

Shore Road Path Committee Meeting

February 27, 2008

Place: Town Hall, Cape Elizabeth

Present:

Paul Thelin – Committee Chair
Maureen O’Meara- Town Planner
Andie Mahoney
Dena DeSena
George Morse
Howard Littlefield
Josef Chalot
Suzanne McGinn
William Nickerson

Meeting called to order by Paul Thelin at 7:00 PM

Minutes from January 17, 2008 were approved without change.

Correspondence: E-mail Regarding The Beth Condon Path In Yarmouth

Information regarding the Yarmouth Beth Condon Path was discussed. Andie Mahoney ran a road race on the Beth Condon Path and said the surface was very stable and sound. She also said it was wide enough for baby carriages and running with 3 to 4 abreast. The main points that were made are:

1. Yarmouth public works maintain the path
2. It is wide enough to have 3-4 runners (approx 7-8 feet)
3. Path runs in and out ; sometimes along side of the road and sometimes in and out of the woods and properties
4. some of the path is black top and some of it is hard packed gravel but at all times it is well maintained and a hard surface.
5. It had good signage and police protection
6. The Beth Condon Path is well used.

Reviewing Existing Information

Path From Fort Williams To Town Center

1. The older Shore Road maps were hung up for viewing. Howard states that Shore Road is now wider and the telephones poles have changed in locations. He also said that drainage areas have changed from the older map as well. Maureen handed out a smaller new map that showed all the abutting neighbors and their street number to Shore Road. The committee thought it easier to read.

A question was asked about “right-of-ways and what they are along Shore Road.”

Maureen explained that when a new road is built, it is constructed in the middle of the land designated for the road and, as a result, the right-of-way width is equal on both sides.

Shore Road, being an older road, is not uniform at all. The right of way may be narrow on one side and wide on another. The other problem is that Shore Road has stone walls and large trees and other obstacles that have been added and grown with time. Maureen said there are three things that can be done where this is insufficient room or obstacles in the right-of-way for the path. Firstly and the most desired is that the abutters may be sympathetic with the idea of the path and be willing to donate a public access easement for the path. They might be happy to work with the committee for the best result on their property and the abutting right-of-way. Secondly, the town could pay a property owner for a public access easement that the property owner is willing to sell. Lastly, and to be avoided, the town could take the land by eminent domain.

Another question was raised about handicapped access. Maureen said that this path could be like the Greenbelt trails that the Conservation Commission builds where the natural character of the land at times precludes strict adherence to maximum slope requirements for handicapped accessible surfaces. Those paths are more rugged, however. This path, as much as possible, should be handicap friendly. Handicap access would include on and off ramps to the side walk and the walk way could only have a certain % of slope.

There was then a discussion that the path should not just run right along the road but should be property friendly. Joe commented that the path "should go where it needs to go." This will make the citizens and property owners happier. It could go around old trees and stone walls. Maureen advised that we meet with each property owner to see the best solution for all.

2. George stated that it will be important to get ideas from the property owners instead of asking them if they are for it or not. It will be important to get them to be part of the process so we all can make the best choices on each individual property. Some property owners might think of a better solution than we can as they may have been thinking of it for a while.
3. There was a long discussion on which side of the road the path should go on. Many of us agreed that the inland side has less homes and more open space. Howard pointed out that the ocean side might be better because of the wet lands and the telephone poles on the inland side. It was agreed that Maureen would talk to the town engineers just to get a ballpark figure on the expense of a new survey. It was also agreed that it will take more walks and study before a side could be picked. There was some talk about cross walks going from one side to another. The dangers of that were brought up as cars don't always pay attention to cross walks. Maureen also stated that speed bumps were not supported by town staff. A committee walk down Shore Road will be planned at the next meeting.

Suzanne McGinn asked why not move the road to the center of the right-of-way so the right-a way width would be equal or at least uniform. Maureen said the road now has a crown in the middle to facilitate drainage and it would be more expensive that just shifting pavement to move it.

Paul had questions about the safety of side walk going over driveways. Most people thought it was safe. Both Howard Littlefield and Josef Chalot took photographs of the

length of Shore Road showing different problems and perhaps solutions. Josef e-mailed the committee his photo and Howard will give a slide show at our next meeting.

4. Bill Nickerson said that the Fort Williams committee sent out a letter of “expression of interest” to experts who might want to help. We all thought that was a good idea for us too. The experts might be conduction designers, landscape designers, civil engineers, and survey experts.
5. It was pointed out that the last time this path idea came up in the 90’s. It was not received well by owners on Shore Road. Communication with Shore Rd property owners should be clear that this project will be very different as the path will be on only one side and much more property friendly and less obtrusive.
6. Andie stated how sidewalks or paths gives a good feeling of community and makes for friendlier neighbors like at the other end of Shore Road where neighbors know each other and families are outside. She thought it would be a good idea to send out a letter to all the property owners to introduce ourselves and to state the positive good thing that a path would do for our town. Others said that in this letter we should also say that a smaller group of our committee would meet with each owner at their home.

For the Next Meeting:

Maureen said she would draft letters for our approval.

1. A letter to all individual property owners giving them also an aerial photography of their own property; Introducing ourselves; objectives; and that we will be contacting them.
2. A draft “Expression of Interest” to professionals to seek consultant assistance.
3. Make a list of the pros and cons of each side of the road that we will add to.
4. Get a ball park figure for a survey from the town engineer.
5. A time will be set up for a group walk down Shore Road and decision about the timing of the mailing of the letters.

Chairman Paul Thelin, adjourned the meeting at 9:20 PM

These minutes are respectfully submitted,

Dena DeSena

