

Sippewissett Association

Mission (summarized):

- *protect and foster the interests of landowners of the Sippewissett region of the Town of Falmouth, Massachusetts*
- *promote and encourage cooperation among such landowners in order to ensure that the future development of the Sippewissett region shall be in keeping with its residential zoning restrictions*
- *protect and prevent the misuse of public and common areas in the Sippewissett region.*

Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2012 – Draft1 Approved at 12-4-2012 meeting

Board Present: Karl Audenaerde, Nancy McDonald, Arthur Gaines, Merle Mizell, Peter Waasdorp

Board Absent: Debbie Gove, Mary Fran Buckley, Susan Cohan, Maureen Conte, Bob Skilton, unfilled

The meeting was held at the home of Merle Mizell and was called to order by Pres. Peter Waasdorp at 7:15 p.m. There was not a quorum present, so the meeting proceeded under the designation of “Executive Session”. Therefore, none of the votes is binding, but rather are presented as recommendations for the larger Board to act on later.

Secretary’s Report – (no Secretary’s report)

The minutes of the June 7, 2012 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded and VOTED unanimous; recommended for Board to approve.

Treasurer’s Report – Karl Audenaerde

Karl reported a Money Market balance of \$ 9,548.29 and a checking balance of \$1,050.54.

Website Report –

No report.

Membership Report – Karl

We have 113 paid members for the current membership year. An update is needed on the Membership List and Addresses. Karl will contact Bob Busby who keeps this updated list.

OLD BUSINESS

Annual meeting:

Need member to replace Maggie on board. Arthur had recommended Bob Grosch, who in later conversation with Peter declined. Peter mentioned Judy Yost, a resident of the Cape Codder condos who expressed interest at the Annual Meeting in June. Arthur mentioned her husband had been active in the Sweeney matter. We recommend the Board vote to invite Judy to join the board of directors.

Right of Way Committee (Coastal Access Committee) – At the Annual Meeting it was voted to reactivate the Right of Way Committee, which had been formed in 2003. The original full committee included: Carl Bowin, Robert Busby, Bill Dugan, Michael Eder, Arthur Gaines (Chair), Lynn Lees, Gill Solomon, Sylvia Vatuk, and Peter Waasdorp. “Committee Resource Associates” included: Maureen Conte, Ken Foreman, and Hartley Hoskins. The committee completed a certain amount of work and made a Power Point presentation but declined to submit a final report because of the uncertainties arising from challenges to the Sippowisset right of way at Gunning Point Beach. 2012 Annual Meeting voted to reactivate the Committee, so no action is required of the SA Board in that regard. Arthur agreed to serve, again, as chairman, and recommended the objective be to identify and reevaluate the significant issues facing right of way and coastal access. We recommend the Board accept this constrained initial goal for the Committee.

Merle discussed ROWs along Cape Codder road, of which one is open and one has been closed off by an abutter. According to Merle, opening a nearby passage way connecting Cape Codder Road with Beccles Road would be opposed by abutters (Thornton and maybe Sogin) who say they fear people would park there for foot access to Woodneck Beach. It is believed the right of way connection was approved by selectmen several years ago and is shown on Town maps; and Peter said he believes there is an official utility right of way through that area.

Salt Marsh Restoration Candidates - APCC is looking for Salt Marsh restoration candidates in Falmouth, that could be purchased and protected by organizations seeking permits that adversely affect wetlands elsewhere.

Research at Woodneck Beach – Karl and Arthur reported on results of measurements made in June and July at SPABSI Pond (west of Woodneck Road) and Woodneck Marsh (east of Woodneck road) involving water level, salinity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen. The central issue under scrutiny was whether or not the SPABSI Pond is tidal, a matter that had been raised years earlier in connection with the 2007 Woodneck Beach study. Two weeks of closely spaced electronic measurements (one per minute) show that the Pond is not tidal, has very low salinity (nearly fresh), and has a surface elevation well above nearby tidal high tide.

The pond level dropped steadily, about 4 inches, over two weeks' time, and salinity increased in a manner consistent with the idea that evaporation was mainly responsible for water loss (not seepage through the beach). Karl mentioned that the plant (water lilies) and animal (frog) life are consistent with a fresh water environment. Peter suggested that if the SPABSI Pond were opened to the sea it would destroy the existing ecosystem. Arthur mentioned that the present ecosystem was probably created when Woodneck Road was built around 1900, before which SPABSI Pond was likely brackish. A full report will be made on the study by Karl and Arthur in the winter newsletter.

