

LAGOON POND DRAWBRIDGE COMMITTEE

c/o Martha's Vineyard Commission

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Minutes of the Meeting held on September 20, 2006

At the Offices of the Martha's Vineyard Commission

Members Present: Melinda Loberg (Chairman), Tristan Israel (Vice Chair), Steve Berlucchi, Dave Grunden, and Mark London

Observers: Harriet Barrow, Chris Fried, Lois E.J. Craine, Bob Ford, Jo-Ann Taylor, Max Hart and Jim Miller

1. Meeting Minutes

- The minutes of the meeting of June 7 were approved as presented, with abstention by Melinda Loberg.
- The minutes of the meeting of August 30 were approved as amended.

2. Permanent Bridge

- Tristan reported that Ralph Packer had appeared prior to the commencement of the meeting and had expressed a preference for a double bascule design, stating issues with the single bascule bridge and illustrating his points on the drawing board: the double bascule produces more clearance for boats; approaching cars could hit the single bascule on edge as it goes up or down, potentially plunging into the channel, which couldn't happen with the double bascule; the height will be taller for the single bascule when open; with a double bascule a boat might be able to squeeze through if one side breaks down. Also, the counterweights could be smaller, but there would need to be two motors.
- He reported that Ralph had also noted that the vibrating hammers used today are much quieter than past methods, and questioned whether or not the channel was designated a federal channel. The Committee agreed to check on the status of the channel, and Jo-Ann produced documentation that the channel was adopted by the Chief of Engineers, on December 11, 1968, 8 feet deep and 100 feet wide, under authority of Section 107 of the 1960 Rivers and Harbors Act, making it a Federal channel.

3. Temporary Bridge

- The Tisbury and Oak Bluffs Boards of Selectmen had previously agreed to "double shifts", with the understanding that construction would begin this fall and would not impact the summer season. The new estimate is that construction will start after the

middle of April. Mark provided a review of the options to expedite construction and reported from a phone conversation with Steve McLaughlin, MassHighway, and suggested that the Committee may want to ask the Boards to favor or encourage expedited construction until the end of June, but to scale that back between July 4 and Labor Day, and to communicate their requests to John Blundo, MassHighway. There was discussion of the impacts of noise on the abutters, and the need to weigh those impacts with the need to quickly get the temporary bridge operational. The Committee voted to authorize the Chairman to send letters to both boards asking them to write to MassHighway concurring with allowing extended shifts (including double shifts) throughout the project, but from July 4 – Labor Day no hammer-driven pile driving other than between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M., and also strongly recommending the completion of pile-driving activities by the end of June and to avoid working after sunset in the summer.

4. Existing Bridge

- Steve reported that the Joint Transportation Committee has responded to the Drawbridge Committee's request to develop a proposal for truck routes, and for a plan to alert truckers prior to arrival at the bridge. He said that JTC recommended the route to be used "if needed", and that JTC advised both towns by letter.
- There was some discussion of whether or not the route could be exclusionary. There is a procedure for the towns to submit requests for a "commercial vehicle exclusion", with traffic studies, but it was noted that this is intended to keep trucks out of neighborhoods, and it was agreed that it would be highly unlikely that such a designation could be made for a state highway such as Beach Road.
- Tristan noted that it would be important for MassHighway to notify the SSA of bridge closures, so that they could alert truckers. This would be done in addition to MassHighway's detour signs.
- The Committee voted to authorize Melinda to send letters to both Boards of Selectmen asking them to concur with the truck route, to be used if needed, and to convey their concurrence to Bernard McCourt, District Highway Director, and to ask for MassHighway's concurrence to include the portion that is state highway; and to ask MassHighway to be sure to notify the SSA in the event of closure of the bridge to truck traffic.

5. Upcoming meeting

- The next meeting of the Drawbridge Committee will be on Wednesday, November 1, 9:00 A.M.

Minutes prepared by Jo-Ann Taylor