

22Jan2019

Mr. James Malkin
Chairman, Board of Selectmen
Town of Chilmark
401 Middle Road, Beetlebung Corner
P.O. Box 119
Chilmark, MA 02535-0119

Re: Evaluation of Alternates to the Proposed Menemsha Bus Turn-around

Mr. Malkin,

We are in receipt of three individual alternative plans to the bus turn-around proposed in our report, dated 27Aug2017. These alternatives have been transmitted by your Office, with your request for review and evaluation with regard to the original design criteria.

- A. The following documents are noted for reference:
1. Parking area sketch prepared by E. Elliston, 1 pg., dated 18Dec2018.
 2. Parking area sketch and narrative prepared by B. Armstrong, 2 pgs., dated 06Jan2019.
 3. Parking area sketch prepared by K. Carroll, 1 pg., received 06Jan2019.
- B. The scope of our review is based on the topics outlined in the following documents, relative to public safety; primarily parking, traffic flow and pedestrian safety issues:
1. Menemsha Master Plan; Parking and Traffic Summary, Chilmark Planning Board Subcommittee, dated 27Mar2017.
 2. Menemsha Master Plan; Additional Notes, dated 23May2017.
 3. Chilmark Planning; Menemsha Corridor Plan for Improvement by Brewster Architects, dated 26Oct2017.
 4. Chilmark Planning; Menemsha Corridor Plan for Improvement, Appendix B by Brewster Architects, dated 11Dec2017.

C. Context

As noted above, the primary goals outlined in the Planning Board Subcommittee Master Plan are summarized as:

- Ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety.
- Ease congestion, while improving traffic flow.
- Encourage access to Menemsha Beach.

D. Observations

The common concept of each of the three revised proposals includes the reconfiguration of the existing Menemsha Beach parking lot to allow the bus turn-around to remain essentially where it is presently located.

1. [Elliston Proposal](#)

- No narrative is provided to further understand the Elliston proposal's intent. However, this proposal appears to show the existing central parking layout be replaced with a two-lane, one-way traffic loop with a bus/emergency lane outboard and a passenger lane inboard.
- No change to the perimeter spaces or corner loading is indicated.

- To accomplish this proposal, the space allocation and outside turning radius for an VTA transit bus would need to be accommodated and confirmed through engineering.
 - It is unclear if the bus drop-off(s) and loading would be at the corners, as the existing space allocation likely will not yield room for a pedestrian path parallel to the proposed traffic lane behind the perimeter parking spaces. Though not indicated, the alternative would be to maintain the existing drop-off at the Comfort Station with the traffic lanes used exclusively for turn-around.
- a. Advantages
- This eliminates the need for the bus turn-around near the Comfort Station.
 - Provides an improved dedicated lane for buses/emergency vehicles, potentially improving traffic flow.
 - Provides a separate lane for passenger cars, potentially improving traffic flow.
- b. Disadvantages
- To accomplish this, a reduction in total parking spaces is necessary, eliminating all 20 central spaces.
 - Separating the bus and passenger lanes seems logical. However, this results in two issues which reduce pedestrian safety and vehicle flow during periods of overlap of bus and passenger traffic.
 - Due to the large turning radius required, the bus lane needs to be outboard as shown. The passenger lane being inboard, then requires vehicles to cross the bus lane to access the existing loading and parking spaces along the entire perimeter of the proposed path, as well as backing into the path upon departure.
 - The passenger lane being inboard requires drop-off pedestrians to cross the bus lane to access the beach along the entire perimeter of the proposed path. This would be further compounded by the movement of children, beach equipment such as coolers, chairs, etc.
- c. Finding
- As noted under general observations, the proposal eliminates parking. And while this proposal attempts to address traffic flow with separate lanes, it results in a worsening of pedestrian-vehicle separation with the crossing of car parking and bus paths. This may result in more congestion, more accidents and less safety overall. The addition of well-marked pedestrian cross-walks across the bus path may aid pedestrian safety, but with some 36 existing perimeter parking spaces, pedestrian traffic interaction will be increased.

