**Town of Brighton**

**Driveway Access Policy**

**Adopted May 19, 2014**

*Vermont Statutes Annotated Title 19, Section 1111*

*“It shall be unlawful to develop, construct, regrade, or resurface any driveway, entrance, or approach, or build a fence or building, or deposit material of any kind within, or to in any way affect the grade of a highway right-of-way, or obstruct a ditch, culvert, or drainage course that drains a highway, or fill or grade the land adjacent to a highway so as to divert the flow of water onto the highway right-of-way, without a written permit from the agency, in the case of state highways, or the legislative body, or designee of a municipality, in the case of town highways.”*

**Statement of Purpose:** This policy establishes minimum standards for the design, construction and maintenance of driveways in order to reduce damage, mitigate erosion, reduce maintenance costs, save money and time, and ensure equal treatment of applicants.

**Process:** Requests for a driveway permit will go to the Road Foreman, who will inspect the site and specify the conditions that need to be met.

**Grade of approach:** Gentle driveway approaches to the road improve safety and help to prevent water damage. All driveways and access roads shall be constructed so as not to impair drainage within the right-of-way, alter the stability of the improved area, or change the drainage of adjacent areas. The maximum gradient of driveways and side roads should not exceed 10%. Steeper grades may be allowed but with more stringent erosion control, sight distance and other requirements. Entrances should be constructed with no more than 3% grade away from the road for a distance of at least 20 feet.

**Angle of approach:** Driveways should intersect the road at a preferred angle of 90 degrees but no less than 60 degrees.

**Sight distance:** a vehicle operator preparing to exit the access point should be able to see without obstruction a minimum of 150 feet in either direction. No access shall be constructed closer than 275 feet to a sharp curve, hill or other blind area.

Distance between driveways and intersections: Driveways and access roads should be constructed no closer than 20 feet from a property line and no closer than 100 feet from another intersecting street or driveway. The Town may designate greater distances in certain cases.

**Width:** recommended width for a residential driveway should be between 25 and 35 feet. Roads likely to handle future increased traffic may need to have greater width.

**Culverts:** A minimum 18” culvert pipe shall be installed under driveways and access roads. Larger sizes may be required by the Town.

The Town may require an engineering analysis to determine the appropriate culvert size for a specific location.

Culverts should be placed as far away from the road as practical to maintain good drainage.

In addition, the road foreman may require more conditions as required by any particular site, including:

* Headwalls and tailwalls
* Stone-lined ditches with vegetation to prevent erosion.
* Driveway base material
* Driveway ditches designed to keep water off the public road
* Driveway bank stabilization
* Vehicles able to enter public road in a forward direction

**Installation, repair and maintenance of culverts:**

Initial installation of a driveway culvert is at the owner’s expense, in accordance with driveway permit conditions as required by the road foreman. The property owner will be responsible for regular maintenance and repair of their driveway culverts and ditches, particularly if they impact or will potentially impact the public road. If damage to a town highway is caused by improper construction, maintenance, or grading, it is the responsibility of the property owner to make necessary repairs at his/her expense. If repairs are not made within thirty days of notice, the Town will make repairs and bill the property owner for expenses.

**Ditches:** No access will be permitted which will result in drainage washing directly onto a town highway. The landowner should daylight driveway ditches onto their own property if possible before intersecting with the town Right-of-Way.

**Relation to zoning:** A driveway access permit shall be required in order to obtain a zoning permit.

**Fee:** A refundable fee may be charged to ensure compliance.