An Overview of the NHDOT Driveway Permit Process

Presented for:

Spring Planning and Zoning Conference

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Why do I need a Driveway Permit?


• Jurisdiction RSA 236:13
• Driveway Manual Delegation of Authority
Highway Maintenance Districts

1. Brian Schutt
   641 Main St
   Lancaster, NH 03584
   Tel: 788-4641

2. Alan G. Hanscom
   Exit 16, I-89 Enfield
   Eastman Hill Rd
   Enfield NH 03748
   Tel: 448-2654

3. Mark Morrell
   2 Snow Rd
   Gilford, NH 03246
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4. Douglas Graham
   19 Base Hill Rd
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5. David Rodrigue
   16 East Point Dr
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   Tel: 666-3336

6. Douglas DePorter
   271 Main St
   PO Box 740
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   Communications Section
   F.E. Everett Turnpike
   I-93, Exit 11
   PO Box 16476
   Hooksett, NH 03106-6476
   Tel: 485-3806
Key Components to Every Drive Permit

- Lot of Record on July 1, 1971
- 400 feet all season safe sight distance
- Amount of Frontage
Minor versus Major Drive

Threshold is typically 100 trips in the peak hour.
Minor Drive

• Application

http://www.nh.gov/dot/business/municipalities.htm

• Process and Time Frame to Permit

• Permit Issuance Good for 1 Year
Major Drive

- Application (same as Minor Drive)
- Typical Time Frame to Permit (1 to 3 years)
- Scoping Meeting
- Traffic Impact Study
- Preliminary Plans
- Final Plans
- Permit Issuance Good for 1 Year
Driveway Review Process

- District Review
  - Review LOS of affected highway
  - 100 trips in peak hour guideline

- Scoping Meeting

- Major Driveway
  - TIAS
  - Traffic Volumes
    - District
      - Accept
      - Conceptual Mitigation Plan
        - District
          - Accept
          - Drive Permit Issued
        - Applicant
          - Resubmission
  - Applicant
    - Resubmission

- Minor Driveway
  - Preliminary Design
    - District
      - Accept
      - Final Plans
        - District
          - Accept
          - Bureau of Traffic
            - PH1 Review
              - District
                - Accept
                - Final Plans
                  - District
                    - Accept
                    - Drive Permit Issued
                  - Applicant
                    - Resubmission

- At Discretion of District
  - Preliminary Design Review
  - Bureau of Traffic Review
  - Drive Permit Issued
Do I need a Traffic Study?

• At the discretion of the District.
• General threshold: More than 100 peak hour trips during adjacent street peak hour.
• Traffic study can be required below threshold volume.
• Formal need and all requirements are determined at Scoping Meeting
Scoping Meeting

Purpose is to gather input from stakeholders to reasonably assure that interests/issues related to the transportation network are identified.

- Stakeholders: NHDOT (District, Traffic, Highway Design), Municipality, and Planning Agencies
- Discussions limited to requirements of Traffic Study.
- Avoid topics dealt with at municipal land use boards.
Traffic Study Requirements

The Basics

• Driveway Manual – Section 6a-6n
• Traffic Data Collection
• Peak Month Seasonal Adjustment (exception?)
• Background Traffic Growth Rate
• Trip Generation
• Trip Distribution/Assignment
• Opening Year & Horizon Year (OY+10) Analysis
• What’s not there? Study Area
Study Area

- Based on input from stakeholders
- At a minimum includes site driveway(s)
- NHDOT generally interested in:
  - major intersections w/in 0.5 to 1(±) mi of site
  - intersections that are part of a coordinated signal system
  - other known/historical areas of interest
- Municipalities and Planning Agencies may have different interests.
Traffic Data Collection

• Intersection Turning Movement Counts
  - All Study Area Intersections
  - Data collected in 15 minute intervals
  - Count duration typically 2 hrs/peak
  - More data required if a new traffic signal is under consideration

• Automatic Traffic Recorder Counts
  - Done on State Highways
  - Typically 2 to 3 weekdays (Sat. if necessary)
Peak Month Adjustment

Should be based on:

• Closest permanent recorder station.
• Similar functional class.
• Use Group Averages only if no permanent counter is reasonably close.
• Adjustment to average month for signal warrants.
Traffic Growth Rate

Should be based on:

• Permanent recorder stations
• NHDOT calculates Regional Growth Factor trends.
• Coverage/Short-term counts (AADTs collected every 3 years) do not necessarily provide good reflection of trends.
Trip Generation - How Many?

- Local data.
- NHDOT encourages the use of local data, if applicable.
Trip Distribution - Where are they going?

- Existing Travel Patterns
- Cordon Method
- Journey to Work
- Gravity Model (modified)
- Others?
Opening Year & Horizon Year Volumes

Function of:

• Raw data.
• Seasonal Adjustment.
• Background traffic growth.
• Other Development.
• Trip Generation.
• Trip Distribution/Assignment.

Bottom line – Is it reasonable?
Engineering Review

• Adequacy of site access
• Need for off-site mitigation
Adequacy of Site Access

• Access management
  • Number and placement of driveways
  • Internal connections to adjacent lots

• Sight distance
  • Driveway policy: 400’
  • AASHTO: need to consider when speed is greater than 40 mph

• Traffic operations
Off-site Mitigation

- Is mitigation required?
- Is the proposed mitigation sufficient?
  - At a minimum: should preserve existing operations
Evaluation of Traffic Impacts

- Level of service
  - Intersection
  - Approaches / lane groups

- Queuing
  - Lane failures
  - Effect on adjacent intersections and driveways
Mitigation Measures

Roadway improvements to offset impact of new traffic

- Traffic control: signs, signals, roundabouts
- Road expansion to increase capacity
- Auxiliary lanes for left and right turns
- Contribution to future improvements
- Right of way dedication
Construction of the Permitted Work

- DOT Inspections
- Consultant Inspections
- Compliance with the Permit
- Time Extensions
- Bond Release
- Future Maintenance
Access Management MOUs

• Agreement between Municipality and DOT
• Good components of an MOU
  – Structures Communication
  – Can be more restrictive than Drive Manual
  – Best when based on a study or master plan
• Rochester Example
Q & A