

THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



CHRISTOPHER D. CLEMENT, SR.
COMMISSIONER

JEFF BRILLHART, P.E.
ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

December 8, 2011

Mr. Mitch Manseau
Newfound Farm
113 Hunt Road
Hebron, N.H. 03222

Dear Mr. Manseau:

I am writing about concerns you and others raised at the September 26, 2011 GACIT Hearings in Laconia and Plymouth regarding the condition of NH 3A in Hebron. I apologize that it took me longer than anticipated to respond to your concerns. You had raised concerns about the poor condition of the road, the narrowness along the corridor, especially with respect to the active bicycle use in the area, and safety. It was requested we look into what it might cost to address these concerns. Let me offer the following:

1. The section of NH 3A of concern in Hebron is approximately 2.5 miles in length with improved sections of NH 3A to the south in Bridgewater and North towards Plymouth. It was constructed in the 1930's with little changes since. It is characterized by 12' lanes, no shoulders, ill-defined drainage ditches, old cable guardrail, steep driveways, the lake on one side and rising terrain on the other. The right-of-way (ROW) width through the entire section is 66' wide, 33' either side of the centerline.
2. In response to the question of what it would cost to reconstruct and add 4' shoulders, the rough cost estimate is about \$2,000,000 per mile or for this 2.5 mile section, or about \$5,000,000. ROW impacts are unknown but given the narrow existing width and terrain, the ROW cost would be approximately \$750,000 - \$1,000,000. With engineering costs figured in the overall cost of such an undertaking could be approximately \$6.5 - \$7.0 million.
3. Alternatively, the cost to rehabilitate the pavement surface (no widening), update guardrail, and modest drainage improvements is about \$750,000 per mile or about \$2,000,000. This assumes no or very limited ROW involvement and modest engineering costs.

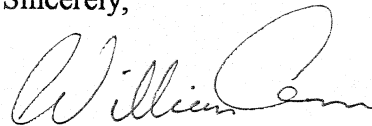
We recognize the condition of NH 3A. We have many miles of New Hampshire rural state secondary roads in similar condition. We have many more needs than resources, especially for these state secondary highways, and as you know from the GACIT presentations, there are implications with state and federal funding levels that will affect level of service and our ability to get to these concerns. We continue to work hard to maintain New Hampshire's roadways in good condition, but unfortunately some will take longer to get to than others.

Given these realities, it is unlikely that a major reconstruction and widening effort can be expected. However, our records show that NH 3A is due for maintenance leveling and pavement overlay in the next few years. Exactly when that will take place is contingent on funding and condition priorities of NH 3A relative to other State highways. Such a treatment would restore the pavement surface conditions for the immediate future and keep it serviceable.

You raised concerns especially about the amount and safety of bicycle traffic along NH 3A and suggested re-striping the lane lines more narrowly to provide a minimal shoulder area. It appears the lane lines are already striped narrower at approximately 11 feet wide (12 feet is standard) and a marginal 1' shoulder area. When the road is next re-striped, or in conjunction with the future pavement overlay, we will coordinate with the Town and consider whether it is reasonable to stripe the lines even narrower to provide a potentially more usable shoulder for shared bicycle use. There are several factors to be weighed in balancing the utility of incremental additional shoulder width with the overall usage and safety of the roadway users.

I hope this information is helpful. We do appreciate your proactive interest in the needs for NH 3A and participation in the GACIT hearings.

Sincerely,



William J. Cass
Director of Project Development

cc: The Honorable Raymond Burton, Executive Council, District 1
The Honorable Suzanne Smith
Christopher Clement
Lyle Knowlton
Alan Hanscom
William Lambert
Town of Hebron