

Martha's Vineyard Island Roads Committee

Minutes of Meeting 5

Date: July 17, 2014, 5:00 p.m.

Location: MVC Offices, 33 New York Avenue, Oak Bluffs

Present:

Committee Madeline Fisher (Co-Chair, MVC), Linda Sibley (Co-Chair, MVC), Stuart Fuller (Edgartown), Jay Grande (Tisbury), Dan Greenbaum (Chilmark), Fred Hancock (MVC), Richard Knabel (West Tisbury), Joan Malkin (MVC), Kathy Newman (MVC), Brian Smith (MVC), Craig Whitaker (Tisbury)

MVC Staff: Priscilla Leclerc, Mark London, Bill Veno

The meeting was chaired by Madeline Fisher who opened the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

1. Minutes

The minutes of the June 19, 2014 meeting were adopted.

2. Meeting with State Representatives

The Co-Chairmen will meet soon to arrange this.

3. Tashmoo Overlook

The Town of Tisbury has initiated an effort to revise the design of the Tashmoo Overlook. It had been widened and shifted to incorporate a planned bike path that didn't go ahead so now there is an unnecessarily large expanse of paving. The objectives include shifting the road back, providing a vegetated buffer between the road and the parking area, and replacing the steel barrier with a wood one. The Town hired the BETA group to submit documents to MassDOT. There will be a meeting and site visit with MassDOT on July 29.

4. Beach Road Update

A public meeting was held on May 21 at which MassDOT and consultant John Diaz of Greenman-Pederson presented options for the redesign of the road between Wind's Up and Five Corners. It is programmed in the Transportation Improvement Program for work starting in the 2017 Federal Fiscal Year and was initiated as the priority step to extend the Shared Use Path along Beach Road. Two options were shown: one which had sidewalks as well as 5' shoulders to accommodate bikes on both sides for the entire length; the other had the same profile between the Tisbury Market Place and Five Corners, but included a Shared Use Path on the pond side between Wind's Up and the Tisbury Market Place and no sidewalk on the harbor side. Both options required widening the current road layout from 40' to 43', adding 18" on each side.

The graphics were not clear so it was not easy to see the impacts on abutters. One abutter proposed widening the road layout by 10' (5' on each side) to further improve pedestrian accommodation and landscaping. Another abutter felt that going from 40' to 43' was acceptable, but any additional widening was not. It is up to the Town to make the decision in collaboration

with MassDOT although, since this is a state road, MassDOT could theoretically override. Jay Grande is the primary contact for the Town.

5. Update on Oak Bluffs Planning Board Meeting

Fred Hancock and Mark London met the Oak Bluffs Planning Board (unofficial, without a quorum), which completes the meetings with the Island's planning boards. The Oak Bluffs members agreed with the general initiative, said that safety was the highest priority, and one said that bicycle accommodation was most important, even if it impacted scenic values.

The compilation of comments from all planning boards was distributed and shows that the most mentioned concerns were: 1) Roadside fences, stone walls, curb cuts, etc. on private property; 2) Safe bicycle and pedestrian accommodation; 3) Tree-trimming, vegetation management (NSTAR, MassDOT, towns). The design of the roadway itself ranked fourth.

6. Draft Work Program Discussion

Craig presented an outline of a 12-week work program for preparing a design manual which was then discussed.

- Some committee members questioned whether it was realistic to expect to get responses from town boards within the few days specified allowed in the work program, to expect MassDOT to agree to change its policy in such a short time span. Craig clarified that his work program did not include the time for the political process on Island and with Boston.
- This timetable assumes that the committee and others would devote all their time to this, which is not realistic.
- It is unclear how this effort would be funded. We should ask the firms we are interviewing for their suggestions.
- It was suggested that we need support from town boards of selectmen, planning boards, the elected Tisbury DPW board, and broad community support before negotiating with MassDOT.
- There might have to be special legislation to allow our manual to override MassDOT standards.
- Some felt the manual should include specifics or while others felt it should state general principles and "not get lost in the details".
- There should be different standards for different types of road such as by traffic volume or Up-Island versus Down-Island.

Committee members signed up for the work groups that they were interested in. These work groups could start to meet on their own.

6. Inventory

Priscilla distributed the initial results of 73 data points of the road inventory. It would also be useful to get information about truck use on various Island roads.

7. Expressions of Interest

The technical review group met before this meeting and will meet again in early August, tentatively the morning of August 4, to review the proposals. There was a brief discussion of criteria. Committee members should send Mark any comments or questions they felt should be asked.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 4, 2014 at 5:00 p.m.