

Report of the Highway Department

Thank you! Thank you for all the support you all give to me all year long. It is much appreciated. Keeping your roads safe to travel is our number one goal, supporting our Town Budget and Warrant Articles makes this possible. Thanks.

Team effort is key. I have myself and one other full-time employee, plus one part time employee 2-3 days per week. Everything else is dependent on sub-contractors all the way from winter maintenance to hazardous tree work to building roads and overlay of roads. Everyday maintenance, pot holes, tree clean-up, and brush fallen limbs, spring clean-up, roadside mowing, sign maintenance, etc is done by the three Town employees. We have the necessary equipment to do this maintenance, but not for the larger projects, like rebuilding roads and paving projects. We help and work with our many subcontractors, but it works great.

The Town owns two trucks, one backhoe, four sanders for winter maintenance; and five snow plows. That is enough to have and maintain. All other trucks and equipment are privately contracted. The Town is better off this way, it would be much more costly otherwise.

2022 was an awesome year for Fremont roads. We got so much accomplished. The year started out with less snow than normal, saved on plowing roads but lots of ice storms cause us to use more salt and sand than planned, but saved on truck time for snow plowing. The budget was okay come April and still included some surplus winter maintenance funds.

Spring brought many hazardous trees which needed to be taken down for safety purposes. You will see in the Highway budget for 2022 that we overspent that line. 2023 has been adjusted for that reason. We were fortunate that Eversource had contractors working on several town roads, and their work relieved the Town of some liability for dead and dangerous tree removal.



Summer was good for us, we did a lot of drainage work, tree work, pruning, shoulder work and paving projects. This included finish overlay paving on Hooke Road, Ann Lane, and all the roads within Mast Tree Estates (Deer Run, Kirsten's Landing and Kelsey Drive). This was follow-up from 2021 major reconstruction work. We reclaimed these poor roads built in the 1980's and 1990's. Other road projects

were Clough Crossing, which is a portion of the old South Road not repaved since the 1970's when the road was built. It needed to be done, as it was becoming impossible to plow without breaking snow plows.

Photo of Mast Tree Estates overlay paving in May 2022 – Courtesy of Leon Holmes Jr

We also did repairs to Sandown Road at the Sandown Town Line. This road from #343 Sandown Road was redone in 2014 with binder course only. Plans in 2023 are to repave from #343 Sandown Road to the Sandown Town Line. This is a very busy road and needs to be fixed.

We also were able to reclaim and pave with binder course 5,900 feet of Whittier Drive. This is Phase II of this road that we started in 2017. Plans are to finish with a 1 ½ inch overlay in 2023.

Total paving for 2022 was 2.6 miles, funded within the operating budget. The goal for every year is two miles. We have 43 miles of road in Fremont and growing every year. We strive to make your roads better.

As you will see in the final 2022 budget, I did go over in the paving line. This is due to the increased oil prices which increase the cost of pavement. We also ran into unanticipated drainage areas that needed to be fixed on Whittier Drive. We had to improve the drainage for longer road life, hopefully the next 15-20 years. This photo shows us and our contractors installing underdrain on Whittier Drive.



A very special thank you to our staff and contractors who work so hard all year. We were saddened by the loss of a long-time winter contractor Jeremy Lennon in 2022. Thank you to the Select Board, Town Office Staff and our counterparts in safety at the Fremont Police, Fire Rescue and Emergency Management Departments. We thank retired Sgt Larochelle for his help over many years as well.

Thank you to consulting engineer Dan Tatem of Stantec for his help on paving and drainage projects. We appreciate working with all of you!

As always I thank you for your support of the Department and our annual operating budget and Capital Reserve Funds to better plan for Fremont's future.

In closing I would like to note my appreciation for all the help with paperwork, and her wealth of knowledge for so many years to me and the Town of Fremont, Heidi Carlson, our Town Administrator. Thanks so much Heidi for your every day assistance!

Respectfully submitted,

Leon F Holmes Jr
Road Agent

Of Special Note for 2022



men (and boys) using shovels. Leon has seen many changes to technology and the population and road network in Fremont during those years!

He was the Road Agent from 1976 to 1980. Leon has seen a lot in his many years in various positions in town. He is quick to acknowledge the changes in Fremont during this time.

Over these years, he has also been a Selectman and served time as a representative to the Planning Board and Budget Committee; been on the Conservation Commission, and on various study and building committees, including the one which resulted in the construction of the Fremont Public Library.

Late in 2022 Leon Holmes Sr retired from his role as a winter maintenance contractor for the Town.

*This is significant as he has been in this role some form or another for the **past 65 years**.*

He began in 1957 at the age of 18. Back then sanding of Town roads was done by hand out of the back of a dump body with



This photo was taken at the March 2002 Annual Town Meeting where Leon was presented with the 2001 Town Report Appreciation Award.

Thank you again Leon for your dedication to the roads of Fremont, as well as your many other roles and responsibilities to the community over the years!

We wish you a happy and healthy retirement!



Leon Holmes Sr during the 2011-2012 winter with the then (new) 2012 Ford F550 one ton plow truck. Leon drove this truck for the Town as needed.

He was also a long-time member of the Fremont Fire Department and was presented with a 55 year lifetime award in 2013.

Photo below shows the ribbon cutting at the Sandown Road Bridge over the Exeter River (at Main Street) when it reopened after many long months of closure during reconstruction.

Leon's log truck was the first vehicle to drive over the new bridge.

The bridge reopened on November 7, 1998.



Photo courtesy of Elizabeth Stanley as printed in the 1998 Town Report.

Photos of Leon through the years in Fremont courtesy of the Holmes Family and archive at the Select Board's Office and the Fremont Highway Department.