



# 2013 CONCORD ANNUAL TOWN REPORT

# PUBLIC WORKS

## Public Works Commission

Cemetery Committee

CPW Administration

Engineering Division

Highway & Grounds

Recycling & Waste

Water & Sewer

## HIGHWAY, GROUNDS & CEMETERY DIVISION

Dickinson Fowler, Highway & Grounds Superintendent

The Concord Public Works, Highway and Grounds Division maintains approximately 107 miles of public streets along with the associated drainage systems consisting of almost 58 miles of drain lines, over 3,200 catch basins, 165 culverts, 1,250 drainage manholes and 400 outfalls. CPW Highway and Grounds Division maintains 59 miles of sidewalks, 2,793 signs, over 90 pieces of CPW vehicles and equipment, and manages the compost facility. It is responsible for 82 acres of public parks and grounds including 50 acres of active recreation areas that includes ten athletic fields. CPW Grounds Division maintains all public shade and park trees, under the direction of the Park and Tree Supervisor who is the Town Tree Warden.

### *Snow Removal Program*

After a relatively light winter in 2012 the winter of 2013 was busy relative to winter maintenance operations with a sustained volume of activity for Department personnel, including the ongoing use of salt and sand as well as brine to keep the roads and sidewalks safe and passable. There were nine winter storm events requiring full mobilization of forces involving Town staff with plowing contractors called in on five occasions. The entire winter maintenance season included 37 events requiring a response for snow and ice maintenance. The major snow event for the year occurred on February 8 and 9 when winter storm NEMO dropped over 27 inches of snow on Concord. This storm was officially designated as an emergency by FEMA which enabled the Town to recoup 75% or \$100,823.97 for initial emergency response expenses related to this storm.

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### *Roads and Sidewalk Maintenance*

Highway crews reclaimed several sections of roadway with full-depth patches of distressed pavement in preparation for certain 2013-14 road projects. Roads and areas that received this treatment included Rte. 117, Old Marlboro Rd., Cambridge Tpk., Walden St. parking lot and Sudbury Rd. Certain manhole and catch basin sites received infra-red treatment.

Along with the typical duties of road repair and maintenance, sign repair/ replacement, roadside brush cutting and street sweeping, CPW Highway and Grounds Division completed projects at the Walden St. parking lot with the installation of new exit speed bumps, and installation of parking curbs at Junction Park and the Fowler Library. Cooperation with other Town Departments to complete other smaller scale projects continued as time and resources allowed. This included the management of the “Town common land” maintenance personnel specifically budgeted to maintain various Town common lands.

### *Sleepy Hollow Granite Post and Chain Fence*

CPW Highway Division and the Cemetery Division completed the installation of a granite post and chain structure in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. This new fencing is located in two open areas along Bedford St. and has improved the visual presentation from the road as well as the Cemetery. Funding for the materials for this project came from Community Preservation funds as well as a \$5,000 contribution from the “Friends of Sleepy Hollow” with CPW Highway and Grounds Divisions providing all labor and equipment for this installation.

### *Drainage*

Catch basin repairs/replacements were completed at numerous locations including Ministerial Dr., Shag Bark Rd., Old Marlboro Rd., Sudbury Rd., Oak Hill Circle, Deacon Haynes Rd., Sorrel Rd., Monument St., MBTA parking lot, Conant St., Bartlett Hill, Thoreau St., Sleepy Hollow Cemetery plus many other locations. Catch basin cleaning was completed in West Concord utilizing catch basin equipment operated by Highway staff. Catch basin cleaning material was disposed of through a contracted competitive bid process compliant with all regulatory requirements. Flooding concerns continued at numerous locations with severe water back-up occurring on Cambridge Tpk. that required continuous monitoring as well as beaver dam removal to control water levels.

### *Parks and Playgrounds*

The Park & Tree crews maintain almost 50 acres of athletic fields for use by the baseball, softball, soccer, lacrosse and other programs. These include Emerson, Rideout, Ripley, and Concord Carlisle Regional High School (CCRHS) artificial fields. Cushing and Sanborn playgrounds continue to be heavily used from spring through the fall and receive the most attention with regard to mowing, raking, line painting, aerating, cleaning and clearing, slice&seeding and fertilizing, etc. Sprinkler systems located at all locations received regular maintenance. As resources and competing priorities allowed, CPW Highway and Grounds Division provided support with maintenance of various conservation areas, as well as the community gardens, the Visitor's Center, Junction Park, the hanging plant program in West Concord, numerous gateway traffic islands and areas of public access in the business districts. Park and Tree staff participated in numerous projects including regular maintenance, infield repair and drainage maintenance at the first class baseball field at Ripley Field, "lip" repair on the 90' baseball diamond at Emerson, and fence installation at South Meadow recreation field. The preparation of the winter ice rinks at Emerson and Rideout Playground were attempted in January and February but due to intermittent warm weather were not able to be sustained. Weather during December did not allow any ice rinks to be started. Construction of rinks will continue to be attempted during January 2014 as conditions allow.

### *Trees*

Concord Public Works planted a total of 90+ public shade and park trees. All shade trees were planted in accordance with the Department's policy of "the right tree in the right place", and included many trees planted on private property as public shade trees, in accordance with the shade tree setback planting policy. Along with the new plantings, the Park & Tree crews pruned 35+ trees and took down another 100+ trees that had been damaged or were in hazardous condition jeopardizing public safety and Town infrastructure. Trees continued to be pruned, removed and maintained at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery with three tree take downs required during this period for safety considerations. Park and Tree staff also assisted the Town Building Supervisor with land clearing at McGrath's farm on Barrett's Mill Rd. following the purchase of this property by the Town.

The “public shade tree protection policy” continues to be shared with the public, contractors and Town Departments. CPW Park and Tree Division continues to strive towards the goal of replacing at least one public shade tree for every one that is removed or dies. This is becoming increasingly more challenging with escalating costs of nursery stock and the need for more “set back” tree locations.

### *Cemetery*

In addition to routine maintenance, CPW Cemetery Division staff worked on numerous projects and provided contractor oversight on other projects. This included the installation of new handrails on Author’s Ridge, monument repair in Old Hill, removal and placement of unused headstones from long term storage, roadway patching, and catch basin installation. This was the second year that CPW Cemetery Division contracted outside services for cemetery mowing and fall/spring maintenance in Sleepy Hollow. This contracting option has proven to be extremely successful allowing CPW Cemetery Division to reduce costs and gain efficiencies while focusing staff on other higher value maintenance and operational responsibilities. One important project that staff was available to begin was the cemetery-wide trimming and removal of bushes and trees that had not been reviewed or completed for more than ten years. This activity will substantially improve the aesthetics of the Cemetery property and will continue through 2014.

The Melvin Memorial continued to be monitored daily with maintenance activities performed including annual review and treatment of the slate tablets and rifle inserts. Long term conservation efforts are being planned with specifications for this work being prepared for spring 2014 advertising with conservation work completed by late 2014 or spring of 2015.

In the eleventh year of a multi-phase monument restoration program in the older cemeteries, preservation consultants continued the sixth year of assessment and physical conservation efforts at Old Hill Cemetery in Concord Center restoring a pre-set number of headstones and gravesites as well as assisting Cemetery staff with the relocation of previously stored unplaced headstones.