

Town of Stamford
Ancient Roads Study

Prepared by
Town of Stamford
Ancient Roads Committee
December, 2009

Introduction

In May 2006, the Vermont General Assembly passed legislation establishing a process for towns to determine the legal status of their roads. Known as Act 178, the “ancient road bill” was enacted in response to concerns from title insurance companies and financial institutions hoping to avoid further disputes between property owners and town officials. Unlike many states, that forfeit town rights to roads after years of disuse, Vermont law requires that they remain public domain until formally discontinued. This concept of “once a road, always a road” dates back to Roman law.

Act 178 allows towns the opportunity to identify and add to the town highway map, any “ancient road” that it decides to retain as a public right-of-way. It also establishes a public discontinuance process for roads that the towns’ selectboard determines are no longer desired or those that do not appear on their existing highway map. A grant program was also established, as a part of the legislation, to assist with funding for research and mapping. While some towns throughout the state have conducted mass discontinuances, many have determined that some degree of research regarding ancient roads would be a worthy undertaking.

The subject of ancient roads first became a topic of discussion in Stamford with notification of a presentation to be hosted by the Vermont League of Cities & Towns in May 2005. Additional discussion was undertaken by the Stamford selectboard at meetings held in June and July, prior to passage of the 2006 legislation. Stamford’s ancient road status would also draw interest from the Town of Woodford and the Bennington Trail Conservancy.

Interest by several town residents and approval of the selectboard led to the submission of a grant proposal by Joseph Tracy in November 2007 to fund research. A meeting of the Stamford Conservation Commission was later held to determine what level of participation or involvement they would play in the project. It was decided that any members interested in working on the research phase were welcome to do so, however, as a group, their involvement would be limited to the latter phases of the project and making recommendations to the selectboard regarding maintenance and/or discontinuance procedures, where necessary. The Stamford Ancient Roads Committee was formally established in May 2008 to begin the task of research.

Procedure

Every attempt has been made to conduct a thorough and complete search of all information pertaining to highways laid out in Stamford for public use. This search has included the assembly of records found scattered throughout the land records, town proceedings, vital records, selectmen’s minutes, town reports and recorded survey information. All information was then transcribed to computer media and has been included as a part of this compilation for reference purposes. Metes and bounds descriptions of recorded road surveys were then plotted to scale using Mapdraw Deed Plotter software. In instances where heading (north, east, etc.), bearing, and/or distance measurements were omitted or illegible in the record information, it was necessary to make a “best guess” attempt to fill in the blanks. Plotted roads were then located on a topographic base map of the town that also included the original lot configuration. Additional deed research was necessary to determine road locations that made reference to various residents and/or ownerships. Various early town maps (Rice & Harwood, Beers Atlas) and Child’s Bennington County Directory were also useful. Additional information has been compiled from research conducted at the Vermont State Archives, Vermont Historical Society Library, Bennington Museum, Bennington Free Library, North Adams Public Library, New York State Library, Woodford Town Office, Readsboro Town Office, Pownal Town Office, and Northern Berkshire Registry of Deeds, from various on-line sources, and documents provided by Anson Mason of Pownal.

Despite the effort to compile all pertinent information regarding the history of Stamford’s roads, it is without question that some information has been omitted due to lost/missing documents, incomplete records and/or poor record keeping (Selectmen’s meeting minutes, in particular). Apologies are made for any information that may have inadvertently been overlooked by the researchers.

A summary of information as it pertains to each individual town highway has been made and a listing of discontinued highways and “open” roads completes the study findings.

The Earliest Roads & Maps

The presence of Native Americans throughout the region ensures the existence of Indian trails and paths. History has taught us about the important role that waterways have played in the routes followed by Native American’s and early European explorers. As early settlers began to inhabit Stamford and surrounding towns, many of the routes they traveled in reaching their destinations were trails and paths developed along these rivers and streams. The rugged terrain of the Green, Berkshire, and Taconic Mountains restricted overland travel, however, trails through this country were established at the lowest points and along the line of least resistance.

Several early maps of the region lying between the Hudson and Connecticut Rivers indicate the existence of a single road or trail running through Stamford.

The maps of Nathaniel Dwight (1762) and William Dawes from the Massachusetts State Archives indicate a road between Albany and Deerfield passing through Stamford. It is interesting to note that these maps do not show the road built in 1753 over “Hoosuck” or the “Forbidden” Mountain, however, they may be based on information from earlier surveys conducted by Dwight in 1749 and show an easier, less arduous route to the merchants in Deerfield, which had been made a depot for military stores by the colonial government of Massachusetts to supply its western frontier.

One of the most famous of these early maps was compiled by Claude Joseph Sauthier and published in 1779. Entitled “A Chorographical Map of the Province of New York in North America”, this map summarizes much of the British military mapping done in the years preceding the American Revolution and also draws on detailed surveys conducted by Sauthier in determining the disputed boundaries of the Province of New York and their extensive claims in what is now Vermont. This map shows a road running from Fort Massachusetts on a northeasterly course to Brattleboro and is believed to have been built in 1746 for the transportation of military patrols and supplies between Fort Massachusetts and Fort Dummer. (Note: The original publication of this map in 1776, as shown on a copy displayed at the New York State Museum, depicts roads from Fort Massachusetts west towards Albany and north toward Crown Point, however, it does not show the road leading toward Brattleboro.) The old military road indicated by Sauthier would later become part of the so-called “Great Albany Road” or “Old Albany Road” that is described in Chapter 1674 of the Colonial Laws of New York, passed March 9, 1774, as follows: “And Whereas some few of the Inhabitants of the said County of Cumberland (part of present Windham County, Vermont) have lately with great Labour and Expense, laid out and opened ... from the Connecticut River towards the City of Albany running Westward through the Townships and Tracts of Land called Brattleborough, New Marlborough (Marlboro), Whiting (Whitingham), and Draper (Wilmington) in the County of Cumberland, and ... Readesborough, New Stamford (Stamford) and Pownal in the County of Albany, which road if well made and kept in good Repair will be very beneficial to all the Inhabitants in those Townships and Tracts of Land, enable them to carry their Produce to Market and raise the value of their Lands”. This road is also depicted on Simon Medcalfe’s “Map of the Country in which the Army under Lt. General Burgoyne acted in the Campaign of 1777 ...”, drawn for inclusion in Burgoyne’s book explaining his defeat at the Battle of Saratoga. Both maps do not provide sufficient detail to accurately determine the course taken as it passed through Stamford, leading to some speculation as to its location. Marion Lawrence’s early history commemorating the 200th anniversary of the founding of Stamford states that such a road “crossed the high ridge of the Hoosacs from Readesborough” and is “still visible but long discontinued”, while research published by Bernice Barnett and B.B. Woods in their book, “Roads In The Wilderness”, suggests a rather indirect route that this road followed through town. Despite any uncertainty that may remain as to the exact location of this road, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that it may have been the “old path” described as being a portion of the first public road laid out in May 1777 by George Lamb, Nathan Mead and Solomon Gleason.

Later maps depicting roads through Stamford would include Blodget's, "Topographical Map of Vermont, 1789", "Vermont" by Daniel Friedrich Sotzman, and Whitelaw's, "Correct Map of the State of Vermont".

The most accurate of these maps would be James Whitelaw's maps prepared during his tenure as Surveyor General of Vermont. The first edition of "A Correct Map of the State of Vermont From actual Survey" was published in 1796 pursuant to an act of the General Assembly entitled "an act for the purpose of collecting the necessary Surveys for completing a Map of the State", passed October 31, 1793. It is interesting to note that the information shown regarding Stamford was presumably provided by the Selectmen according to the requirements of said act, however, many other roads had been established in town by this time, than the few indicated. Revisions of the Whitelaw map were made in 1810, 1821, 1824 and 1851.

Highway Summaries

Main Road/Routes 8 & 100

While Act 178 was enacted to deal specifically with town highways, it would have been easy to begin compiling a summary for each road based on numerical sequence (Town Highway 1, etc.) and ignore Routes 8 & 100 (Main Road). However, the present route that it follows had its beginnings connected to early town highways and it would not be proper to conduct a thorough study without including pertinent research findings. Several sections of the old State Highway were also relinquished as part of the 1963 relocation project and are incorporated as part of the present Town Highway system.