2. Armstrong Proposal

- A narrative is provided to further understand the Armstrong Proposal's intent.
 - This proposal shows the western portion of the central parking layout eliminated with the single-lane, one-way traffic loop moved inboard.
 - This central area will be marked as No Parking/Emergency Vehicles only.
 - Possible Moped and bicycle parking may be provided.
 - No change to the perimeter spaces, drop-of points or corner loading is indicated.
- a. Advantages
- This eliminates the need for the bus turn-around near the Comfort Station.
 - Provides an enlarged traffic lane for buses/emergency vehicles along the western turn, potentially improving traffic flow.
 - Provides for emergency vehicle staging/parking.
 - Provides for additional moped and bicycle parking.
- b. Disadvantages
- To accomplish this, a reduction in total parking spaces is necessary, eliminating 7-9 of the parking spaces shown in item B3, above (Brewster Architects Plan).

- o The traffic lane indicated in the Plan by Brewster Architects reflects a passenger vehicle lane width and turning radius.
 - Without the bus turn-around at the Comfort Station, the radius and lane width would require significant increases to accommodate transit buses, resulting in the additional loss of parking in the central area and would require confirmation through engineering.
 - The Armstrong Proposal recommends the use of smaller transit buses as noted in their recommendation #1. We will defer to the VTA regarding ridership, routing, bus size, etc.

c. Finding

As noted under general observations, the proposal eliminates parking. And while this proposal attempts to address traffic flow by shifting the traffic lane, it does not consider the additional turning radius and lane width required to do so for buses vs. passenger vehicles shown in the Brewster Architects plan.

3. Carroll Proposal

- No narrative is provided to further understand the Carroll Proposal's intent.
- This proposal shows the western portion of the central parking layout revised with the single-lane, one-way traffic loop.
- No change to the perimeter spaces, drop-of points or corner loading is indicated.

d. Advantages

- This eliminates the need for the bus turn-around near the Comfort Station.

e. Disadvantages

- Similar to the Armstrong Proposal; to accomplish this, a reduction in total parking spaces is necessary, eliminating 7-9 of the parking spaces shown in item B3, above (Brewster Architects Plan).
 - o The traffic lane indicated in the Plan by Brewster Architects reflects a passenger vehicle lane width and turning radius.
 - Without the bus turn-around at the Comfort Station, the radius and lane width would require significant increases to accommodate transit buses, resulting in the additional loss of parking in the central area and would require confirmation through engineering.

f. Finding

As noted under general observations, the proposal eliminates parking. And while this proposal attempts to address traffic flow by shifting the traffic lane, it does not consider the additional turning radius and lane width required to do so for buses vs. passenger vehicles shown in the Brewster Architects plan.

