

Below are additional notes from my 10/7/08 visit to Old Albany Post Road.

- So long as the corridor surrounding Philipstown's unpaved roads remains less densely developed, the town should use every opportunity to use alternative road maintenance practices such as ESMPs to promote the infiltration of stormwater, rather than pattern drainage after urban stormwater systems the exaggerate flood flows and reduce groundwater recharge.
- In a discussion with Roger Chirico he mentioned that the town enacted a policy or law that requires a landowner to pay for alternative drainage structures if he/she wants the town to close off an existing ditch outlet. It seems that this would be incentive to create as many ditch outlets as is practical before further development brings more off right-of-way water and limits outlet opportunities.
- Different organizations and publications use various determinants such as traffic count and road grade as benchmarks to determine when paving is recommended or justified on an unpaved road. These are guidelines, and since the effectiveness of drainage, as well as many other factors, affects the stability of a road, they are not hard and fast rules. Steep grades can exist on unpaved surfaces, so long as effective drainage can be achieved. Unless a situation exists such as that found on the southernmost unpaved portion of Old Albany Post Road there are generally cost effective maintenance options that do not require paving.
- Discussions with Roger and Frank of the Philipstown road crew, as well as local residents, reveal that since the flood event a great deal of maintenance time and material is being spent on the upkeep of the 450' stretch near Continental Village. It is likely that this stretch is adding significantly to the average annual road maintenance costs per mile for Old Albany Post Road.
- The stabilization of the road surface and the installation of catch basins along the southernmost .1 mile of the road will markedly cut back the loss of surface material and will reduce storm related turbidity in the waterways below, but will do nothing to address flood flow volume.
- Armoring a road by stabilizing the surface and hardening the ditches is a common response to a large flood event. However, this approach only addresses the symptoms of the problem rather than the cause. While it is important to use these practices to protect the road from further damage when good alternatives do not exist, it is also important to reduce or eliminate the cause of the problem (i.e. – overdevelopment of a watershed, uncontrolled sources of off right-of-way water, too few ditch outlets, etc.).
- The Town of Philipstown has a page on the town website under the Stormwater tab labeled "After the Storm" that suggests ideas on how residents can reduce stormwater run-off and encourage infiltration by using permeable pavement, grassy swales and vegetated filter strips. The practices follow much of the same line of thinking that ESMPs do in dealing with road drainage. The adoption and implementation of ESMPs on Old Albany Post Road would set a great example to the residents of Philipstown that the town is truly interested in practicing what it preaches. A public outreach campaign in the town newsletter and website could help to get this message across, create public buy-in, and increase public awareness to stormwater issues.