As previously mentioned, several early maps had indicated the presence of a single road leading through Stamford and that such a road was "the old path" mentioned in the description of the first public road laid out in May 1777 (B1/P23). Beginning "at the South Line of the town" and running northerly past "the west Side of the Great Rock on Raymonds Lot" to a hemlock tree, the two roads are believed to have followed a common course. At this point, the old path would have continued up the valley and the public road continued northerly following what has been referred to as "the road that leads to Bennington" (B2/P41, Jan. 1787) and later known as "Sumner Hill" or "Sumner" Road. It is believed that the road survey recorded in Book 1, Page 74 and dated August 27th 1782, is a "metes & bounds" description of the May 1777 road, which may have been conducted in response to "an act to settle and establish all highways that are laid out in this state", passed February 20, 1781, by the State of Vermont General Assembly. The 1782 survey refers to the road as "beginning on the Line of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts bay" and "a Small Distance East of the Road that is Now Commonly Traveled out of said town". Pages 2 & 3 of the Early Town Proceedings:1783-1802 (ETP), dated January 24, 1783, record the minutes of a town meeting where it was "voted that the Rode be accepted that was laid out to the original proprietors".

The survey of East Road (Town Highway #1), laid out April 30, 1778 (B1/P23 & 24), indicates that "the mane Laid out Rode" continued at least as far north as the present junction of Clough Road and East Road at that time. Book 1, Page 11 of the Stamford Land Records, dated May 18, 1781, records the minutes of a meeting voting "that the rode Continue for the precent a Long the Side of the river" and ETP, Pages 1 & 2, record the minutes of a town meeting held in 1783 where it was "voted to accept and approve a rode from Meads to Hicocks (Clough Road to Basin Road). At a meeting held October 6, 1788 (ETP, Page 18), it was voted that certain roads surveyed by Eli Persons were to be accepted and established as town roads. These would include the road then referred to as River Road (ETP, Page 19).

In October 1785, the inhabitants of Stamford petitioned the General Assembly (Vermont State Archives Volume 17, Page 136 & 137) to impose a land tax of one penny per acre on all lands in the town (public rights excepted) for the purpose of building a road "leading into the main road which goes from Bennington to Wilmington". According to the petition, such a road was necessary as the residents had "laboured under the

disadvantage of having no publick road or highway by which a communication can be had to other parts of this state without passing into the commonwealth of Massachusetts being almost a direct contrary course” and “would greatly accommodate the publick and be of singular advantage to this town”.

On November 21, 1785, inhabitants of the town voted “that there be a road laid out from the northeasterly settlements of this town to a place called Brace or as far as the town line where it shall be most convenient” and “that this Committee go immediately and view the place or the Rode from Hicocks place to the town line” (ETP, Page 9). A copy of the September 18, 1786 survey is attached to the meeting minutes found with the documents referenced. The warning for said meeting was made November 8, 1785 and recorded in ETP, Page 7. At a subsequent meeting held October 26, 1786, it was “voted the Rode laid out by the Selectman to Readsborough be and hereby is established by the Town” (ETP, Page 13A). It should be noted that plotting the course of the road based on the information referenced, reveals many discrepancies between the survey and the course which this road is believed to have followed. Similar instances are believed to occur in other surveys and may be caused by a variety of factors (crude surveying techniques, inaccurate observations, improperly recording field data, transposition errors, illegible and/or missing information, etc.).

On May 25, 1796, an alteration to the main road was made on a portion of the old main highway that now includes the southerly end of Clough Road (ETP, Page 75) and a subsequent alteration made north of the junction with East Road was recorded June 2, 1824 (VR, Page 192).

A town meeting warning for June 19, 1797 notified voters of the need to “appoint a committee to make suitable alterations in the survey of the Heartwell Road (so called) as they shall think advantageous to the public ...” (ETP, Page 79). A survey bill of the Hartwell (also spelled Heartwell) Road is found on Page 87 of the Early Town Proceedings. The description provided indicates that the survey includes portions of the old main highway now comprising Clough Road and the lower portion of Lincoln Road. In March 1810 (VR, Page 48 & 49), the inhabitants of Stamford voted for the Selectmen to lay out a road from the Hartwell Road to Camps Sawmill & to be continued until it strikes the other road, indicating the course of the main road to Readsboro would pass over what is now Lincoln Road for a period of time and not over that part of the highway originally laid out as River Road and by the September 1786 survey. An alteration of the road as it passed through first division Lots 28 & 35 substantiates this fact (see below). Several other subsequent road surveys and early deed information of adjoining ownerships refer to the portion of the old main highway (now Robillard Road and Brookside Drive) as the “old Hartwell Road” (VR, Pages 71 & 90).

On May 28, 1832 (Town & Vital Records [VR], Page 198 & 199), a road survey commencing 5 rods and 8 links (87.78 feet) north of the South Line of Lot No. 112 and ending on “the road leading northerly to the old turnpike road” was recorded, altering the course of the original road to Readsboro to include that portion presently known as Bushika Road and the southerly end of Sportsmen Road.

Another survey altering the course of the main road to Readsboro was made on that portion of the road passing through part of 1st Division Lots 28 & 35, owned by Levi Gilmore and Lyman Stoddard. Said survey was recorded February 4, 1834 in Town & Vital Records, Page 213. A second alteration on the highway passing through the aforementioned lots was recorded February 19, 1935 (VR, Page 223). These alterations would have been on that portion of the road laid out following the March 1810 vote referenced above and lying northerly of the present terminus of Lincoln Road.

On January 14, 1839 (VR, Page 258), a pent road was laid out extending from the (then) main road, south of a small bridge near the north line of Elisha Lake’s land, to the Readsboro town line. The course of the present State Highway is believed to closely follow and overlay this road.

The main road to Readsboro would once again follow the route of the “old Hartwell Road” by the late 1850’s, as described in the narrative provided for Lincoln Road.

It should be noted that on October 8, 1803, the Town of Stamford petitioned the General Assembly of the State of Vermont to establish a turnpike road leading from the Windham County Turnpike in Readsboro to the Clarksburg Town Line for the purpose of making and repairing the road described (Vermont State Archives [VSA], Volume 44, Page 60). Said petition was granted by the Turnpike committee on November 9, 1803 and an act establishing the Stamford Turnpike Corporation was passed by the General Assembly on November 14th of that year. Among the conditions set forth in the legislation was a time limitation of thirty-five years placed on the duration of said corporation after completion of the road, that said road shall be completed within five years

of the passing of said act, upon expiration of the time limitation the property of said road shall be vested in the State and the disposal of the Legislature, and that failure to meet these conditions shall be cause to void said act. In October 1806, a petition was filed to amend this act after it became clear that the road could not be completed within the time period required. As a result, an additional two years were allowed for completing said road and 15 years being added to the time limitation of the corporation before the property of the road shall vest in the State.

No records were found indicating any action taken against the Stamford Turnpike Corporation for failure to fulfill its obligations, nor were any references to the turnpike or the corporation found in any of the highway records relating to the road to Readsboro, subsequent to the 1806 amendment.

It is uncertain as to the exact date that the road became part of the State Highway system, however, the 1914 Town Report indicated a separate accounting of State Road Work for the first time. The northerly half of the route accepted by the State, prior to the relocation project in 1963, would follow the course of the "old Hartwell Road" (River Road), a portion of the alteration recorded on May 28, 1832 and the pent road laid out January 14, 1839.

As previously mentioned, the relocation of the State Highway known as Routes 8 & 100 was undertaken in 1963 (See B28/P124 & 132 for Certificate of Opening). The primary function of this project was to widen and straighten various sections of the road. As a result, a number of sections (8 in total) of the old State Highway were no longer required to be controlled by the State and were returned and relinquished to the Town of Stamford (B28/P145 & B28/P151). Several of these sections are designated as Town Roads and included as part of the existing highway system. These roads include Town Highway #25/Clough Road (Section 3), a portion of Town Highway #7/Lincoln Road (part of Section 4), Town Highway #26/Robillard Road (Section 6), Town Highway #27/Brookside Drive (Section 7) and Town Highway #28/Bushika Road (Section 8).

Article 10 of the 1973 Town Report requested the residents of Stamford to consider a "vote to transfer on request the land owned by the Vermont Highway Department and subsequently deeded to the Town, and any portions of unused Town Highways to the abutting property owners for the sum of \$1.00, and all expenses to be born by the applicant".

In May 1979, the Selectmen discontinued the portion of the old State Highway (part of Section 4 referenced above) lying south of the access road leading to the Shippee/Mills residence, allowing it to revert to the abutting property owners (Shippee/Mills) as authorized by Article 8, section 531, Title 19 V.S.A. Reference may be had to the minutes of a public hearing held May 24, 1979 and referenced to Town Proceedings Book 4 with no page listing given.