E. Summary

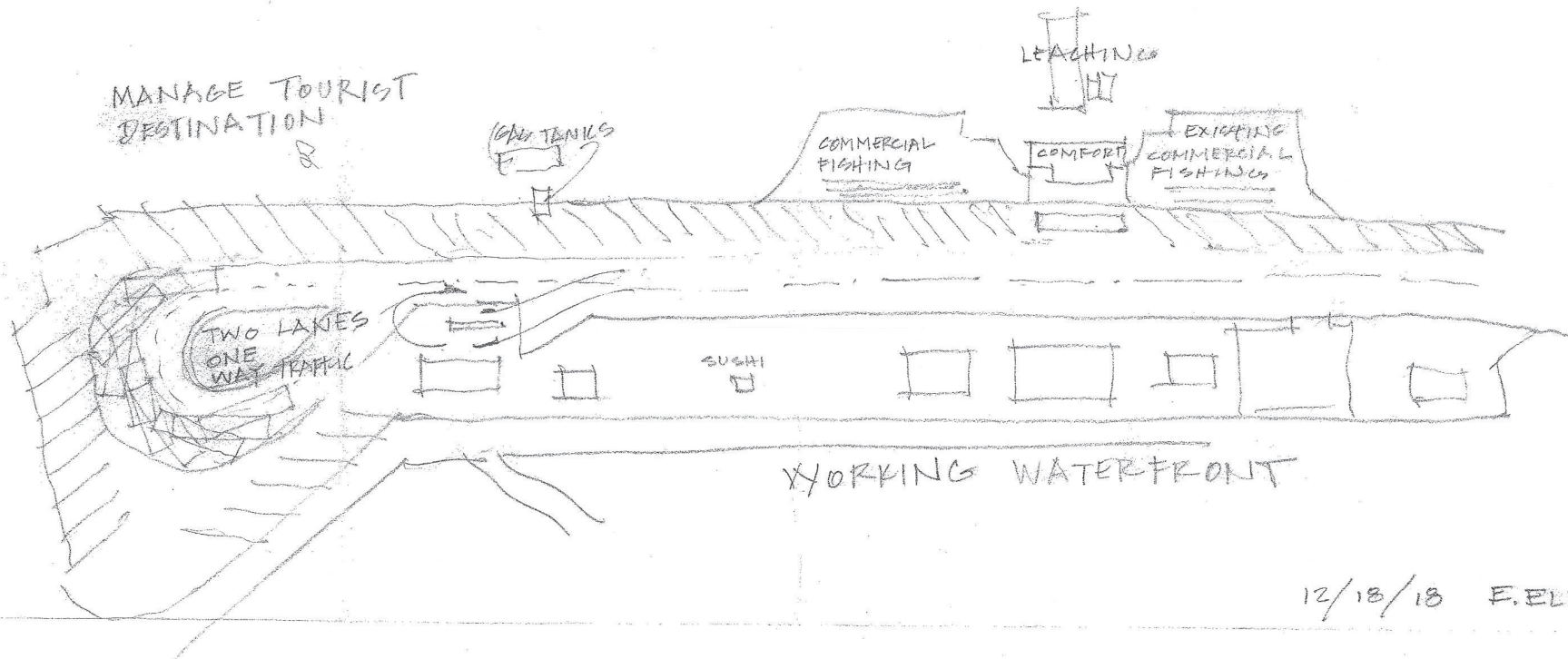
The original goals of the Subcommittee to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety and ease congestion while improving traffic flow are so intertwined that they require many small interventions to address the overall concerns. Understanding that maintaining the character of Menemsha is crucial, it is still our opinion that short of reducing the physical size of the VTA transit buses, the bus turn-around proposed to be constructed by the Comfort Station is an appropriate component of solving the concerns raised by the Subcommittee.

Sincerely,

BREWSTER | ARCHITECTS, LLC



William Brewster, RA
cc: file



12/18/18 E. ELLISTON

TO: Chilmark Selectmen
FROM: Barbara Armstrong
DATE: January 6, 2019
RE: Proposed Alternative Plan to Bus Turnaround Plan

You will find attached, the 8/20/17 Brewster Architects Plan for Dutcher Dock to Menemsha Beach Parking and a proposed revision of that plan to accommodate large vehicles, delivery trucks and buses.

Note: The bus drop off/pickup point would stay where it currently is, in front of the Comfort Station.

