

Martha's Vineyard Scenic Roads Initiative

Minutes of Meeting 2 of the Scenic Roads Committee

Date: May 29, 2014, 5:30 p.m.

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

Present:

Committee Fred Hancock (Acting Chairman), Trip Barnes (MVC), John Breckenridge (MVC), Madeline Fisher (MVC), Jay Grande (Tisbury), Dan Greenbaum (Chilmark), Richard Knabel (West Tisbury), Joan Malkin (MVC), Kathy Newman (MVC), Linda Sibley (MVC), Brian Smith (MVC), Craig Whittaker (Tisbury)

MVC Staff: Christine Flynn, Priscilla Leclerc, Mark London, Bill Veno

1. Organizational

John Breckenridge nominated Linda Sibley as Chairman. Joan Malkin nominated Madeleine Fisher as Co-Chairman. Neither motion was acted on.

John Breckenridge nominated and Richard Knabel seconded Linda Sibley and Madeleine Fisher as Co-Chairmen. The motion passed unanimously.

In general, the Co-Chairmen should draft meeting agenda with staff and send the draft to all Committee members for comment before finalizing.

The regular monthly meeting date of the full Committee was changed to the third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at the MVC Offices. Note that there will usually be a Commission meeting that evening at 7:00 p.m.

There was a discussion as to whether each appointee of a town with more than one appointee should have a vote or whether the town's vote should be shared. It was decided that each Committee member would have a vote. It was suggested that we wouldn't anticipate having close votes, but should aim to work by consensus.

It was noted that the Committee is advisory. Any recommendations affecting a town would have to be approved by the Board of Selectmen or possibly by Town Meeting. Any recommendation affecting the MVC, including any expenditures, would have to be approved by the Commission.

We will probably want to set up work groups or subcommittees to deal with topics such as: vegetation, NSTAR, roadway projects and standards, and signage.

2. NSTAR

The meeting will be held on Thursday, June 5, at 5:00 p.m.

The purposes of the meeting are:

- Giving NSTAR the opportunity to explain its policies, procedures and plans with respect to each of the topics of concern,

- Giving the committee the opportunity to voice the community's concerns, and
- Agreeing how to work together to deal with outstanding issues.

The Committee reviewed the draft agenda. We should add an item on generators, and one on the ongoing process of collaboration.

For several of the items on the agenda, we should ask NSTAR representatives to brief the committee. These include the status of cable and pole construction, planned pole upgrades, policies and practices on herbicides and trimming vegetation. Ideally, NSTAR would send written policies or other documentation in advance of the meeting, but the meeting is only one week away.

Since this meeting will review all topics and might well be the only meeting with the entire Scenic Roads Committee (in the event the committee identifies a NSTAR work group), the committee felt it was very desirable that in addition to Jerry McDermott (community relations), we should encourage Paul Sellers (vegetation) and Mark Baldwin (construction and operations) to attend, if possible.

3. Information Updates

3.1 Meetings with Planning Boards: There was a meeting with the West Tisbury Planning Board on May 19th. The summary of meeting notes has been updated to include their comments. The meetings with the Oak Bluffs Planning Board had been scheduled for June 5 but will be postponed because of the NSTAR meeting. The meeting with Aquinnah is on June 17th. Staff has started compiling the comments by category, which, when completed, could serve as a basis for a Committee discussion of possible strategies.

3.2 Complete Streets Workshop: On May 20, the MassDOT Complete Streets Engineer from the Boston, the MassDOT District 5 Engineer, and other experts gave a well-attended workshop on the Vineyard. Among other things, they explained the new MassDOT Healthy Communities Policy for better accommodating bicycles and pedestrians in road projects. It could be useful to invite the two MassDOT representatives to meet the Scenic Road Committee.

3.3 TIP Projects:

Edgartown-Vineyard Haven Road: MVC staff will work with MassDOT engineers and towns to compile information and outline options for discussion later this summer.

Beach Road, Tisbury: Two options were presented by John Diaz of Greenman Pederson Inc. (GPI) at a public meeting on March 21, 2014. More information will be needed in order to be able to better assess the impacts on the area.

Beach Road, Oak Bluffs: A Town bicycle committee is also working with John Diaz of GPI to explore options for extending the Shared Use Path from the Drawbridge to the County Road SUP and then to the harbor. They also have looked at an SUP from the ferry terminal along Seaview Avenue to link to the existing SUP heading towards Edgartown. Some of these projects would involve modifications to the road.

Tashmoo Overlook: Redesigning the Tashmoo Overlook might be an opportunity for moving ahead quickly with a demonstration project for improving scenic roads.

3.4 Inventory of Island Roads: MVC staff will carry out an inventory of all main roads, with the help of interns who start next week. Mark London distributed an outline of information that will be collected.

3.5 Library of Information: MVS staff is moving ahead with acquiring relevant books, manuals, and articles. Mark London distributed a list of the main documents so far. Other suggestions are welcome.