No other transfer or discontinuances of the unused portions of the old State Highway were found on record and, therefore, title to these lands should vest in the Town of Stamford. These would include Sections 1 & 2, the northerly portion of Section 4, and Section 5 of the highway relinquishment described in Book 28, Page 145 of the Stamford Land Records. Reference may also be had to Selectmen's Minutes Vol. 3, Page 355 & 356 (Apr. 24, 1997 & May 8, 1997) to an inquiry made regarding the public right-of-way on former State Highway lands (Pecor; Section 5). Research done on behalf of the Selectboard at that time verifies title to the land as remaining in town ownership. It should be noted that several landowners abutting the property described are actively maintaining and/or using said lands.

Town Highway 1: East Road

East Road was laid out on April 30, 1778, becoming the second road established in Stamford for public use. The description of the layout (B1/P23 & 24) does not include a “metes & bounds” survey (courses & distances), however, the location is readily determined by the abutting landowners to which it makes reference. No alterations to the original layout were found on record. The right-of-way width is four rods (66 feet).

Following improvements and resurfacing in 1998, East Road was upgraded from a Class 3 to a Class 2 Highway.

Reference has been made to East Road as “Back Road”.

Town Highway 2: Jepson Road

In 1783 (ETP, Pages 1 & 2), the town voted to approve and accept a road laid out from Benjamin Raze to Captain Wales. Originally known as the “West” Road, Page 5 of the Early Town Proceedings dated March 31, 1785, records the minutes of a town meeting where a vote was taken that may have altered the beginning course of the road. A survey of the road is recorded in the Early Town Proceedings at Pages 18 & 19 and is believed to be one of several surveys conducted by Eli Persons and accepted by the Town on October 6, 1788. Some discrepancies are evident between the courses and distances of the record information as compared to the actual traveled route, however, it is obvious to see that the layout identifies this road. The road was laid out at a width of three rods (49.5 feet).

In July 1979, an agreement was entered into between Earl Jepson & Wyeth Jepson Hanson and the Town of Stamford (un-referenced document) to relocate a portion of Jepson Road to facilitate winter maintenance of the road. A map of the Right-of-Way and Road Alteration is filed in Map Tube B-6 at the Stamford Town Office.

A reclassification of Jepson Road from a Class 3 to a Class 2 highway was completed in April 13, 2006 (Selectmen’s Minutes Volume 3, Page 284 & 285).

In addition to West Road, Jepson Road has also been referred to as West Hill, Joy Road and Bratton Road.

Town Highway #3/Sportsmen Road

Sportsmen Road is composed of two separate layouts that served as the old road to Readsboro. The northerly portion of the road is believed to follow the course of the original highway laid out by the survey of Jonathan Allen, dated September 18, 1786, and recorded in ETP, Page 9. References to the original road to Readsboro can also be found in ETP, Page 7 (November 8, 1785), ETP, Page 9 (November 21, 1785), and ETP, Page 13A (October 26, 1786). The southerly portion of the road is described by the survey recorded May 28, 1832 (VR, Page 198 & 199). The description of the northerly portion makes no description as to width, while the southerly portion is laid three rods wide.

In January 1932, Selectmen voted to discontinue that portion of the road from Fred Tatro’s old place (B18/P40, Nov. 1908) to the Readsboro Town Line. Reference may be had to Record:(Nov.1842-Sept.1886), Page 288 & 289. At that time, the road was referred to as the Hoyt Sumner Road.

Sportsmen Road (commonly called Sportsmen’s Club Road) has also been referred to as Fred Tatro Road.

Town Highway #4/Collins Road

The present layout of Collins Road follows the route of the survey dated November 3, 1834, which is recorded in VR, Page 218. From the junction of Bellows Road (Town Highway #5) west, the road also follows the course of an earlier survey made by Josiah Tupper in June 1797.

The conveyance of a strip of land three rods in width, altering the course of Town Highway #5, deeded by Joseph & Anna Rondeau to the Town of Stamford on April 14, 1977 and recorded in Book 33, Page 332, suggests that the course of Town Highway #4 was also altered as a part of the project described (DSR-518DR-281-A).

The width of the 1834 layout is recorded as being 2 rods.

Other road names have included John Collins Road and Rondeau Road.

Town Highway #5/Bellows Road

Bellows Road is a portion of the road laid out by Josiah Tupper in June 1797 (ETP, Page 82). In June 1824, a new route (now Collins Road) was surveyed leading from the road to Readsboro westerly toward the former Richards farm and others. As a result, the southerly portion of the old road lying southerly of Samuel Gould's house (now Skorupski) was discontinued on February 19, 1835 (VR, Page 223 & 224).

The portion of road lying approximately 242 feet south of the junction of Town Highways #4 and 5 was altered as part of project DSR-518-DR-281-A. The strip of land conveyed is described in the deed of Joseph & Anna Rondeau found in Book 33, Page 332 (Apr. 14, 1977) and is 3 rods (49.5 feet) in width.

No right-of-way width was given in the original survey of this road. In such cases, a right of way width of one and one half rods on each side of the existing traveled way may be assumed and controlled for highway purposes, as described by State Highway Law (Title 19, Sections 32 & 702).

Town Highway #6/Basin Road

In 1783, inhabitants of the town "voted to accept and approve of the highway from Hicocks to Porters" (ETP, Page 1&2. Reference may also be had to B3/P48 & B1/P137). It is believed that the survey of the "North Cross Road" found on Page 19 of the Early Town Proceedings describes this road. Subsequent surveys of the road from "Porters to Lanes" (East Road; ETP, Page 19), recorded June 1796 (ETP, Page 75) and March 1815 (VR, Page 90) include courses and distance along this road in their descriptions.

A un-dated survey found in the front of the Early Town Proceedings: 1783-1802 (ETP), describes an extension of the original road leading easterly into what is locally known as "the Basin". This road was discontinued beyond the point opposite the dwelling house of Maurice Fitzgerald (now Finney) on May 1, 1867 (VR, Page 195).

The North Cross Road survey specifies a two rod right-of-way. Widening of the traveled portion of the road was mentioned in the 1971 Town Report.

Town Highway #7/Lincoln Road

The road composing this highway designation is made up of three parts.

The beginning was built as part of the 1963 State Highway relocation project as access from the new State Highway to the Shippee/Mills residence. The agreement relinquishing control from the State Highway Board to the Town of Stamford is found in Book 29, Page 386 of the Land Records and was recorded July 30th, 1969. Section 1 of this document describes the road layout and location. No description of the road width is given.

The second part is a portion of Section 4 of the State Highway relocation project that was relinquished to the town in September 1963 (B28/P145). This section of highway was laid out as part of the survey of the "Hartwell Road" in 1798 (ETP, Page 87). The town has not conducted any maintenance work on this portion of the road in many years.

The remaining portion of the road includes the traveled way most commonly referred to as Lincoln Road. The lower (southerly) portion of this section of highway was laid out as part of the 1798 "Hartwell Road" survey. In March 1810, inhabitants of the town voted to extend the Hartwell Road northerly to Camp's sawmill "till it strikes the other road" (VR, Page 48 & 49). The deed of John Knowlton to Levi Gilmore, dated Apr. 1841 and recorded in Book 10/Page 245, describes the location and courses of the road as it passes through Lot 35. An alteration of a portion of this road was made in February 1834 (VR, Page 213) and makes reference to this route as being the main road to Readsboro. A survey recorded February 19, 1935 (VR, Page 223) also describes a portion of the old highway lying northerly of the present terminus.

In May 1859, the Selectmen discontinued the road from Marcena Reeds (B12/P187) to Robert Webster (B12/P457 & B12/P316) as a "county road" and established it as a pent road. See Record, Page 135 for reference of this action.

In August 1954, conveyances were made by Louis & Dorothy Souci and Arthur & Louise Lincoln to the Town of Stamford (B26/P118 & 119 and B26/P119 & 120, respectively) re-establishing a portion of the road as an open highway. The description within these deeds makes reference to a gate across the road.

The town also accepted right-of-way deeds and cost reimbursement from adjoining landowners in June 1976 for improving a section of the road, extending approximately 2/10 of a mile northeasterly from the old Lincoln place to its present terminus at the southerly line of land now or formerly of Peter Miles (B29/P296). Reference may be had to Book 32, Pages 490 & 491 of the Land Records for a complete description of the property conveyed.

The 1971 Town Report gave an account of widening work that had been undertaken on the lower portion of the road and additional improvements were completed on the road prior to resurfacing in 1993 (Selectmen's Minutes Volume 2, Page 155).

