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Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held on June 28, 2018 In the Katharine Cornell Theater 51 Spring Street, Vineyard Haven, MA

IN ATTENDANCE

Commissioners: (P= Present; A= Appointed; E= Elected)

P Gail Barmakian (A-Oak Bluffs)	- Michael Kim (A-Governor; non-voting)
P Trip Barnes (E-Tisbury)	P Joan Malkin (A-Chilmark)
P Leon Brathwaite (A-County)	- Katherine Newman (A-Aquinnah)
P Christina Brown (E-Edgartown)	P Ben Robinson (A-Tisbury)
- Peter Connell (A-Governor; non-voting)	- Doug Sederholm (E-West Tisbury)
P Robert Doyle (E-Chilmark)	P Linda Sibley (E-West Tisbury)
P Josh Goldstein (E-Tisbury)	P Ernie Thomas (A-West Tisbury)
P Fred Hancock (E-Oak Bluffs)	P Richard Toole (E-Oak Bluffs)
P James Joyce (A-Edgartown)	P James Vercruysse (E-Aquinnah)

Staff: Adam Turner (Executive Director), Bill Veno (Senior Planner), Paul Foley (DRI Planner), Sheri Caseau (Water Resources Planner), Christine Flynn (Economic Development and Affordable Housing Planner), Mike Mauro (Senior Transportation Planner), Dan Doyle (Regional Planner).

Chairman James Vercruysse called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Once a month the Commission schedules a meeting to review Island-wide planning issues. Tonight is about transportation and there will be a presentation on the Beach Road improvements and Shared Use Path in Vineyard Haven. This project was not referred to the MVC as a DRI, so the Commission has no regulatory effects over it. MVC staff will give an overview presentation, the Department of Transportation will present, and representatives from Town Boards can offer comments, comments from the general public will be heard as well. Comments from speakers shall be limited to five minutes. The goal of the meeting is to understand the specifics of the project and when it will be completed.

1. BEACH ROAD SHARED USE PATH PRESENTATION - TISBURY

Commissioners Present: G. Barmakian, T. Barnes, L. Brathwaite, C. Brown, R. Doyle, J. Goldstein, F. Hancock, J. Joyce, J. Malkin, B. Robinson, L. Sibley, E. Thomas, R. Toole, J. Vercruysse.

1.1 Staff Report

Bill Veno presented the following:

- The Town has looked at installing underground utilities on Beach Road since the early 1990s.
- A cyclist group examined shifting the road around the Shipyard in 1993 to allow for a bike path.
- The first bike paths on the Island were built in 1975 in the State Forest, and there are now approximately 37 miles of paths.
- The Joint Transportation Committee (JTC) is the regional transportation groups on the Island which determines how the State and Federal transportation monies that comes to the Island to improve roadways and transportation issues are spent.
- The Island Plan identified the gaps in the shared use paths as a major issue.

- Photos were reviewed of the sidewalks on Beach Road with the utility poles and narrow walkways.
- We are looking to plug gaps in the down Island area for shared use paths. Maps were reviewed showing those gaps.
- A study was completed in 2009 looking to connect the potential shared use path from Oak Bluffs over the drawbridge to Vineyard Haven, as close to downtown as possible.
- A map from 2012 was reviewed indicating locations for improvements from the study.
- In 2010 and 2012, the Tisbury Town Meeting considered articles: one was to authorize the Board of Selectmen to obtain easements, and that effort is ongoing.
- In 2012, a meeting was held in Tisbury to hear public opinions, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee said a path along Beach Road was the most important improvement.
- The JTC agreed and authorized the section from Marketplace to Winds Up, but decided to look at other sections with an expanded project. It was submitted to Mass DOT and they agreed it was a worthy project.

