

Public Hearing
For the Closing of a portion of the
Blanchard Road to Winter Maintenance from 33 Blanchard Road to
Blanchard/Shirley Town line for a period of 10 years from November 1st to
May 30th in winter under 23 MRSA §2953

June 8, 2023

Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm

Norman Beckwith read the portion in question. The closing of the Blanchard Rd from 33 Blanchard Road to the Shirley/Blanchard town line to winter maintenance.

Derek Stimpson feels the Blanchard Rd should be open to winter maintenance. When there is a traffic accident on Route 15, they could use Blanchard Rd for an alternate route.

Norman explained to keep the whole road open to winter maintenance you would have to look at fixing Bunker Brook and that would cost at least a million dollars and then you must figure in how much the rest of the road would cost to be in drivable conditions in winter.

Another question that was brought up wasn't Colin down there cutting trees and plowing the road?

Norman explained that yes, the town allowed him or anyone until we were advised it was in the best interest of the Town not to allow that unless someone wanted to contract with the town, and they would need to have liability insurance.

There was a question asking if the town wanted to abandon the road. The answers were abandoning the road is not an option, if we abandon the road the town would have to pay each abutting owner for us not to maintain the road.

Daniel Varieur said "there was a law in 2018 that you may not close or abandon the road without the landowners gaining an easement. The easement can be given to the landowners, and you don't have to do anything with the road again".

Norman responded with "you will have to find someone to buy the road".

Daniel responded with "state law states the municipality of the town is responsible for each landowner has easement the entire way through".

Norman responded back, "You have to sell the road first and each landowner is going to have to buy a piece of that road and then each owner is going to have to maintain it".

Gene Turner wanted to know why David's side of the road is maintained and taken care of and the other resident's side is not the same as his.

David explained to Gene that when he moved onto his part of Blanchard Rd it was just as the other resident's road is now. It took the town 10 years for the road to be where it is today.

The other question from the residents is why the residents aren't told about the road being closed for winter maintenance when they purchase the property.

The selectmen all agreed that it is up to the resident who is buying the property to speak with the realtor if the road is maintained in the winter.

Jeff Mace asked why the road was opened for winter maintenance last year.

Norman responded with the road was closed for winter maintenance from the slate road to the Blanchard town line. 4 residents hired Ed Gagnon to plow the road with a contract with liability insurance which cost him \$2,500.00.

Crystal Stimpson wanted to know how this meeting came about and who requested it.

Norman responded with we requested this because of insurance purposes. To close the road, we must go by a guideline to have a public hearing. Then the town can vote at the annual town meeting to open or close the road to winter maintenance.

David made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:00pm. Norman seconded. Motion carried 3-0.

Submitted by,
Carolyn Nye