No right of way width was provided in the early Hartwell Road survey, however, the Lincoln & Souci deeds described a right-of-way three rods wide. The deeds recorded as part of the 1976 extension convey a 50-foot width.

At the time of the Lincoln & Souci conveyances to the Town of Stamford, the road was referred to as Fred Lincoln Road.

Town Highway #8/ Sumner Road

Also referred to as Sumner Hill Road, Sherman Hill Road, and Juan Sweet Road, the origins of this road can be traced to the first road laid out for public use in May 1777 (B1/P23). As previously mentioned in this report, the survey recorded in Book 1, Page 74 is believed to be a "metes & bounds" description of this original road.

Sumner Road is also believed to be a portion of the road to Woodford (ETP, Page 13A; Oct. 1786) and also referred to as "the road that leads to Bennington" (B2/P41; Jan. 1787). No survey describing the formal layout of such a road was found and a petition filed in October 1793 with the General Assembly of the State of Vermont (VSA, Vol.19/P86) stated that there is no public road leading from Stamford to Bennington that is "passable". However, evidence of such a road being established is furnished by Sotzmann's "Vermont",

Blodgett's 1789 Topographic Map, and Whitelaw's 1796 "Correct Map" of Vermont. It is also possible to follow old roads over the course believed to be depicted by these maps.

The survey recorded July 5, 1821 (VR, Page 191) describes a more recent layout of the major portion of Sumner Road with a width of three rods (49.5 feet).

In May 1867 (VR, Page 195), the road lying northerly of the barway leading into the orchard of Chauncey Bratton was discontinued. In June 1982 (B37/P426), Haynes Brothers conveyed a parcel of land located at the northerly end of the road to be used as a turnaround area by the town.

At the March 1, 1988 Annual Town Meeting residents passed Article 9, extending Town Highway #8 (Sumner Road) from its present terminus to the Michael Murphy property (approximately .12 mile). However, the acceptance policy of bringing the road up to Town Highway standards, providing a turnaround area, and deeding a right-of-way was never completed. Reference may be had to Town Proceedings Volume 4, Pages 212, 217 & 218.

Town Highway #9/Tatro Road

This road was laid out and accepted as a town highway on December 20, 1950. The record thereof is found in Book 25, Page 400 of the Stamford Land Records. Said road is three rods in width and extends from Mill Road easterly to within 20 feet of the barn located on the Ernest and Rose Tatro premises (B20/P200).

A portion of the road was altered during the reconstruction of Bridge #23 over Roaring Brook in 1995 (Selectmen's Minutes Vol.2, Page 318. See also B51/P215 and Map Box Plan 60).

The minutes of the June 28, 2001 Selectmen's Meeting (Volume 3, Page 21) mentions the possible discontinuation of a portion of the road near the Paquette house. Additional discussion concerning this matter was taken up at the November 29, 2001 meeting (Vol. 3, Page 39). At that time, Mr. Paquette stated that he would not block the turnaround for maintenance purposes, however, he does not want the public to have access to his property.

Town Highway #10/Maltese Road

No survey or formal acceptance of the original layout of this road, also referred to as Foucard Road, was found on record. However, several early county maps (Rice & Harwood, Beers Atlas, Child's Directory) indicate that a road of some type was established as early as 1856.

In July 1959, several residents inquired about the town doing work on the road extending to the summer residence of Mary Samson and what measures were required for it to become a town highway. The Selectboard advised as to the necessary procedure for acceptance and placing the issue on the warrant for the annual Town Meeting. No other action concerning this matter would be brought before the town until a much later date.

Efforts to have the road extended to the property of David Finney were initiated as early as September 1982. At a Special Town Meeting held on November 23rd of that year, a vote was approved to extend the road under the condition that all expenses of deeding a right-of-way, bringing the road up to Town Highway standards, and providing a turnaround area to be borne by the abutters of said extension (TP#4, Page 105 & 106). After much expense of time and money, the road was upgraded to town specifications and accepted as a Class 3 highway in December 1995 (See Selectmen's Minutes Vol. 2, Page 282-286 and TP#5, Page 173-177). Deeds recording the applicable easements are recorded in Book 45 at Pages 514 (Patten Corp.), 516 (Finney), 518 (Moulton, Jr.), 520 (Agone), and 523 (Libby) and Book 46 at Pages 88 & 89 (Garrison). The right-of-way width is specified as 50 feet.

Town Highway #11/Old County Road

According to the minutes of a town meeting held November 21, 1785, the inhabitants of Stamford voted to select a committee for the purpose of viewing the ground leading to Pownal "to see if there can be a Rode

Conveniently made” (ETP, Page 9). However, by October 1793, such a road was yet to be established and a petition was filed with the General Assembly of the State of Vermont to levy a tax of one penny per acre on all land in said town, public rights excepted (VSA, Vol.19/Page 86). The petition stated that there was no passable, public road leading to Pownal or Bennington, subjecting the residents of Stamford “to the cost and inconvenience of traveling through part of Massachusetts to attend county and Supreme court” and “that the road leading through this town to the County of Windham is almost impassable”. The purpose of the tax was for making and repairing said roads. A road to Pownal was then laid out by the Selectmen of Stamford in November of that year and is recorded on Page 56 of the Early Town Proceedings: 1783-1802 (ETP). The survey of the road began near the dwelling house of Bethuel Finney (B2/P264) and ended on the east line of the Town of Pownal. The width of the road right-of-way is four rods (66 feet).

Town Highway #11, known as “Old County Road”, includes the access road constructed over a portion of the old State Highway as part of the 1963 relocation project and that part of the aforementioned road to Pownal lying between its junctions with Sumner Road and Mill Road.

In November 1931, the Selectmen voted to discontinue that portion of the road from the Tiboni place (B25/P11) to Earl Crosier’s place (B23/P34). The record of this discontinuance was filed January 28, 1932 in Town Proceedings #2, Page 288 & 289. The 1940 State Highway map correctly depicts the discontinued portion according to the record description. Following the conveyance of the Crosier farm to Warren Sparrow in 1943 (B26/P402), confusion developed as to the actual limits of the discontinuance, and the “discontinued” portion of Old County Road was said to extend from Tiboni’s (Newkom) to the junction of Mill Road. Since that time no maintenance of the road from Mill Road to the Crosier place has been undertaken by the town.

The status of this section of road has been questioned on several occasions by the landowners (Fachini) most affected by the uncertainty in the actual limits of the discontinuance. Reference may be had to Volume 3 of the Selectmen’s Minutes regarding issues discussed (Page 49, 73 & 178).

On June 20, 2002, the portion of Old County Road beginning at the westerly side of Bohl’s Sand Bank driveway to the former Newkom dwelling was reclassified from a Class III to a Class IV road (TP#6/ Pages 56-64 and Selectmen’s Minutes Volume 3, Pages).

Town Highway #12/Mill Road – County Road

This highway designation is assigned to Mill Road and that portion of County Road lying westerly of the so-called, “High Bridge”.

No formal layout or acceptance of Mill Road has been found on record, however, it is shown to have been established as early as 1856 on several early county maps (Rice & Harwood, Beers Atlas, Childs Directory). Road expenditures listed in the 1893-94 Town Report verify its status as a town road at least since that time.

County Road follows the route laid out according to the November 1793 survey (ETP, Page 56). The narrative provided for Town Highway #11 may also be referenced for additional information regarding the establishment of “the road to Pownal”.

In September 1988, landowners adjoining the so-called “High Bridge” conveyed an easement increasing the right-of-way to be controlled by the town, for the maintenance and repair of the bridge and highway lying therein. The deed for said easement is recorded in Book 45/Page 24. A prior conveyance by Earl Crosier (B23/P530) was recorded August 29, 1939, granting an easement on additional lands located on the east side of the “Brook Road” and around the “Steam Mill Bridge” for reconstruction, maintenance and repairs.

Other name references to Mill Road have included Steam Mill Road, Brook Road, Roaring Brook Road and Slide Brook Road.

According to all available information, no major alteration or changes have occurred in the course of either road throughout their histories.

The westerly portion of County Road lying westerly of the former Carol Baker residence is classified as a Class 4 highway.

Town Highway #13/Risky Ranch Road

The original layout of Risky Ranch Road can be traced to the surveys dated March 5, 1838 (VR, Page 250) and May 7, 1849 (Record, Page 67). Two separate alterations in the original course of the road were made in June 1841 and are recorded on Page 282 of the Town & Vital Records. The first of these alterations was made to the beginning of the road, while the second alteration was made on the middle portion of the road lying northerly of the south line of 2nd Division Lot 6.

