

Selectmen's Meeting
August 17, 2009
4:00 pm

A meeting of the Board was held on the above date in the Fred B Morgan Jr. Meeting Room, Town Hall. Members present were Michael J. Donaroma, Chairman; Margaret E. Serpa; & Arthur Smadbeck. Town Administrator Pamela M Dolby was present.

Mr. Donaroma opened the meeting at 4:04 pm. The Board began the meeting by approving the following items:

A Commercial Marine License for Edgartown Marine Services Inc. (formerly Herring Creek Marine)

The minutes from August 10, 2009 and dispensing with reading aloud.

Ms. Dolby then gave her weekly update. She started with good news. The Town had been awarded \$995,000 to help low income households fix their homes. Ms. Dolby had been working on this for a long time and is very happy about the outcome. Melissa Vincent is the administrator on the project and she has already received many applications.

The Board congratulated Ms. Dolby on securing the funds.

Ms. Dolby then reported that the Board had received a letter from attorney Norton in reference to the Goodman shade tree denial. She has forwarded it to Mr. Rappaport, Town Council.

At 4:10 pm Mr. Donaroma opened the hearing for Ms. Sandra Scheuer at 36 Mill Street. Representing Ms. Scheuer was Chuck Wiley. Also present was Mr. Stuart Fuller, Tree Warden.

Mr. Wiley gave a short description of the trees and their conditions. The reason for removal was to widen the driveway.

Ms. Serpa needed a clarification of which cherry tree was to be removed. She went on a sight visit and the cherry tree on the map was not the one marked at the site.

Mr. Fuller replied that the one on the map was the correct one and that the cherry marked at the site was mismarked. He also supported the removal of the three trees in question. They are not of a significant girth and are in bad health.

Ms. Serpa pointed out that this does not affect the canopy over the street due to the size of the trees.

Mr. Donaroma wanted to know what they planned to plant as replacements.

Mr. Wiley answered that they intended on replacement with two honey locust trees as three would crowd the existing street trees.

Mr. Donaroma told Mr. Wiley to work with the Tree Warden on placement and type of tree. He then asked if there was any public input or correspondence. There being none he closed the hearing at 4:13 pm.

Ms. Serpa moved to approve based on the bad health of the trees and that they should come down and with the stipulation that Mr. Wiley work with the Tree Warden and get his approval for the placement and types of the two replacement trees. Mr. Smadbeck seconded. Unanimous.

At 4:15 pm Mr. Donaroma opened the discussion on the proposed Chappaquiddick bike path. Present was a large group of about 40 concerned citizens from Chappaquiddick. Mr. Donaroma started by sharing that he had gone to the meeting on August 11th at the Chappaquiddick Community Center held by the group opposing the bike path that call themselves Sharing Chappy Roads(SCR) group. He was lead to believe this would be a two sided mediated meeting. He heard lots of cons and some pros. He believes that if the group that wants the bike path wants to proceed, they should start with the Planning Board, then the following departments are going to have to be involved at one point or another: The Conservation Commission, Police Department, Highway Department, and the Traffic Committee. Also the Sheriff's Meadow Foundation and the Martha's Vineyard Land Bank.

After all that, the Financial Advisory Committee has to go over the financial aspect and recommend the project or not recommend it. From what he has seen the two groups have no common ground at this time and the Selectmen aren't ready to form an official committee.

Ms. Serpa stated that the Board had received and read numerous emails and letters.

Dr. Bob Colvin, member of the Chappy Path Committee (CPC), stated that the committee has worked hard to raise awareness of the safety issues. They now want the Selectmen to take the lead.

Ms. Serpa stated that from what she has seen it does not appear or give the impression that there is a clear consensus for a bike path or any type of path.

Mr. Roger Becker, member of the Share Chappy Roads (SRC) group, stated that the "CPC" had two informational meetings and were not interested in hearing from the opposition. He felt that the meetings were more about a "yes" or "no" vote than the safety issues. He was turned down at "CPC" meetings to give his opinions. He stated that the "SRC" invited the "CPC" to a public moderated meeting on August 11th they said no and didn't want to debate though some members did attend. He felt that it was premature to form an official committee.

Mr. Peter Wells, member of "CPC", objected that he was not invited to the August 11th meeting.

Ms. Melissa Kagan, member of "CPC", stated that the goal of having the Selectmen appoint a committee was for the process to be public, official, and have a set process. The opposition is accusatory. The path is a hot issue on Chappaquiddick and there is no consensus. Friends from the rest of Edgartown would like to come ride their bikes that haven't had a say on the issue yet.

Mr. Donaroma replied that the list he gave her was to guide the "CPC" through the process. Through the departments they could work out the pros and cons. They shouldn't be in such a hurry and give it a year or two to go through the process. The Planning Board has posted public meetings. He stated that he would like to see a bike path that is really thought out and that a creative bike path may be better.

Ms. Dolby pointed out that the Meshacket Rd. path has already been in the planning stages for years and it will come before any path on Chappaquiddick is developed.

Mr. Bob Clay stated that both sides love Chappy and they do have the common ground of wanting to promote safety. They aren't without alternative ideas to solve the problems.

Mr. Knight questioned how the other bike paths were developed.

Mr. Smadbeck answered that there has always been universal support for the other bike paths.

Ms. Dolby answered that the Meshacket Rd. one came in by petition and there was no opposition. It is a little more complicated because it involves some taking of property due to the narrow nature of the road.

Mr. Donaroma stated that it was approved at the Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Clay stated that there was no consensus among Chappaquiddick residents. He loves to see bikes in the street in front of his house.

Ms. Adibi stated that she felt that the non-voting taxpayers didn't have a say.

Mr. Adibi stated that the Board must respect the anti-bike path sentiment of what he feels is the majority of the people on Chappaquiddick.

Mr. Donaroma told Mr. Adibi that he was wrong. The bike path would ultimately be decided by the whole Town at an Annual Town Meeting.

Mr. Adibi stated that he felt protective of Chappaquiddick. He again stated that the majority of Chappaquiddick is against the idea. He stated to the Board that the Town will have to take a lot of land and to be prepared for a lot of legal costs. He was unhappy about the Town having meetings in the winter when he was not in residence.

Mr. Rick Murray stated that his children ages 4,6,8, & 10 ride their bikes a lot. He can see the issues. He doesn't want to see the big bike path but does think a bike lane would be helpful. Something does need to be done to increase safety.

Ms. Kagan thanked the Board for their assistance and listening to their issues.

Ms. Claire Thacher wanted to point out that sometimes the car drivers need to work to share the roads and a lot don't want to.

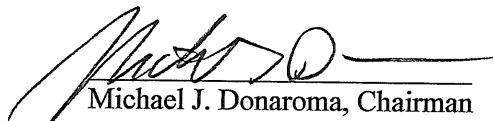
Mr. Donaroma answered that the car issue is everywhere, not just Chappaquiddick.

Ms. Dolby then gave her update. The paperwork for a lot restriction for Mr. Alan Gowell has not been finalized yet. Town Counsel stated that a marriage certificate was sufficient evidence that abutting lots are owned contiguously and the paperwork would be ready the following week.

Ms. Serpa moved to adjourn at 4:50 pm. Mr. Smadbeck seconded. Unanimous.

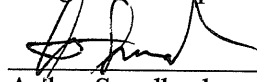
Approved:

Respectfully submitted,


Michael J. Donaroma, Chairman

Kristy Rose
Assistant

Margaret E. Serpa


Arthur Smadbeck
Board of Selectmen

August 17, 2009