

## HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

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### SNOW

Last winter our crews were called upon 45 times to fully treat the road surfaces and we spot treated the roads 32 times. The department plowed the roads 14 times and scraped roads of slush or packed snow twice. The first snowfall arrived on November 17<sup>th</sup> and winter ended for our department with a last snowfall on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Total snowfall for our area was just over five feet. Between storms the Highway crew removed snow from intersections and cul-de-sacs to improve visibility. Acton residents are reminded that sand and salt is available at the Highway Department. Additional information regarding the town's snow plowing policy is available on the town web site.

### ROADS

All roads, sidewalks and town parking lots were swept in the spring. Signs were repaired or replaced as needed and line painting of streets and parking lots was done. As time allowed, lawn damage from plowing was repaired. Pope, Carlisle, Concord and Nagog Hill Roads, and Central Street were milled, leveled and resurfaced. Oneida, Coughlin and Taylor Roads were resurfaced for the Water Department. Asphalt berms were installed in several areas where severe erosion was undermining road edges.

### DRAINAGE

The Highway crew performed their annual task of flushing drainage pipes and replaced pipes as needed. In addition, several drainage structures were cleaned and repaired as needed. Beaver dams were removed under the direction of the Conservation Department. Culverts were installed on Prospect Street and Minuteman Road. Drainage improvements were made to the parking lot at the West Acton Fire Station.

### SIDEWALKS

Sections of sidewalk were constructed on Summer, Central, and Prospect Streets.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS

Under the direction of the Engineering Department and the Public Works Director, the intersection of Main Street and Hayward Road was rebuilt. As a result, the sight distance and safety at this location has improved. The Highway crew constructed a small parking lot at the S. Acton Fire Station and a small lot at the conservation area off Wheeler Lane. At the request of the Conservation Department, a siphon tube was put in place to access water from the North Acton Quarry to the pond at Nara Park to improve water quality.

### TRANSFER STATION

The Highway Department operates the transfer station and recycling area. Refuse is accepted at our site and transferred to a waste to energy facility in North Andover. Leaves, Christmas trees, clippings and brush are accepted at the Transfer Station. Handouts are available at the gatehouse that will answer your refuse and recycling questions. Information is also available on the town's web site.

### RECOGNITION

I would like to thank my assistant, Richard Waite and my secretary, Karen Switzer-Neff for their continued dedication and hard work. It is a combined effort to keep the Highway Department running smoothly. I also wish to thank all of the other departments for their help and assistance during the year. A special thank you goes to the highway crew for the many projects undertaken and completed throughout the year.

Russell W Robinson, Superintendent

### Staff:

Karen Switzer-Neff, Secretary  
Richard Waite, Assistant Superintendent  
Kevin Farrell, Crew Leader – Highway  
Carl Maria, Crew Leader – Highway  
Donald Hawe, Heavy Equipment Operator  
William Wilkie, Heavy Equipment Operator  
Matt Miner, Heavy Equipment Operator  
Ken Lane, Light Equipment Operator  
Kevin Baker, Light Equipment Operator  
Mark Fitzpatrick, Truck Driver/Skilled Laborer  
Jon Bailey, Truck Driver/Skilled Laborer  
Mike Horan, Truck Driver/Skilled Laborer  
Charles Willett, Lead Mechanic  
Sam Bell, Equipment Repair Person  
Matt Lutinski, Equipment Maintenance Person  
Robert Mallard, Crew Leader – Transfer Station  
Craig Kellogg, Heavy Equipment Operator – Transfer Station

## GREEN ADVISORY BOARD

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The Board of Selectmen created the Green Advisory Board (GAB) in early 2009 to respond to the growing need to understand and engage in actively reducing energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions levels in Acton. Acton wants to be in a position to respond to increased regulation and rewards presented at both the federal and state government levels. The committee has worked closely with Dean Charter, Director of Municipal Properties, and JD Head, Coordinator of Facilities and Transportation for the Acton Public Schools and Acton Boxborough Regional School District.

The committee has aimed to be proactive since its first meeting in March 2009. Initial work began with interviews with JD Head and Dean Charter, because municipal buildings and the school campus, as large concentrated energy consumers, are areas that Acton can target to immediately reduce energy use and GHG emissions. The committee has been impressed with the level of management and energy efficiency work that is ongoing in these areas. The GAB looks forward to continuing to interact with these departments to further increase energy efficiency and reduce Acton's GHG emission levels.

In the late spring, the Massachusetts Green Communities Act (GCA), enacted in 2008, required that the GAB direct its attention to understanding the implications of the Act's requirements and how the Town could respond in a manner that was favorable for Acton. The intent of the GCA is to support and encourage Massachusetts's municipalities to make a commitment to energy efficiency and renewable energy. The state will provide technical and financial assistance toward this goal by awarding \$10 million annually in grant money to municipalities that have met the Green Communities qualifications. Work to meet the qualifications of the GCA has been the focus of the GAB's work. It has included the following:

- Introduced a warrant article at the June Town Meeting to allow the leasing of municipal and school building rooftops for solar installations. The warrant article passed.
- Participated actively in the siting of and Request for Proposals (RFP) for the location of solar photovoltaic (PV) installations on schools and municipal properties. Over the summer the Board assisted in identifying appropriate sites for solar PV installations and reviewing responses to RFPs. A site at the Highway Department has been selected for the installation of a 75 kW array, and a total of 300 kW is being installed on school roofs, distributed between three schools (Acton Boxborough Regional High School, R.J.Grey Junior High School and Douglas Elementary School). Acton will benefit from clean and lower cost electricity as a result. These installations will save the Town of Acton approximately \$23,000 in their first year of operation, and are expected to produce similar or greater savings annually over the next 25 years.
- Investigated different methodologies for determining Acton's energy use and GHG footprint. It was determined to initiate the process using the Energy Portfolio Manager software, which is supported by the Environmental Protection Agency. Dr. Ihab Farag and Jim Potter from UNH have assisted with the process of gather-

ing and collating energy use data, and entering back data into the Portfolio Manager software in order to establish an energy use benchmark for the town. Training will be provided to the GAB and town employees, and the Energy Portfolio Manager will continue to be used to provide a standard method of collecting energy data from the municipal and school buildings.

- Presented the Stretch Code to the Board of Selectmen. The Stretch Code is an appendix of the Massachusetts building code that provides a more energy efficient option for towns and cities than the basic building code.

In the coming year the Board will continue to work on meeting the requirements of the Green Communities Act, and reducing Acton's energy use and GHG emissions.

**Members:**

Chris Schaffner and Kate Crosby – Co-chairs  
Eric Hudson  
Tom Michelman  
John Ravis  
Mary Smith

**Associate members:**

Terry Lindgren  
Carol Holley (Ms. Holley resigned)  
Dennis Loria

**BoS Liaison**

Terra Friedrichs was the initial liaison  
Paulina Knibbe

**Staff Liaison**

John Murray

## **LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE**

The Land Stewardship Committee is a volunteer committee responsible for the care of almost 1700 acres of Acton's conservation lands. Most of this work is outside: patrolling the trails, blazing trails with paint, widening the trails when they grow narrow, removing blow downs, mowing meadows, installing and repairing bridges, walkways and kiosks, supplying maps to kiosk map boxes, removing trash, cleaning up from vandalism, and noticing and reporting major encroachment issues to the Conservation Commission and town staff.

We rely on the support of many additional volunteers in addition to the work of the sworn-in committee members. In 2009, volunteers helped with trail cutting, boardwalk construction, wood-chip placement, and invasive plant removal. We also had new volunteers, not sworn in as