

JOINT MEETING
of the
SELECTBOARD, PLANNING BOARD, CONSERVATION COMMISSION,
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
AND
LAKE MANSFIELD IMPROVEMENT TASK FORCE

FIRE STATION, 37 STATE ROAD
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2014
6:30 PM

I. Call To Order:

Deb Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:30 P.M.

II. Meeting Introduction: Deb Phillips

Deb Phillips gave an overview of the goal of the meeting.

She asked that all present think about:

“What do we want Lake Mansfield to be recreationally?”

“What do we do about the road in response to the first question?”

Deb stated that this is the beginning of the process, not the end. The goal is not to make a decision, but to start the conversation.

III. Presentation re: Lake Mansfield Road.

Christine Ward gave a slide show presentation about this topic.

Christine explained that Lake Mansfield is a 28 acre pond that is 16 ft. deep at the deepest point. It is owned by the Town of Great Barrington and is overseen by the Conservation Commission. There is also a 29 acre conservation forest with an accessible trail system that is connected to the recreation area.

Christine gave a description of the area and how it has changed over time.

Christine Ward explained that the Town of Great Barrington can seek grant funding since Lake Mansfield has been designated a body of water at risk.

In 2010, the Town received storm water drainage grant money to do work to stop the sediment build up.

In 2013 there was a remediation of the Castle Hill Drainage system.

In 2013-2014 a phragmites control project was done.

A grant of \$30,000 was received for water quality monitoring. Students from Simons Rock College will help to monitor the lake and write a water quality plan.

Christine Ward spoke about the details of the traffic control study from June 2013; volume of traffic was low with approximately 550-575 cars per day. There were slightly more cars driving north than south. (The road is approximately 20 feet wide)

The Master Plan and the Open Space Plan includes Lake Mansfield.

Christine Ward listed 10 areas of concern; the Boat Launch, Knob Hill, road deterioration, buffer zone/roadside wetland areas, whale rock, vernal pool, fishing access pull out, East View pool entrance, beach parking and run-off, and the Lake outlet. Chris Rembold reviewed alternatives as presented by Tighe and Bond. Any work that is to be done would require much permitting.

The first proposal is to rehabilitate the road and install a formal drainage system. The road would remain 2-way. This is estimated to cost approximately \$1.2 million (+/- \$300,000)

The second proposal would be to reclassify the road as 1-way and rehabilitate the road with drainage and bank stabilization. This is estimated to cost approximately \$1.1 million (+/- \$300,000)

The third proposal would be to reclassify the road as a park access road which would be closed to thru-traffic and perform limited rehabilitation. This is estimated to cost approximately \$600,000. (+/- \$150,000)

The fourth proposal would be to repave the road. This is estimated to cost approximately \$60,000 and should have a 5-7 year life.

IV. Open Discussion re: Lake Mansfield Road.

Jeff Cohen asked if a determination has been made that will give more recreation or Conservation options.

Chris Rembold replied that each proposal has its own impacts.

Deb Phillips asked what the area should be. She stated, as a member of the Selectboard, she needs to look at the road as a means of transportation as well.

Steve Bannon said closing the road to thru-traffic will cause hardships that would have to be dealt with. He explained that many people use this Road to avoid Main Street traffic. Emergency vehicles use this road often.

Fire Chief Burger said that he prefers that this road be kept open. Closing the road will create a detour for ambulances. He said that Fairview Commons is the most common call so closing the road would create a delay in turn around and response time.

Christine Ward said that there were community forums regarding this topic 5 years ago. This information would need to be updated.

Dan Bailly asked if there were any other options researched regarding re-routing the road.

Deb Phillips responded that cutting through was discussed.

Dan Bailly said that he would like to see information about this option. He also asked what option the Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force would support.

Deb Phillips said that the Task Force was split and has no recommendation.

Christine Ward said that the Task Force feels that in order to plan for the future of the road, there has to be an understanding of what the community wants to see for that road and recreation space. She said it is not the Task Forces job to decide.

Jeff Cohen said that being able to visualize the proposal with sketches would be helpful. He also suggested trying an option with the least impact and see how people react to it.

Jonathan Hankin replied that the least impact would be to repave the road. He suggested using airport mix.

Joe Sokul said that airport mix can't go on the top of the existing asphalt; the asphalt would need to be removed. He said this would work on a park type road, not a heavy traffic road.

Jonathan Hankin stated that closing a road requires looking at the big picture. He said that there has been no discussion about how Barrington Brook will impact traffic.

Jessica Dezieck said that she would not like to see it as a park road. She would like it to be done properly from conservation aspect.

Jonathan Hankin questioned the amount of accidents there have been on the road. Chief Burger replied that it is one of the safer roads in town; people drive carefully because of the conditions.

Jennifer Tabakin said that there needs to be clarity about the scope of work at the Lake's edge. There would still need to be work done at the Lake's edge if nothing is done to the road.

Dan Bailly asked how extensive the available grants would be for such a project. Chris Rembold replied that this question is hard to answer without knowing the plan. Chris said that money is often available for roads, 'open space' and recreation.

V. Adjournment:

Deb Phillips thanked all who were present for their input.

The joint meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM

Respectfully submitted,



Cara Becker
Recording Secretary