional gravel after the first complaint, but then additional freeze/thaw and rain occurred which negated the temporary improvements.

Unfortunately, there are limited options available to address the current conditions of the road while the frost is still in the ground. Grading the road is not an option until the frost comes out. Application of additional gravel may temporarily improve the surface of the road as well, but with ongoing freeze/thaw action and precipitation, this will only provide temporary relief. Many of the paved roads are also experiencing worse than normal frost heaves, cracking and pot holes. This situation shows clearly why Towns post their roads for heavy loads at this time of year.

The best long-term solution, which does nothing to allay the current conditions, is to rebuild the road to improve the strength and shape of the cross-section and to improve drainage along both sides of the road. Once the road is built, it can be paved, which reduces the rutting and soft conditions that are so prevalent in Maine at this time of year.

Sincerely,
Gorrill Palmer

William C. Haskell, PE (Maine #8518)
Principal

