

**To: The Chilmark Selectmen**

**From: The Chilmark Planning Board**

**Subject: Menemsha Planning**

The Planning Board has embarked upon a much needed updating of the Town's Master Plan. The Master Plan, first developed in 1985 and then revised several times (most recently in 2003), provides a wealth of information on the history of the town of Chilmark and its growth, while also identifying goals and objectives for the future of the Town.

The Planning Board's initial focus for the current Master Planning efforts is Menemsha. As a first step, the Planning Board's subcommittee has held meetings across the community since early in the summer, in order to hear from the community about issues of concern, possible solutions and their vision for Menemsha. The product of this undertaking will be long-range planning guidelines as well as suggested short-term actions.

As this phase of our planning efforts winds down, we are beginning a careful analysis of the feedback that we have received to date. While we are hesitant to jump to conclusions, we have begun to see that there are a number of public safety and transportation initiatives that might be pursued for the summer of 2017. We feel that these initiatives are self-contained and could be undertaken without limiting the Town's options for the overall issues.

The attachment to this memo describes these suggestions that might be implemented in the summer of 2017. We would like to come to your next meeting and discuss the possibility of putting an article on the warrant for the December special town meeting to pursue these initiatives.

## ATTACHMENT

### SUGGESTED MENEMSHA ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2017

#### MAKING THE SATELLITE PARKING LOT AT THE LANDFILL MORE FUNCTIONAL

Based on our meetings with the community, it appears that, if the satellite parking lot were improved, more people might be inclined to use it, thus reducing congestion in Menemsha. We recommend that the Town fund a limited study by a landscape architect to design a basic functional parking lot. We recommend the following features:

- Improved parking surface. Suggest a low maintenance material such as gravel or peastone.
- Delineated parking spaces in the satellite lot. At present, people tend to park haphazardly. With marked spots, people would be guided to park in a more orderly fashion, and the Town could maximize the use of the available space. This could be accomplished by installing cement parking bumpers or some other type of markers.
- A clearly marked bus stop, in the satellite lot, with appropriate signage. The bus drivers need to have a clearly marked spot that is left open for them to use to pick up and drop off passengers. Bus riders need to know where to wait to be picked up.
- A shelter at the bus stop. This would help define the waiting area, block the sun and give people a place to congregate. We suggest approaching Martha's Vineyard Regional High School's vocational department to see if this is something the high school might be able to build.
- At the bus stop, or within the shelter, a clearly displayed map of the bus route with a detailed schedule.
- At the bus stop, or within the shelter, a clearly displayed "tourist map" of Menemsha, identifying businesses and services provided.
- A port-a-potty or composting toilet at the satellite lot.
- Improved limited lighting at the satellite parking lot which, while helping people find their cars, would not negatively impact neighbors (perhaps solar operated ground lighting).
- Screening to block the view of the landfill from the parking lot.

#### ADDITIONAL SIGNAGE RELATED TO SATELLITE PARKING LOT

In an effort to reduce the number of vehicle drivers travelling down to Menemsha and then realizing there are no parking spots, we suggest that the Town of Chilmark add some more signage around town to indicate how to get to the satellite parking lot and how to use it. The goal would be to encourage people to try the satellite parking lot before they go to Menemsha. We recommend the following, suggesting that all signs be consistently branded and in keeping with the "feel" of Chilmark:

- Signs at the triangle (at the intersection of North Road and the Menemsha Crossroad), in town center, at the intersection of Middle Road and Tabor House Road and at the intersection of North Road and Tabor House Road, to direct vehicle drivers to the satellite parking lot. The signs should be consistently worded, such as "Menemsha Beach Satellite Parking".

- The same sign (“Menemsha Beach Satellite Parking”) should also be posted at the entrance to the landfill, rather than just the “P” sign that is there now.
- At the entrance to the landfill parking lot, there should be a sign indicating the hours that the satellite parking lot is open. People need to know how late they will be able to retrieve their cars.

### **IMPROVING THE BUS STOP IN MENEMSHA**

Based on our meetings with the community, there are ways in which the bus stop in Menemsha could be improved. We suggest the following:

- A clearly marked bus stop, with appropriate signage. The bus drivers need to have a clearly marked spot that is left open for them to use to pick up and drop off passengers. Bus riders need to know where to wait to be picked up.
- At the bus stop, a clearly displayed map of the bus route with a detailed schedule (identical to the map posted at the satellite parking lot).
- At the bus stop, a clearly displayed “tourist map” of Menemsha, identifying businesses and services provided (identical to the map posted at the satellite parking lot).

### **IMPROVEMENTS AT THE INTERSECTION OF NORTH ROAD AND BASIN ROAD**

Although we will pursue a more comprehensive plan for vehicle travel and pedestrian safety in Menemsha, a couple of suggestions seem worth trying now.

- Put a “Stop” sign at the bottom of the hill (on North Road) so that cars must come to a full stop, before either turning right onto Basin Road or proceeding straight towards the Home Port and Galley.
- Trim the vegetation on the corner (where the “Stop” sign will be), to allow better visibility of oncoming traffic and pedestrians.

### **IMPROVEMENTS ON THE CURVE (OPPOSITE “THE BITE”)**

- Pursue the offer of an easement from the Di Maura family at the curve opposite the Bite. Although we are still working on plans for a pedestrian path, and aren’t ready to recommend anything at this time, the Di Maura’s generous offer seems like something we should pursue.
- With the permission of the Di Maura family, trim vegetation at their curve as well.

### **MORE INFORMATION IN OTHER LOCATIONS ABOUT SATELLITE PARKING AT THE LANDFILL**

We offer a number of suggestions that might be pursued by the Town to get the word out about the offsite parking lot and how to use it. These suggestions do not require a warrant article for Town Meeting but are worth discussing.

- Expand the information on the Chilmark Town website to include a map showing the location of the satellite lot in relation to Menemsha and the town roads; a link to the VTA website which has the schedules for the buses; maybe a “frequently asked questions” section. Many people get their information to plan their vacations early – before they arrive on the Vineyard; more information on the website would help them plan.
- Work with the VTA and the Menemsha business owners to make sure that each is aware of the others’ needs. For example, the VTA presently provides four early runs of the shuttle buses to the satellite lot to accommodate employees of Menemsha businesses. Is this the right number of runs at the right time?
- Suggest additional outreach to the wider community about the satellite parking area and how to use it. For example, the “School’s Out” newspaper, a West Tisbury school fundraiser, could be asked to include such an article (we do have Chilmark students at the West Tisbury school who might be interested in helping with this).