

Town of Edgartown  
**Cape Pogue DCPC**

Minutes of Meeting  
March 28, 2024 5:00 P.M.

In Attendance (virtual):

Town Administrator (James Hagerty)

Cape Pogue Property Owner appointed by the Edgartown Board of Selectmen (Rachel Self)

Edgartown Conservation Commission (Jane Varkonda)

The Trustees of Reservations Membership (Bob Hayman)

Conservation/Wildlife Specialist (appointed jointly by Sheriffs' Meadow Foundation, Vineyard Conservation Society, and Vineyard Open Land Foundation) (Matt Pelikan)

Edgartown Board of Health (Chris Edwards)

Massachusetts Environmental Police (Matthew Bass)

Edgartown Planning Board (Scott Morgan)

Martha's Vineyard Commission (Dan Doyle)

County of Dukes County (Martina Thornton)

Meeting called to order.

Water Issues

*Updates from Harbormaster and Shellfish Warden*

Rob Morrison was not present, but had reported to Rachel Self that 5,102 bushels of scallops had been harvested from Cape Pogue this year – slightly down from last year. He had high hopes for next year.

Land Issues

*Current Pending NOI and Special Permit Applications*

Dan Doyle had provided a map of shoreline changes around the island. Matt Bass noted that some of the numbers looked encouraging, and Dan Doyle explained some of the factors that contributed to greater and lesser erosion in certain spots. There was discussion of various erosion patterns around the island.

Rachel Self expressed that one of the most important things to do was “develop and propose district guidelines,” one of the Committee’s purviews under its bylaws; she felt that proposing a width for OSV corridors fell within that. Jane Varkonda explained how the toe of the dune was defined and how ten feet from that point was calculated; it was a site-specific calculation depending on each beach’s characteristics. She felt that defining a specific width for a corridor would be difficult for those reasons. Matt Pelikan suggested that as little of the beach as possible should be devoted to vehicle traffic – his preference, based on prioritizing wildlife concerns, would be a twenty-foot corridor with turnouts for vehicles to get past one another. It should be

just above the wrack line to allow for nesting habitat. Jane Varkonda agreed and recounted how at Norton they had essentially implemented that, with a staff person available to direct traffic. Dan Doyle did not feel there was any problem with figuring out a minimum distance for this specific site; he did not think the Committee should shy away from making calculations for people to work with. Scott Morgan inquired whether one trail could be designated for northbound traffic, and one for south. Rachel Self expressed that there was only one really reliable trail, so there was no guarantee that both trails would always be available. There was discussion of driving and parking behavior at various points on the beach. Rachel Self expressed that it was important to begin to start figuring out specific definitions so that enforcement could be accomplished when needed. Jane Varkonda and Matt Pelikan expressed that shifting conditions would always require a beach manager to make judgement calls around enforcement.

Rachel Self proposed perhaps a thirty-foot corridor requirement. Matt Bass felt that would be too limiting, and would essentially require the beach shutting down, and any strict number would probably have the same effect. Rachel Self felt it was important to give the beach manager some tool to determine when the corridor was passable and when it was not, particularly when they did not have enough staff and resources to monitor and enforce constantly. Jane Varkonda expressed that staffing was the real issue; if staff was there to enforce on a case by case basis, you would not need strict criteria. Hard numbers just would not work. Several Committee members suggested that the width of the car is the minimum width for a corridor, and that it simply was site-specific. They felt the guidelines were as clear as any definition would be.

Dan Doyle inquired whether there was a working group on this issue; Matt Pelikan suggested that perhaps there could be a subcommittee to come up with some recommendations on this issue to bring back to the main Committee to discuss. Chris Edwards suggested getting the opinion of TTOR's new beach manager, and perhaps to invite him to a meeting to introduce him to the Committee. Matt Pelikan asked James Hagerty how a subcommittee could work considering public meeting laws, etc. He explained the rules around quora, publishing minutes, etc.

Jane Varkonda moved to form a subcommittee. Dan Doyle seconded. Rachel Self requested volunteers for the subcommittee. Jane Varkonda, Matt Bass, and Matt Pelikan volunteered; the Committee felt a TTOR representative should also be a part of it, but as none was present, they left that member to be designated by TTOR at a later point. The purpose of the subcommittee would be to "develop and propose district guidelines for required resources necessary for recreational OSV corridors".

A roll call vote was held on establishing this subcommittee. The vote passed unanimously.

The next meeting was scheduled for April 25th at 5:00 P.M.

Jane Varkonda moved to adjourn. Martina Thornton seconded.

Meeting adjourned.