1.2 Mass DOT Presentation

Tom Currier presented the following:

- Mass DOT started coming over to the Island in 2013 to hold meetings to find out what the constituency would want on Beach Road.
- Greenman-Pedersen, Inc. (GPI), the design contractor for Mass DOT, put together a 25% design, and there was a change of heart and an internal debate on the Island. The final design was decided on, and it was to be a symmetrical design. The shared use path would be on the Lagoon side and a sidewalk on the harbor side. A cross section of the design was reviewed.
- We tried to close down some of the expansive curb cuts.
- The design includes a 4.5 ft bike lane, 10.5 ft travel lane and a 6.5 ft sidewalk.
- We have been working through the issues and one is the drainage. We will work on that but it won't fix all the drainage. The sea level is rising and the water table is so close to the underside of the pavement. But the drainage will be better. There is no place for drainage but this design however, will be a huge improvement.
- The curve at the gas station will be designed for 25 mph.
- We have added a crosswalk at the Net Result and the Packer Wharf as a result of community request.
- We looked at planting trees in the grass strip but everyone has said they will die. We have asked the abutters if they would like to plant at the backside of the properties where they have a better chance of surviving.
- The utility poles will disappear and there will be underground utilities from the warehouses back to Five Corners.
- It is a safer design. It still will flood but it will have proper sidewalks, an improved road and a better bike path so the bikes are off the road.
- It is a \$5.5 million project. Advertising for the construction will start in May 2019 with the project starting in Fall 2019 and an approximate completion date of Fall 2020.
- Some say the best compromise is one where everybody is not happy. We are trying to make the best improvements we can with what we have to work with. We have tried to come up with alternate solutions.

Bill Veno asked Tom Currier to address the Right of Way process.

Tom Currier presented the following regarding Right of Ways.

- It is a State process. Designers are working with us to develop right of way plans.

- That will trigger acquisition. We will work with the owners face to face at least five times. It is a negotiation process.
- All right of ways have to be in place before we can advertise for the construction process.
- There is a construction easement versus a utility easement.
- Fee Taking is where we are buying the physical property. A utility easement is seeking a permanent right to access that area. Aerial easements (such as at the gas station) are to provide the right for utility companies to service their overhead utilities. Construction easements are to facilitate the work and the agreement has a time line and expires usually within five years. Drainage easements are sometimes used at sidewalks but for this project they will probably have to be fee taking easements.

1.3 Presentation of the Plans

Bill Veno presented the following:

- The plans were shown and reviewed.
- At Five Corners it is currently 30 feet wide and the proposed plan is the same but the travel lanes have 10 to 10.5 feet each rather than 11 feet.
- At the Net Result there is a wide crossing for cyclists and it enables cyclists to reach Five Corners.
- The shared use path is 8 feet wide and once past the Tisbury Wharf property it is then 10 feet wide up to the Town.
- There is some green space; 3-4 feet between the road and the shared use path.
- The Net Result crosswalk plan was reviewed.
- There will be coir bags to help build up the dune bank and plugs to build up the beach grass on the harbor side.
- The Town asked for a lot of vegetation for the area as it is presented as a gateway.
- Street lights will mimic those that are at the drawbridge.
- The plan was shown and reviewed to indicate the current right of way as compared to the planned right of way at the Shell Station.
- The barrier between the shared use path and the roadway is mostly grass except at the shipyard. That will be hard surface and it won't be depressed.
- An image of the area was shown current versus the design from the shipyard to the Tisbury Marketplace. The utility wires are shifted to the lagoon side and not on the harbor side as they currently are. The lampposts at the shipyard are out of the travel area.
- Tree plan changes were reviewed existing versus the proposed. Currently there are 20 trees and 28 additional will be planted. Seven trees are proposed to be removed. The species to be planted is Locust and the three Pitch Pine trees will remain by the Winds Up area.
- The utility change plans were reviewed. The utility poles will be relocated. The new pole placement and location was shown and the location of the lamp posts was reviewed. The existing poles are to be removed.
- There is a lot of foot traffic in this area especially with the ferries. We need to enable them to get around safely and for the economy with downtown access as well as getting to work.

Adam Turner said there are approximately 760,000 passengers from the ferries. One of the benefits of this type of project is that it will take people down the paths to the businesses. Currently there is no path so one of the goals is economic development. This will allow people to come off the boat and safely access the businesses. This has been a long process and he thanked Mass DOT for coming to present.

1.4 Commissioners' Questions

Gail Barmakian asked if the driving lanes are the same width as they are now and will the trucks fit. **Tom Currier** said they are narrower.

Trip Barnes said trucks are 96" wide and the new ones are 108" wide so that only allows 6" on each side. **Tom Currier** said it is tight.