The survey of March 1838 and the alterations of June 1841 describe a road width of two rods (33 feet), while the May 1849 survey, beginning near J.W. Peck's, states the right-of-way to be three rods wide.

Risky Ranch was reclassified in 1986 from a Class 3 to a Class 4 highway. It has also been referred to as the Tim Larry Road.

Town Highway #14/Klondike Road

The northerly and southerly portions of Klondike Road are laid out according to a survey recorded March 4, 1837 (VR, Page 242), that connected with an earlier road passing through 2nd Division Lot 14. This earlier road was established between the state line and the road leading to Pownal (County Road) and can be found recorded in the Town & Vital Records, Page 191. The survey describing this road is dated May 11, 1822.

On June 15th 1840 (VR, Page 270), an alteration to the southerly portion of the road was laid out, discontinuing that portion of the old road running through Lot 14.

Subsequent alterations were made on the northerly portion of the road in November 1844 (Record, Page 20) and December 1870 (Record, Page 216) that describe the present course of travel.

The right-of-way width in all surveys and alterations referenced above is stated as being three rods wide.

The southerly portion of Klondike Road from the State line to the farm of Wallace Dolle is a Class 3 highway, while the northerly portion extending to County Road is a Class 4 highway.

Klondike Road has also been referred to as West Road and Summit Mill Road.

Town Highway #15/Schenk Road

Very little information has been discovered regarding the layout of this road.

The westerly end of Schenk Road can be traced to surveys made June 1840 (VR, Page 270), altering the course of Klondike Road, and of a pent road laid out December 26, 1843 (Record, Page 14).

The present road extends easterly to the old Fred Schink place (B21/P14), however, no layout of a road, connecting the pent road referenced above to the road laid out August 27th 1796 (ETP, Page 81*), can be found on record.

Some discussion of discontinuing the portion now classified as town highway was undertaken in 1961 (June 27 & July 11; Red binder), however, no record of any further action was found.

In May 1979, Schenk Road was reclassified from a Class 3 to Class 4 highway (Town Proceedings, Book 4/ Page Un-referenced) and later that year, Patten Corp. was granted permission to resurface approximately 0.61

miles of the road leading up to their property line in connection with their development, provided no expense was incurred by the town, the work was done according to town road standards and no change in the classification was made as a result. Discussion of reclassifying the road to trail status would be discussed at the July 25th 1985 Selectmen's Meeting (Selectmen's Minutes, Volume 1), no record of any further action was found.

Schenk Road (often spelled Schink) has also been referred to as Geiser Road. It is presently a Class 4 Town Highway.

Town Highway #16/Lesure Road

The lower portion of this road was laid out by a survey recorded May 11th 1793 from Benjamin Raze to Nathan Walker (ETP, Page 50), while the upper portion can be traced to a survey made September 10th 1795 (ETP, Page 55). The two surveys together describe a road that extends from Jepson Road to County Road.

While the Town of Stamford currently maintains the road only as far as the Goodson property, no discontinuance of the northerly portion of the road has been found on record.

A major reconstruction effort was undertaken on this road in 1983. The present status is that of a Class 3 highway.

Lesure Road has also been referred to as Baker Road, Horrigan Road, and Dilworth Road.

Town Highway #17/Boulger

At a town meeting held March 12, 1810 (VR, Page 48 & 49), a vote was passed that the "town lay out a road from Benjamin Raze to Richard Lees from thence to George Sampsons to Salah B. Benjamins". The road is described by the first survey recorded on Page 51 of the Town & Vital Records (VR) and is dated June 1, 1810. The original layout calls for a three-rod road.

In January 1932, the westerly portion of the road described in the June 1810 survey, lying west of the Magee Farm (B8/P233), was discontinued by Selectmen (TP#2, Page 288 & 289), however, some question as to its legal status would be discussed by the Selectboard in 1961 (Selectmen's Minutes; Red Binder – 6/27, 7/11 & 8/8). The discontinued portion would also become the subject of much debate many years later, when a landowner group (which became known as the Sheep Hill Seven) made a request to the town for permission to use the discontinued roadway as access to their properties. A reclassification of a portion of the discontinued roadway to "legal trail" status was considered as a right-of-way option and passed by town voters, however, was not formally enacted pending resolution of illegal trespass matters on the Town Forest. The March 5, 1979 Town Meeting vote to sell a strip of the Town land would finally settle this matter (TP#4, Page 39-42). The record of the right-of-way is recorded in Book 37, Page 447 of the Stamford Land Records.

The remaining easterly portion of the road described by the June 1810 survey is that which is now known as Boulger Road. Past reference has also been made to this road, and the discontinued portion, as Magee Road.

At the March 1, 1983 Town Meeting, voters approved a motion to change the Highway classification of Boulger Road from Class 4 to Class 3 (TP #4, Page 111).

Town Highway #18/Forgette

The lower portion of Forgette Road was accepted and approved in 1783 as the road “from Lanes to Meads old field” (ETP, Page 1 & 2). It is specifically described by a survey believed to have been conducted by Eli Persons and recorded October 6, 1788 (ETP, Page 19). This portion is referred to as “Middle Cross Road” and connected what was then called East Road (sometimes called the “Old Stage Road) to the bend of the road at the southeast corner of Meads old field (present East Road). The right-of-way width is described as being three rods (49.5 feet) and extends for a distance of about 881 feet.

No survey or formal layout of the upper portion of the road was found on record, however, in August 1896 (TP#2, Page 67), several owners of land along and near said road, requested that a portion of the road “leading from the road near A.H. Fuller to Alessio Piantoni and Ezra Wilbur” be discontinued and that a new road be laid out and extended on the north side of the old road. The Selectmen granted the discontinuance and a new road was laid out according to the description attached to the aforementioned petition. Reference to the road location can be found in the deeds of the abutters, recorded in Book 16/Page 598; Parcel 2 (Sept. 1896), Book 17/Page 58; Parcel 4 (April 1896), and Book 23/Page 5; Parcel 3 (Feb. 1930). The width of this “new” or upper portion of the road was laid out with a width of two rods (33 feet).

Un-referenced documents found in the Town Office, dated August 7 & August 18, 1950, signed by Aimee Forgette and Joseph Conti, convey a right-of-way three rods wide across their lands for the purpose of “doing away with the curve on the old road”.

Forgette Road has also been referred to as Poissant Road (1932).

Town Highway #19/The Lane

The inhabitants of Stamford voted to accept and approve the road from Tuppers to Captain Wales in 1783 (ETP, Page 1& 2; date unknown). The description is recorded in Book 1, Page 24 of the Land Records and is dated September 25, 1778. The road is described as running from the East Road, along the lands of Benjamin Tupper and George Lamb, and continuing on a straight course to the river bend, then as the river winds and twists, before crossing the river near the “Baker Lot”. The topographic features found along this road suggest that some change in the rivers course of flow has occurred since the original layout. The description called for a road of three rods in width.

In August 1939, land was conveyed to the Town of Stamford in connection with the rebuilding of the “Costine Bridge”. Reference may be had to the deed of Anna Costine to the Town of Stamford recorded in Book 23, Page 531 of the Land Records.

Town Highway #20/Stebbins Lane

Records indicate no survey or formal acceptance of this road. It is known that it was included in the individual road account listed by the Road Commissioner in the Town Reports beginning in 1952 and ending in 1969. At that time it was listed as “Grange Road”. The legal status of Stebbins Lane was questioned at a meeting of the Selectmen held December 8, 1988 (Vol. 1), as it had no number assigned to it for the purpose of determining eligibility for State Aid.

Town Highway #21/Millard Road

The origins of this road can be traced to the minutes of a town meeting held in October 1786 (ETP, Page 13A), where the town voted to “have the Rode surveyed the Selectmen Looked out through Cook farm”. No record of such a survey has been discovered. A partial description of the road location is given in the division of the Squire Millard estate, recorded in Book 9, Page 65 of the Land Records and dated June 1835. The road is known to have extended westerly to lands of Peleg Slocum (B2/P85, Nov. 1786). In April 1823, the town “voted to discontinue the road leading to the Slocum house so called” (VR, Page 130). It can only be assumed that the discontinuance included only that portion of the road lying westerly of the Millard Cemetery and the residence currently owned by Peter Grudin.