Brewster Plan Changes/additions/Comments

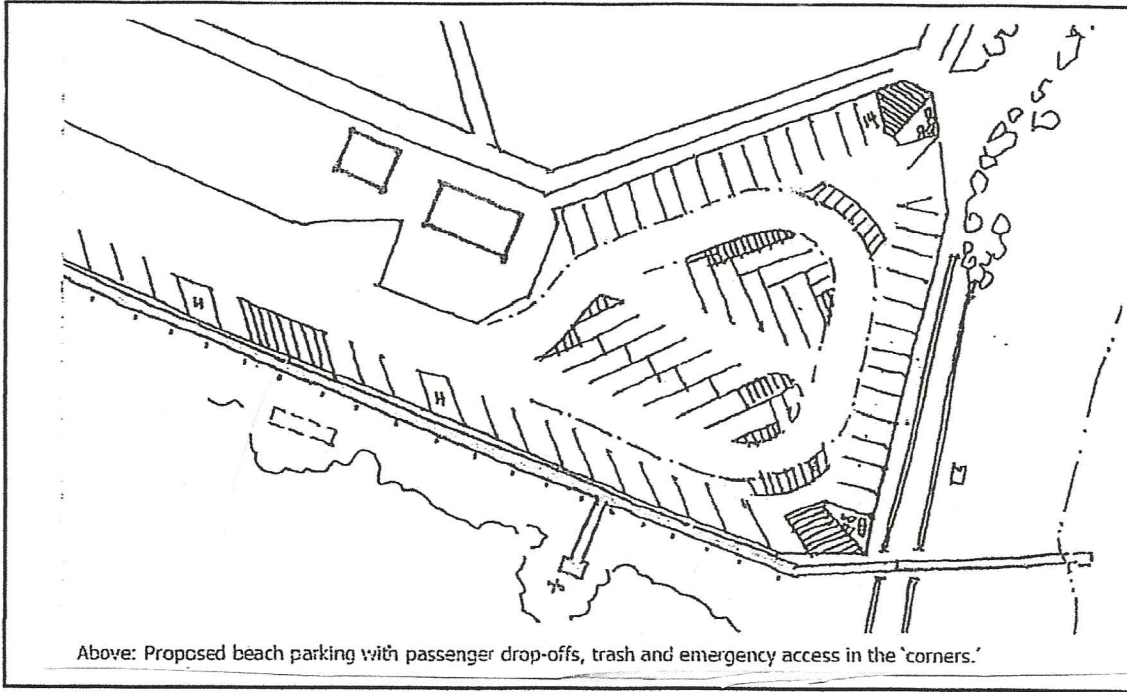
1. With the removal of 7 automobile parking spots, the central parking was moved towards the middle for ease of all traffic, including buses. This central parking may be adjusted, if necessary. Net loss of auto parking, between the proposed plan and the approved bus turnaround plan, is zero.
2. Maintained from The Brewster plan:
 - a. drop off points for passenger and emergency vehicle access
 - b. access for trash and recyclable collection in the 'corner" along the beach
 - c. emergency vehicle access to beach
3. Additional No Parking Area in center could be used for emergency vehicles.
4. Brewster Architects had suggested adding smaller spaces for mopeds and motorcycles. It appears those may exist in their plan and spaces could possibly be configured in this central area as well.

Recommendations:

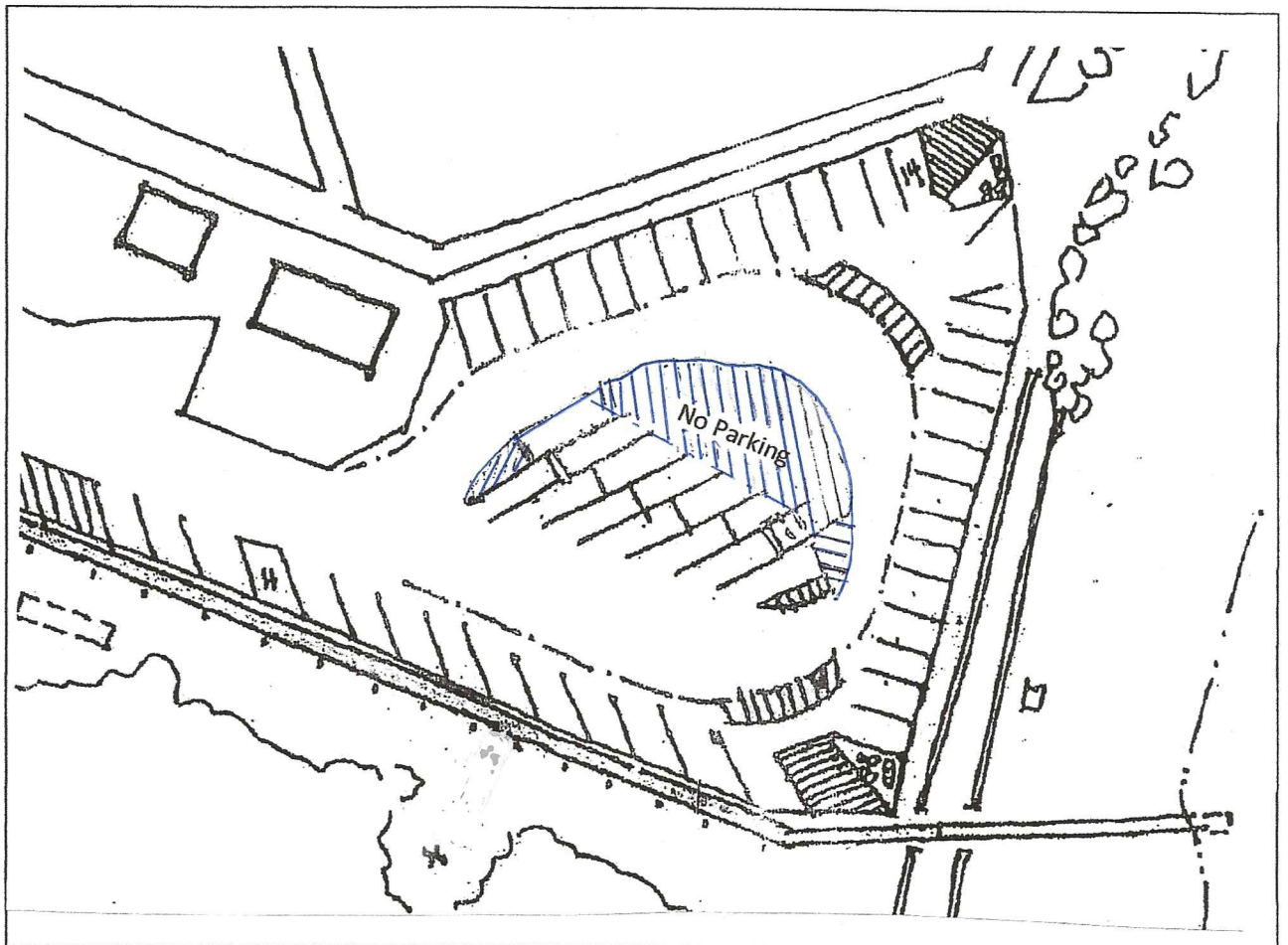
1. Ask VTA to use small buses in Menemsha.
2. Stop the #4 bus from coming down the hill into Menemsha. Have it connect with the #12 at both the Satellite Parking at Tabor House Road and the Chilmark Community Center.
3. We have received ridership data from the VTA, but the data is not sufficient to determine the typical boarding vs. departures at the beach area, by time of day, and day of week, and month. The Town should have a survey done this summer so it can be determined what the need is vs. the capacity being provided via the large buses.
4. Consider recommendations on the 8/17 Brewster report to: "Develop and refine existing parking time limits for the varying locations depended upon the specific use, such as Market pick-up, passenger drop-off, short-term and full-time parking to accelerate parking space availability."

Alternative to Current Bus Turnaround Plan
(revision of 8/20/2017 Brewster Architects Plan)
Submitted by Barbara Armstrong. 1/7/19

Original Brewster Dutcher Dock to Menemsha Beach Parking Plan- 8/20/17:



Proposed Revision to Brewster Plan to Accommodate Buses - 1/7/19:



MINOR
MODIFICATIONS
TO ORIGINAL
BREWSTER
PLAN

MOTORCYCLE/
MOPED

TRASH

PICK UP/
DROP OFF/
EMERGENCY

BIKE
RACK

TRASH

PICK UP/DROP OFF/
EMERGENCY