Gail Barmakian asked if the construction schedule will be in the documents so disruption will be minimized. **Tom Currier** said we will maintain two way traffic at all times. There may be a time, less than two days, with alternating traffic but not during heavy traffic times. There is a summer moratorium and we will work with the community and the businesses.

Gail Barmakian asked if there will be any minor modifications to affect flooding and sea level rise. **Tom Currier** said Five Corners is the lowest point in the whole area. Other than picking it up there is not much that can be done. It is a very difficult area and we don't have a solution for that in this project.

There was a discussion about signage for and striping the shared use path.

- **Fred Hancock** asked if there is a center stripe in the shared use path as helpful guidance for the pedestrians. It is potentially a very busy path.
- **John Osorio** said the shared use path is typically not striped and open for all uses.
- **Fred Hancock** said he thought it would be helpful for pedestrians versus cyclists.
- **John Osorio** said we can look at that.
- **Bill Veno** said the biking and pedestrian community wrestled with that. Edgartown tried it at the business park on Barnes Road. It wasn't impressive. It is an ongoing problem.
- **Leon Brathwaite** said on the shared use path if there was a dotted line at least they would know where to move right or left.

Ben Robinson asked how much the shift is at the curve at the Shell Station. **John Osorio** said we still need to meet the design requirements due to concerns heard from the Town due to the proximity to the Shell Station. We had to meet the sight requirements. It is a difficult curve and we are designing to meet 25 mph sight requirements due to the sidewalk and those are Federal requirements.

Ben Robinson said you have a speed limit at Five Corners at 30 mph and then it goes down to 25 mph 600 to 800 feet later. That could be an issue. **John Osorio** said he believes Five Corners will be 25 mph. We can't actually change the speed without studies so the Town may have to take that up. **Ben Robinson** said at Winds Up the speed limit is 40 mph so can the crosswalk be relocated. **John Osorio** said we are somewhat limited but we will look at it.

Ben Robinson said in front of the MV times it is a large drainage and flood issue. You could potentially raise it 6-8 inches. **Tom Currier** said we will look at that.

Ben Robinson said it was said the plantings are to be native seed can you be more specific. **Tom Currier** said they will be identified.

Linda Sibley said after one of our recent horrible storms the flooding in this area was horrible. Raising 6 inches might make a difference in keeping the road open or closed. It might make the road passable.

Tom Currier said with regards to adjusting speed limits it is State legislature that it is preceded by a speed study which is usually initiated by the community. It is a double edge sword. The speed study usually sets the new speed at 85% at the prevailing speed. That needs to be thought about as it could increase the speed based on the study. It would be more beneficial to the community to do the speed study after the project is completed. We will see if we can eliminate some of the smaller posted speeds and make it more uniform.

Robert Doyle asked for clarification about the surface water runoff directed to the lagoon and not to the harbor. **Tom Currier** said it is captured in the catch basins and will work as it does today but will be new and optimized.

1.5 Comments from Public Officials

Tristan Israel asked for the parameters for comments. Is it questions or statements? **James Vercruyse** said it is both.

Jim Rogers, Tisbury Board of Selectmen, said at this time you are no long taking statements from the Town. You are at 100% plan. **Tom Currier** said we would lose our slot for advertising the program if we had to change the plan. We are basically done. Small changes can possibly be done but not changing the curve in the road and the easements.

Jim Rogers asked who pays to reconnect the power when the poles are moved. **Tom Currier** said it is part of the program to reconnect.

Tristan Israel thanked the Mass DOT for coming. Doing this together is a good idea as well as having these meetings in towns for issues like this is also a good thing. When this first came out he was in favor of a symmetrical plan. Then we worked on a hybrid plan. When the 100% plan came back it was pretty much the original plan. He has concerns where the shipyard is. It is not what the board voted for. We voted for a plan that extended the sidewalk into the Packer property so passengers from the cruise ships could walk all the way. Can we look at drainage to go into the harbor rather than the lagoon. He would think this is better flushing. The Board of Selectmen did petition to reduce the speed limit to 20 mph. We did put the process before the State. Where sea level rise is a problem we need the ability to replenish that sand and shore up that area. He thanked them for having the meeting in Tisbury.