Town Highway #22/Clayton Avenue

This highway is described in the deed of Albert Foster, and others, to the Town of Stamford in Book 26, Pages 126 & 127 of the Land Records recorded December 26, 1954. This conveyance describes a strip of land 50 feet wide, extending easterly (approximately 885 feet) from the Main Road to the center of the brook (known by the name of Creamery Brook).

The distances given in the aforementioned deed were made prior to the 1963 State Highway relocation project.

Town Highway # 23/Henry Hill

Henry Hill (also called Edward Henry Road) was accepted as a Town Highway following a public hearing held January 16, 1956. The deed transferring title to the Town of Stamford is recorded in Book 26, Page 247 and dated November 23, 1955. The total length of the roadway is 24 rods (396 feet) and three rods in width (49.5 feet).

Town Highway #24/Rondeau Road

A portion of this road was laid out for public use by the Selectmen of Stamford in September 1841 (VR, Page 282). There may have been some question as to the status of the road in the years to follow, as Francis Rondeau made a request for one-eighth of a mile of roadway, including the original layout, to be accepted as Town Highway (TP# 3, Page 60; Minutes of March 1, 1960 Town Meeting). Having successfully prepared the surface to the satisfaction of the Road Commissioner, formal acceptance was made October 24, 1960 (TP#3, Page 69). Deeds conveying the necessary land to the Town of Stamford are recorded in Book 27, at Pages 75 & 85. The width of the right-of-way conveyed is three rods.

Town Highway#25/Clough Road

The layout of Clough Road can be traced to the surveys of River Road (ETP, Page 19), an alteration made in May 1796 (ETP, Page 75), the Hartwell Road (ETP, Page 87) and a second alteration made June 2, 1824 (VR, Page 192).

The present road is a part of the “old State Highway” or “Main Road” that was relinquished by the State as part of the 1963 relocation project and is referred to as Section 3 thereof (B28/P145). In March 2005 (Selectmen’s Minutes Volume 3, Page 216), a request was made by the Selectmen to the Agency of Transportation to upgrade portions of the old State Highway, now a part of the town road system, to Class 2 status. Roads included in this request comprise Clough Road, Robillard Road, Brookside Drive, and Bushika Road. No such reclassification was ever approved or finalized. It remains a Class 3 highway.

Town Highway #26/Robillard Road

Robillard Road is that portion of the “old State Highway” described as Section 6 of the State Highway relinquishment (B28/P145). The northerly portion of the road can be traced to the survey of the road to Readsboro laid out in September 1786 and known as the “old Hartwell Road”. The portion south of Basin Road is thought to be the northerly end of River Road (ETP, Page 19).

Robillard Road is a Class 3 highway.

Town Highway# 27/Brookside Drive

Brookside Drive is that portion of the relinquished “old State Highway” described as Section 7 (B28/P145). The original layout can be traced to the survey of the road to Readsboro, dated September 18, 1786, by Jonathan Allen (ETP, Page 9).

The name of the road was changed from Burns Road in August 1981 (Selectmen’s Minutes Vol. 1; August 6, 1981). It maintains a Class 3 status.

Town Highway #28/Bushika Road

Section 8 of the 1963 State Highway relinquishment to the Town of Stamford describes this road. In addition to the description given in Book 28, Page 145, a certificate of relinquishment specific to this particular section is recorded in Book 28 at Page 151.

This road is also a portion of the road to Readsboro that was laid out by the survey of May 28, 1832 (VR, Page 198 & 199).

Bushika Road is a Class 3 town highway.

Town Highway # 29/Lincoln Road

This highway designation is given to Section II of the agreement between the State of Vermont and the Town of Stamford, recorded July 30, 1969 in Book 29/Page 386 of the Land Records. The deed referenced describes the layout and location of the access road, constructed between the old and new State Highway, as part of the 1963 relocation project. This access serves as the beginning of the traveled way most commonly known as Lincoln Road. Past reference has also been made to this section of road as being Town Highway 7-a (1969 Town Highway Mileages).

Town Highway #31/Sparrow Drive

Sparrow Drive was originally laid out as a private road accessing lots within the “Stamford Farms, Section II” subdivision. Several years after its development, lot owners approached the Selectmen about the possible acceptance of the road as a town highway. An agreement was made that the town would assume responsibility for winter plowing once a year-round residence had been established.

On November 29, 1984, a public hearing was held to hear comments on the acceptance of Private Drive and the upper portion of Lesure Road as town Highways. That evening following the hearing, Selectmen voted to accept these roads as Class 3 highways. The suggestion of a change in name to “Sparrow Drive” was also accepted at that time. Reference may be had to Volume 1 of the Selectmen’s Minutes for a record of the meetings held September 27th and November 29th concerning this matter.

The certificate of highway mileage, filed March 1986, states the length of the accepted road to be 0.75 miles. The map depicting the described subdivision indicates the road limits to be 50 feet in width.

Town Highway #32/Legal Trail

This designation is given to a section of old highway extending from Lesure Road to the present terminus of Schenk Road. This section of highway was formally discontinued in January 1932, at which time it was described as “the road from the Lesure Bro’s to the Schink place”. Reference may be had to Town Proceedings #2, Pages 288 & 289 for the record of discontinuance.

In 2007, this portion of discontinued highway was added to the Town Highway map as a “legal trail” (Selectmen’s Minutes Volume 3, Page 333). Reference may be had to the minutes of the May 24, 1979 Selectmen’s Meeting (Town Proceedings Book 4, Page Un-referenced) reclassifying that portion of Town Highway 15 said to be “untraveled road”.

Reference may be had to the survey of a portion of the original layout recorded August 27, 1796 (ETP, Page 81) as a three rod road.

Discontinued Roads

This portion of the study summarizes those roads or sections of roads within the town that have been discontinued according to the process required by law. It is arranged in chronological sequence and makes reference to the record of the original layout, survey, and/or any alteration that may be pertinent to the road discontinuance. Common road names have also been referenced where applicable.

March 31, 1785: A vote taken at a town meeting held on this date (ETP, Page 5), describes the discontinuance of a portion of the “West Road” (now Jepson Road) from the state line to a point near the house of Benjamin Raze (now or formerly Jane Sullivan) and a subsequent vote taken to lay out the road mentioned. It is uncertain as to what action this vote achieved, however, the survey of the road recorded October 6, 1788 (ETP, Page 18 & 19) provides a more accurate description of the entire road and supersedes any layout the earlier vote may have established.

March 12, 1810: The minutes of this town meeting (VR, Page 48 & 49) record the discontinuance of “the road that is laid out on the Clarksburg line to the Aldrich Hill so-called”. This road has been referred to as the “Clarksburg Road”. The original layout was recorded on June 12th 1794 (ETP, Page 60) and in July 1797 (ETP, Page 80) the road would be continued to “where Annanias Aldrich last lived (B5/P160). This discontinuance does not make any specific reference to the adjoining road running northerly through Lot 16 that was laid out in

March 1806 (VR, Page 16), and which is believed to have connected to the road leading from Benjamin Raze to Salah B. Benjamin.

March 9, 1812: Voters passed over an article in the warrant of this meeting for discontinuing the road that leads from Thomas Sanford's house (See B7/P286) to the highway that leads to Hartwells. Some question remains as to the road being referenced in this notice.

April 7, 1823: A vote taken on this date (VR, Page 130), records the discontinuance of the road leading to the so-called "Slocum house". Deed research indicates that this is the road looked at by the Selectmen running through the Cook farm and voted to be surveyed according to the minutes of their October 26, 1786 meeting (ETP, Page 13A). It is assumed that the discontinuance affected only that portion of the road lying westerly of the cemetery and retained that portion leading to the main road now known as Millard Road.

July 3, 1830: Discontinued the road leading to Isaac Hill's that was laid out June 6, 1825 (VR, Page 193) as an open highway. The survey recorded in conjunction with this discontinuance (Town & Vital Records, Page 195) establishes a pent road over the majority of the 1825 layout.

September 27, 1833: Discontinued a road between the main road and the road leading to the Raymond farm. See Town & Vital Records, Page 196 describing the layout of this road in November 14, 1831. The discontinuance is recorded in VR, Page 210.

February 19, 1835: Discontinued that part of Bellows Road, originally laid out by Josiah Tupper in June 1797 (ETP, Page 82), lying southerly of Samuel Gould's house (B7/P510; now Skorupski), that portion of the road laid out July 5, 1821 (VR, Page 191) running northerly from Sumner Road to the Stoddard house, and the road laid out August 25, 1829 (VR, Page 195) leading from the southeast corner of Lot 111 to the road to Readsboro. The discontinuance of the road leading to the Stoddard house is thought to also affect the status of the road laid out May 11th 1793 (ETP, Page 50) leading to Gideon Selden's (B3/P176). The last four courses of the 1821 survey appear to follow the beginning courses described in the 1793 survey.

