

## Road Facts in Sandwich

### 1. There are 4 kinds of local roads in Sandwich:

Class V — a town road, paved or gravel which is maintained and on which the public has a right of access.

Class VI — a Town road which is no longer maintained by the Town for travel by the public, but which the public still has a right to use.

Discontinued Town road a Town road which has been formally closed by a vote of Town meeting. The public no longer has a right of access, although private owners who abut the road continue to have that access unless they have given it up in writing.

Private roads — roads which have not been formally accepted by the Town, and which the Town has no obligation to maintain. The public's right to use these roads is dictated by the roads' owners.

The vast majority of Town roads in Sandwich have been "laid out" (created) as 3 rods wide, or 49.5 feet in width (a surveyor's rod was typically 16.5 feet). This width refers to the entire width of the right of way. The width of the part driven on, the travelled way, is typically 16 to 18 feet wide for gravel roads and 18 to 19 feet wide for paved roads, but the Town may use the entire width of the right of way in maintaining the road for safe travel by the public.

2. Drainage ditches on the side of the travelled way are important for transporting water off the road to keep it from eroding. The Town is allowed to use the entire width of the right of way, usually 49.5 feet, for maintenance of the road, including of ditches as well as the slopes and banks beside the ditches, and the placement of culverts.

3. A landowner abutting a road must get permission from the Town before putting anything in the Town's right-of-way. If a driveway permit requires a culvert, it is the landowner's obligation to install and maintain the culvert.

4. Stonewalls on the edge of the right of way are often boundaries, and as such may not be removed or altered by the landowner or the Town.

5. The Town is allowed to cut trees in the right-of-way that are necessary for public safety reasons (with permission of the Selectmen).

6. All Town Roads in Sandwich created before 1971 are designated Scenic Roads and are subject to the Scenic Road Act. This means that the Town or the utility must get Planning Board approval before undergoing any maintenance, repair, utility, reconstruction, or paving work (with some exceptions). A landowner is allowed to cut trees of any size on their own property.

For more detailed information and references to RSA's, see "A Hard Road to Travel", NHMA \*\*\*\*\* A copy is available in the Selectmen's Office.

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