- **Tom Currier** said we have sidewalks all the way to the Packer Wharf but it imposed right of way impacts to the Shell Station which were thought egregious and we were told the wharf is longer having tour boats coming in so that took the sidewalk up.
- **John Osorio** said we tried to extend the sidewalk all the way to the wharf and we were denied. The beach nourishment was our final attempt to stabilize that area and the beach. We have the same issue on the Lagoon Pond side. It is another permitting process. There are Coastal Zone Management issues that would put us out another couple of years. We did try to accommodate it.
- **Tom Currier** said we tried a boardwalk configuration shifting the road to try and get the sidewalk all the way to the wharf. We were told we have to try the beach nourishment and if it fails then we can try for other options. We have to show that we tried to stabilize.

1.6 Public Comment

Steven Zabloutny said are there any considerations of the underlying material for the road to help with the washout by the use of special materials. **Tom Currier** said we do that and this will have a beefier section.

Pam Cassel owns Winds Up and said you spoke about enhancing the access to the businesses but we will be compromised by losing a good portion of our parking and people will be disappointed not to be able to enjoy that area with the lack of parking. Could it be reconsidered? **Tom Currier** said we are tying into the existing shared use path. Even if we could decrease it by one foot it would not have an effect on the parking.

Jeff Cassel said we park on the road side and the other side and indicated on the site photo. By taking the few feet we will lose half. We have a row of parking on the road side and another on the building side. Because our business is sailing we operate trailers there and we are also losing beach in there. We live and work here seven days a week.

- **Tom Currier** asked if they can park parallel on the road side.
- **Jeff Cassel** said it blocks the whole area and people are not good at parking. The trees were planted by my Grandmother with the Friends of Tisbury 35 years ago. They are now providing some shade and stabilizing there. Replanting the trees will take 35 years to provide stabilization. It is significant to us to lose them.

Phil Wallis is the Executive Director of the Martha's Vineyard Museum. Some of the electrical utilities are submerged and some not. With our investment on top of the hill we are not happy that there will be 50 foot poles along there and mask the view from the museum. What would the cost be to submerge them all? He knows that corridor is important for utilities but it seems to be a wise thing to do long term. With regards to the miles per hour it is very confusing as a driver going through there with 20 to 25 to 30 to 40 mph. He would like to see a responsible management plan as a calming issue for that. With regards to the neighbors it seems the 12" could be discussed and it would be a responsible thing to do and work with the neighbors.

Ralph Packer said we are very concerned with the traffic speed on Beach Road. We made a walk on Beach Road. There are 300 jobs between Beach Road and Winds Up. Within three hours we had 150 signatures and only one signer was not a worker on Beach Road and we presented that and we have to reduce the speed. We have tank trucks entering into our yard. Getting into the road is a problem. There is not enough width to swing over. We have power outages and we offered on our property to remove 7 poles. We have barges and tow boats and we are growing. We are the largest mover out of New Bedford to Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. We bring in modular homes and we are part of a working waterfront and we need to be able to swing the trucks. We are in discussion with Vineyard Power and now Vineyard Wind. They want to locate in Vineyard Haven. It is one hour from our dock to the wind turbines and they are talking about bringing 50 jobs. We are in the petroleum business and want to be in the wind business. The museum is bringing a huge investment and will be a focal point of our community.

Debbie Packer is the Manager of the Tisbury Shell. Why are you not using the 40 foot right of way across from the Tisbury Shell? In front of Tisbury Shell it is a staging area. When we have power outages Eversource trucks are staged there. We have not heard why you are not taking the 40 foot right of way.

- **Tom Currier** said we have addressed that with your family. We are discussing the number of utility poles to put underground all the way and it requires a betterment and it is very costly and rate payers will pay for that. We are using the entire width and more and at the curve it has to be done as designed and with the crosswalk.
- **Debbie Packer** said we don't want the crosswalk there. That is our property.
- **Tom Currier** said you have access to the parking and showed the location of the new crosswalk and the access curb cut to the parking on the site plan.
- **Debbie Packer** said we are entitled to 22 feet so she finds it unacceptable. We have 265 signatures of our customers who do not want the crosswalk there. It is a safety issue. We have boats and people who have to get out of line. She invited them to come and work at the station on July 4th to see how it is used. It does affect our business and we have special permits. We serve huge trucks and trailers. It will be a huge impact on us. When you live here and work here seven days all year it is a huge impact on us.
- **Tom Currier** showed the plan of taking for the right of way.
- **Debbie Packer** said you are taking five feet and we have difficulty with that if someone has to get out of line to go around the other cars. She is not sure they are understanding the safety of running a gas station. You need a huge amount of area for boats and people to get around.
- **Tom Currier** said we can talk further off line.
- **Debbie Packer** said you said it is all set and we would slow the process down.