Record of the discontinuance made on this date is found in Town & Vital Records, Page 223 & 224.

April 22, 1837: Town & Vital Records, Page 246 records the discontinuance of several roads on this date.

The first road discontinued on this date is the road laid out May 11, 1822 (VR, Page 191) beginning on the south line of Stamford and ending on County Road (excepting that part of the road running through 2nd Division Lot 14).

The second discontinuance was the road leading from the dwelling house of Austin Sumner to the County Road leading to Pownal. This road is described by the survey recorded in Town & Vital Records, Page 51 (2nd survey) following the March 12, 1810 vote to "have a road from Valentine Wheelers to intersect Pownal Road". An alteration and subsequent discontinuance of a portion of this road was recorded May 15, 1829 (VR, Page 194).

The final discontinuance was for that part of the old road leading through lands of Thomas Brook's.

June 15, 1840: This discontinuation refers to an alteration made on this date (VR, Page 27) to a portion of the road laid out March 4, 1837 (VR, Page 242). The alteration made at that time describes what is now a portion of Klondike Road and the beginning of Schenk Road.

April 19, 1844: Discontinued a portion of the road laid out June 12, 1843 (Record, Page 13) and described by the alteration recorded on this date in Record, Page 16. This layout led by Isaac Hills' in Lot 101 and ended on the main road leading by Lee's sawmill. It is believed to be a part of the road later referred to as leading to the Owen Morrissey farm and called the "Russell Road".

November 14, 1844: Discontinued a portion of the road altered this day leading by William G. Morey (part of Klondike). Said discontinuance is found in Record, Page 20.

July 6, 1859: The action filed on this date and found in Record, Page 135 discontinued a portion of the road between Read's and Webster's as a "county road" and established it as a pent road. This discontinuance applied to the road laid out March 1810 (VR, Page 48 & 49) extending the Hartwell Road northerly to meet the original "road to Readsboro" and alterations made February 1834 (VR, Page 213) and February 1835 (VR, Page 223). Portions of the "discontinued" or re-classified road have been re-established as an "open road" by subsequent conveyances from adjoining landowners to the Town of Stamford, now forming the northerly portion of Lincoln Road.

May 1, 1867: The first of four roads discontinued on this date (See Record, Page 195) refers to the road extending northerly from the end of Sumner Road described by the pent road surveys recorded May 6, 1843 (Record, Page 10) and May 1854 (Record, Page 103). This discontinuance is also believed to be applicable to any portion of the first public road laid out in 1777 (Book 1/Page 23) and the road leading to Woodford (See ETP, Page 13A & VSA Vol. 19/Page 86) that may have still been used as a public way at that time.

The second road discontinued on this date was the road leading from the main road to the Rueben Raymond farm located in Lot 117. See Town & Vital Records, Page 227 (May 19, 1835) for the layout and prior discontinuance of various portions of this road.

The third discontinuance was for that part of Basin Road lying easterly of a point opposite the Fitzgerald house (now Finney). The discontinued road can be traced to a number of surveys and alterations that describe various portions of the layout and may be referenced to Early Town Proceedings, Pages 75 (June 1796) & Loose Papers, Town & Vital Records, Page 90 (March 1815), and Record, Page 90 (June 1853).

The final discontinuance was for the upper portion of the road originally laid out in June 1843 (Record, Page 13) and altered April 1844 (Record, Page 16) and later referred to as the "Russell Road". See also the discontinuance of the Russell Road recorded January 1932 (TP#2, Page 288 & 289).

May 11, 1867: Discontinued the road from the main road (Risky Ranch) to Barney Colwell's. Reference may be had to the road layout described by the survey dated August 17, 1840 found in Town & Vital Records, Page 271. It is uncertain if this discontinuance has any bearing on the road laid out June 15, 1840 (VR, Page 270), running southerly through part of Lot 4 to the road described by the September 1825 survey (VR, Page 193 & 194).

December 27, 1870: Discontinued a portion of the old highway (Klondike Road) and a portion of Wiley Mountain Road altered by the surveys recorded on this date in Record, Page 216.

January 13, 1896: Discontinued the McElwain Lane laid out by the survey recorded May 28, 1832 (VR, Page 199). Reference to this discontinuance is found in TP#2, Page 68.

August 22, 1896: Discontinued a portion of the old road (now Forgette Road) altered by a new layout described in Town Proceedings #2, Page 67.

September 27, 1910: A petition to discontinue that portion of the so-called "Benjamin Road" road lying west of the John Collins house, located about 78 rods westerly of the main road leading from North Adams to Heartwellville, and extending to a point near the dwelling house of Almiron Benjamin, was filed on August 30, 1909 (Town Proceedings #2, Page 68). Reference may be had to the survey by Josiah Tupper recorded June 1797 (ETP, Page 82), the survey dated June 2, 1824 (VR, Page 192; 1st survey) and a September 18, 1855 survey (Record, Page 111) altering the course of the road south of Green Nichols sawmill (See B12/P641 & B12/P511).

January 28, 1932: Several roads were discontinued on this date following a petition presented by certain residents of the town in June 1931. Included in the discontinuance were all or part of the following roads:

Magee Road – From the Magee place to Adolph Dolle's place. See surveys of June 1810 (VR, Page 51), September 1825 (VR, Page 193 & 194; Section 2), and September 1847 (Record, Page 38).

Cole (Cowles) Hill Road – Beginning on the highway above George Sumner’s and extending to the Benjamin place. See surveys and alterations made October 1836 (VR, Page 238) and September 1840 (VR, Page 271). See also Record, Page 9.

County Road – From the Tiboni (Newkom) place to Earl Crosier’s place. The original layout of County Road was recorded March 5, 1794 (ETP, Page 56).

The road from the Lesure Brothers to the (Fred) Schink place. See road laid out September 4th, 1797 (ETP, Page 81*).

The Howe Mountain Road – From near the Ebert Blacksmith Shop to the Readsboro line. Reference may be had to the survey recorded October 30, 1847 (Record, Page 40).

The Russell Road – From the main road to the end of said road near the Owen Morrissey building site. See original survey of road made June 1843 (Record, Page 13) and alteration made April 1844 (Record, Page 16).

The Hoyt Sumner Road – From Fred Tatro’s old place to the Readsboro Town Line. See layout of original road to Readsboro surveyed September 18, 1786 (ETP, Page 9).

The record of the foregoing discontinuances are found in Town Proceedings #2, Page 288 & 289.

May 24, 1979: A portion of Section 4 of the 1963 Relocation Project relinquished to the Town of Stamford, recorded in September of that year in Book 28, Page 145. The discontinuance is specific to that portion of the old State Highway lying southerly of the access road leading to the Lloyd Shippee residence. Reference may be had to the minutes of a public hearing held April 12, 1979 and referenced to Town Proceedings Book 4, no page listing indicated.

Abandoned/Open Roads

The final portion of this study provides a summary of legally established roads located within the town boundaries, which have for various reasons been abandoned (and in many cases forgotten) and are considered to be discontinued public highways or rights-of-way. Because these roads do not appear on the General Highway Map of the town and no record of formal discontinuance has been found, these roads are by default, Class 4 town highways. Act 178 (the “Ancient Roads” law) requires all municipalities to add all Class 4 highways and legal trails to their General Highway Map and Certificate of Highway Mileage by 2015. Any of these roads that are not a legal trail or otherwise clearly observable by physical evidence of their use as a highway or trail and which is not added to the town highway map & certificate by February 2010, shall become an “unidentified corridor”. If the town does not reclassify an “unidentified corridor” by the 2015 deadline, the public right-of-way is automatically discontinued. From the research conducted during this study, the subject of “unidentified corridors” does not appear to be a major concern.

In the summaries provided below, the date of the layout and/or survey, in addition to any name given or implied, is used to identify the road being described.

Old East Road (1783; ETP, Page 9)

The minutes of a town meeting held in 1783 records the vote accepting and approving “a rode from Porters to Lanes (ETP, Page 1 & 2). The survey of this road is one of several made by Eli Persons in October 1788 and

is recorded on Page 19 of the Early Town Proceedings. A survey by Andrew Selden, in June 1796 (ETP, Page 75), also describes the road layout and includes courses along the roads now known as Basin Road and Forgette Road. An alteration in the road layout was made soon after the Selden survey, near the house of Comfort Eaton by Josiah Tupper (ETP, Page 76; November 1796).