- **Tom Currier** said he would like to better explain later to her.
- **Ralph Packer** said we are pleased you came but where it stands now is the Board of Selectmen has to represent us. Everyone on Beach Road will be affected. He thinks they are our leaders and they need to call us in and make a better plan.

Steven Zabloutny said looking at the crosswalk plan at the Shell station if the green space at the old crosswalk was removed some of the Packer's objections may be removed.

- **Tom Currier** said we can discuss the curb cut. If is it too narrow we can look at it so your vehicles can get in and out and be serviced. These are the things that we need to review.
- **Ben Robinson** said what if we change the bike lane transition and tightened it up at the Packer property and pull the green planting space 2.5 feet closer.
- **Tom Currier** said we can look at that.

Linda Sibley said she thinks this is aptly on the record and the State should work with them and it was not factiously said to work with them on the 4th of July. How does the radius of the curve work with the speed limit? Perhaps alter the road a little less and lower the speed limit more. The basic speed limit should be at all times reasonable and proper. She finds it odd that it is not considered by the State. It should be based on safety and consideration. If it is being pitched that the changes will bring people out to these businesses it needs to be safe.

- **John Osorio** said the existing regulations regarding speed are from 1972. We have said to the Town if you are to conduct a speed study to do it after the project is built when lanes are reduced. If done now it would work against you with the wider lanes.
- **Tom Currier** said it is all dictated by State law.

Nat Benjamin is on the Tisbury Harbor Management Committee. He thanked them for the presentation. He is a little disappointed to hear the implications. If we start changing the plan and the project is out the window for years to come that is okay. Let's not rush into this due to some State mandate. Let's get it right. **Tom Currier** said we have been doing this project since 2013 and studying it since 2008. It has been a long arduous process and we have all been involved.

Tom McCurdy is a cyclist that rides Beach Road every day. The way it is configured today we all ride on the shoulder and trucks get really close especially at the curve by the Shell station. The section at Five Corners to the Net Result is a symmetrical plan with a 4.5 foot shoulder. Then you get to a point where we have to move over to a shared use path. He could do that because he understands the design but as more bike riders come to the Vineyard from the ferry it will be confusing. You are speeding along on the shoulder and then reduced to two feet and if not aware to jump onto the shared use path and hopefully not knock down the lady with the stroller he sees that as a dangerous situation. You narrowed the travel lane by 1.5 feet and there is 6" on either side of those big trucks. When trucks are passing each other it will be a foot apart. It will be a hazard to cyclists who are used to riding on the shoulder and unaware of the shared use path. He thinks it is accidents waiting to happen.

Bill Veno said cyclists always have the right to ride in the roadway. There are plenty of curb cuts and if taken unawares they can hop off on the curb cuts. **Tom Currier** said it will be signed also. There is an example of that in Edgartown on Main Street at the Court House. Cyclists need to ride slow and as the conditions dictate.

Dan Doyle spoke as a resident of Tisbury. He rides his bike to work and he can't wait for the improvements. There are broken areas in Brooklyn that are better than what we have and bikers will adjust.

Adam Turner thanked the Commission and thanked Tisbury for letting us have the meeting in Tisbury to have concerns clarified such as the speed study as well as the Packer's concerns and the Winds Up

316 parking issues. We met in Taunton with 30 members of State agencies to talk about climate change and
317 what to do about these roads. We need to look at these things differently. Tom Currier's team had to
318 work within constraints as well. He recognized Pam Hazner, she is our district representative for the
319 Commission. He thanked the Mass DOT for coming tonight.

320 **Dorothy Packer** asked what the process is from here so we understand what needs to be done. **Tom**
321 **Currier** said they can come back and have discussions.

322 **James Vercruyse**, thanked Mass DOT and for providing the forum.

323 The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

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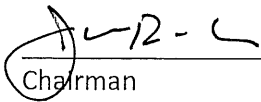
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Chairman

11.15.2018
Date

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Clerk-Treasurer

15 NOV 2018
Date