Town meeting minutes and road descriptions recorded in Town & Vital Records at Pages 71 (July 20, 1813), 90 (March 3, 1815) & 118 (February 12, 1821) indicate that the road may have fallen into a state of disuse between the time of the original surveys and these later references.

The original 1788 layout and the March 1815 alteration call for a road width of two rods, while the portion altered in 1796 states a three rod right-of-way.

This road has also been referred to as the “Old Stage Road”.

Kellogg Road (1783)

The only reference to this road is found on Page 1 & 2 of the Early Town Proceedings, dated 1783.

Physical evidence of such a road can be found in the location referred to in the meeting minutes (Lot 4, 1st Division). This road extends westerly from the Main Road through the property of Raymon Febles.

September 17, 1799 (ETP, Page 102)

This road was laid out to run from the southwest corner of Lot 21, 1st Division, a distance of 488.4 feet, as a cross road from River Road to the east side of the Hartwell Road (See ETP, Page 87; 1798). The course of the road was to run along the division line of Lots 13 & 20 with half of the two rod width lying on each lot. The description provided places the location of the road as being northerly of the present entrance to Lincoln Road. Due to the various construction associated with the relocation of the State Highway (Route 8 & 100), no physical evidence of such a road is observable. As defined by Act 178, this road will be classified as an “unidentified corridor” on July 1, 2010. Unidentified corridors not reclassified as town highways (Class 1 – 4) or as a legal trail by July 1, 2015, will be discontinued by statute (19 V.S.A. s 302(6)(G)).

Aldrich Road (March 31, 1806; VR, Page 16)

The layout of this road originally connected with the “Clarksburg Road” running along the State Line to Aldrich Hill. Following the discontinuance of that road in March 1810 (VR, Page 48 & 49), the new road (now Boulger Road) from Benjamin Raze to Salah Benjamin (VR, Page 51; 1st survey) would have connected with this road at the southwest corner of Lot 19, according to the description provided with each respective layout.

Thomas Sanford Road (1812; VR, Page 60 & 61)

More research is needed to make a final determination as to the road being described in the document referenced. There is some speculation that Sanford may have lived in the Amos Camp house (now Mark Potvin) prior to the May 1817 purchase from Daniel Aldrich (B7/P73; 10 acres, Lot 28). If this assumption is correct, the road in question would be the “old Hartwell Road”.

April 27, 1812(VR, Page 65)

The limited information provided with the layout of this road makes location difficult and more research is needed.

Uriel Lanfair Road (September 13, 1825; VR, Page 193 & 194)

This road begins on the east line of 2nd Division Lot 4 and runs easterly through lands formerly of Uriel Lanfair (now Carl Dolle) to the old road leading to Salah B. Benjamin, laid out May 11, 1822 and described in Town & Vital Records, Page 191. The easterly portion of this road ran from the old Salah B. Benjamin Road to the southwest corner of 2nd Division Lot 19. A portion of this easterly section would have been included in the discontinuance of the Magee Road made in January 1932 (See TP#2, Page 288 # 289). The westerly portion of this road running through the lands of Lanfair was laid out as a two-rod pent road with the remaining portion being an open road.

Isaac Hill Road (July 30, 1830; VR, Page 195)

The road described by this layout is a re-survey of a majority of the road originally described by the survey of June 6, 1825. It appears that the new survey was made as part of a reclassification of the road from a two rod, open road to a pent road with a right-of-way width being one and a half rods.

This road runs northerly from the old road to Readsboro to Lot 101, westerly of the Pam Costine residence.

Jimmy Brown Hill Road (February 19, 1835; VR, Page 223)

This is a two rod, pent road beginning on the road leading to Solomon Livermore's (Benjamin Road) and ending on the south line of the farm belonging to James Brown.

Oliver Yaw Road (November 28, 1835; VR, Page 229)

This road led from the east line of Oliver Yaw (part of Lot 105; now Pam Costine) to the new road to Readsboro laid out May 28, 1832 (VR, Page 198 & 199). Reference may also be had to the Volney Lanfair Road described in Book 15, Page 522 of the Stamford Land Records, recorded June 3, 1880.

Phillips & White Sawmill Road (March 4, 1837; VR, Page 242)

The layout of this road was included as a part of the March 1837 survey describing what is now Klondike Road. It is thought to be a re-survey of a section of the Uriel Lanfair Road laid out in September 13, 1825 (VR, Page 193 & 194). The original layout called for a two rod right-of-way, while the survey of Klondike Road describes a road three rods in width.

June 15, 1840 (VR, Page 270)

This is a two rod road laid out from the southeast corner of 2nd Division Lot 4 to the middle of Lot 3. The layout connects it to the “Uriel Lanfair Road” and to a subsequent survey (August 17, 1840; VR, Page 271) leading from Risky Ranch Road to the middle of said Lot 3 (Colwell Road).

Rueben Clough Road (May 15, 1843; Record, Page 10)

This survey describes a two rod pent road, running southerly from the County Road leading to Pownal to the north line of the south half of 1st Division Lot 4, near the lands presently owned by Joseph & Carol Fachini.

B. Whitney Cook Road (September 13, 1845; Record, Page 28)

This survey describes a pent road lying off Boulger Road having a right-of-way width of two rods.

Barden Road (April 24, 1846; Record, Page 28)

The southerly half of this road follows and slightly alters the road laid out February 19, 1835 (VR, Page 223) leading to the “Jimmy Brown Hill” farm. The right-of-way width is two rods.

June 27, 1846 (Record, Page 29)

This survey describes a pent road leading from the road to Readsboro to east line of 2nd Division Lot 92 and a second road leading to Erastus Briggs. Both roads are laid out at a width of two rods. Due to the re-establishment of the Stamford/Readsboro Town Line in 1900, portions of this road now lie outside the town boundaries.

These roads are within or pass through the Alpenwald subdivision.

Wiley Mountain Road (October 14, 1847; Record, Page 38)

This pent road runs across the southeasterly corner of Stamford, from the west line of the Town of Readsboro to the north line of the State of Massachusetts. An alteration on the southerly portion of the road, adjoining the state line, was made in November 1870 (Record, Page 216). The majority of this road passes through lands of the US Forest Service (Tract 429), however, other owners maintaining use of this road include Ellen Zona, Birch camp, and Joseph Lora. The original layout calls for a two rod right-of-way, while the width described in the alteration is three rods.

Dickinson Road (October 25, 1848; Record, Page 49)

The road described in this layout runs in a southwesterly direction from the dwelling house of Caleb Dickinson. The location is uncertain at this time, however, the Dickinson house may be tied to the Maurice Fitzgerald homestead (now Finney) located off Basin Road. The road is described as being three rods in width.

Roaring Brook/Stamford Pond Road (December 6, 1873; Record, Page 240)

In May 1863, a petition was filed with the Selectmen of Stamford to establish a pent road from the bridge above C.T. Parker & Co. mill to the farm of Franklin Oaks. A survey of the southerly portion of the road was made November 1873 and is recorded in Book 15, Page 60 of the Land Records. The road right-of-way is 1½ rods.

This road has also been referred to as Coal Kiln Road.

Mansfield Road (December 4, 1884; Record, Page 301)

The layout described in this survey is for a two rod, pent road running between the so-called Benjamin Road and the Barden/Jimmy Brown Hill Roads.

Old Highway Alteration (October 23, 1888; TP#2, Page 8)

This survey runs from the west end of the bridge between the houses of S.S. Cole & F.L. Campbell (now Wes Pecor & David Tatro) to the old road (Lincoln Road). It was laid out prior to the discontinuance of the old McElwain Lane (See VR, Page 199 & TP#2, Page 68). The road width is recorded as three rods wide.

Conclusion

The primary focus in the months ahead will be to apprise residents of the town regarding the status of these “forgotten” roads and evaluate any benefits pertaining to the retention of public rights. Following this process, any road no longer serving the needs of the public, should be formally discontinued. Also of major concern will be addressing the issues relating to the “discontinued” portion of Old County Road and the upper end of Sumner Road.

Work will continue in the months ahead to add any new information uncovered by new discoveries, make any necessary revisions, and solve the mystery surrounding the few remaining pieces of the puzzle.

While some of the findings presented in this report are sure to spark debate, it is hoped that the information compiled during this study will fulfill the intent of the legislation aimed at avoiding future controversy regarding the legal status of the town highways. It is also hoped that the study will serve as a reference for attorneys, title insurance companies, surveyors, etc. and that updates will be made periodically to keep records current.