Nutrient data – Karl produced sheets giving several years of nutrient data taken by Bay Watch volunteers at Woodneck Beach, Gunning Point Pond, and Flume Pond. Karl will seek to obtain the electronic files containing these data from the Coalition for Buzzards Bay. Arthur agreed to provide a user-friendly interpretation of these data.

Update on Gunning Point

ConCom meeting With lots of help from Michael Eder, Peter made a PowerPoint presentation at the September 12 Conservation Commission enforcement hearing on 43 Gunning Point Road. Documents and photos were presented on illegal or improper issues relating to: the illegal eastern small groin; the lack of preexisting rip rap on the eastern section of the bank; the location of the extensive new riprap over the backlot line onto the beach lot; the change in deeds; the lack of a special permit hearing; etc. Other community members also spoke (Michael, George Billings, Hartley, Ken Foote, etc.) The hearing was continued until October 31. Betsy Gladfelter expressed her hope that she might have a way to deal with the groin and hoped all parties would be amenable.

Survey of beach lot. For years Hartley Hoskins has been recommending a survey of the bounds of the Sippowisset Subdivision coastal strip around Gunning Point and Hamlin Point, to which subdivision lot owners hold right of access. His logic is that such a survey is needed to properly assert ownership of that land by SPABSI and to define the specific land to which lot owners hold access rights. The cost of such a survey would be about \$6,500. We discussed whether it would be appropriate and possible for the Sippowisset Association to make a contribution to this project. It was suggested that maybe such a survey is premature since the matter of ownership and rights to this land (already defined by back lot lines of abutting lots and by low tide) is currently actively under review at the Town level. Karl mentioned that Sippowisset Association would not in any case be in a position to make a large contribution. No resolution of this matter was reached.

ZBA appeal - The Zoning Enforcement Officer, Eladio Gore, finally responded to a complaint (the third) signed by a large number of Sippewissett residents. It is assumed that the citizens meeting organized by Carl Bowin with the Town Manager and Counsel resulted in Mr. Gore's overdue response. By ruling that the 43 Gunning Point project meets local zoning codes, he has finally allowed us to appeal his decision to the ZBA. An appeal signed by well over twenty residents was delivered to Town Hall last week, and a hearing will be held November 1.

Globe article – an investigative report is expected to appear in the Boston Sunday Globe on September 30, 2012 giving the results of a lengthy study by the Globe, with interactions with several residents of Gunning Point. The issue is neighborhood concerns over changing deed boundary delineations and constructing coastal structures that have the effect of obstructing public and community access along the coast.

Cleaning road signs – Peter said he has no evidence that speed signs have been cleaned, although it is evident that the roadside along Sippewissett Road has been mowed recently, which has had the effect of making speed limit signs more evident.

Phragmites update – ConCom approved; fundraising

Motorcycle noise update - Peter reported that Falmouth police say fewer complaints have been received about motorcycle noise. Peter suspects the noise had not diminished, just that fewer people complain. He believes the Falmouth Police do not wish to write tickets for motorcycle noise.

Kiosk at Woodneck – Nancy reported that her activities to have signs installed in a public information kiosk at Woodneck Beach have been frustrating and fruitless. She has been pursuing support in establishing signs of the quality of those used by the Commonwealth at Plum Island and South Cape Beach. Her communications with Massachusetts Audubon have been nonresponsive, even though she has made it clear that we would pay the costs of putting up such signs. It was suggested that she contact Ian Ives the Audubon Director at Long Pasture Sanctuary, to explore cooperation at that level.

NEW BUSINESS:

Summer social – The summer social was held at Gerald Klein-Robbenhaars house on August 5, 2012. Several members of the Board agreed it was very successful. An estimated 60 people attended. 150 oysters were purchased for 85 cents each from The Clam Man, and were opened by Karl Audenerde, Bob Skilton, and Derek McDonald. According to Karl 150 oysters is considered the correct amount for the affair. The other source of oysters considered and rejected was the local cooperative operating through Coonamessett Farm whose price was \$2.25/oyster, including two shuckers for the event.

Save the Bay swim & bike ride

Bike Ride – The bike ride follows a course from Horseneck beach in Westport to Quissett Harbor in Falmouth, around Buzzards Bay to be held on October 14, 2012. Karl Audenaerde will be participating and is soliciting support for the Coalition through pledges for each rider.

Swim - 264 swimmers made the 1.2 mile swim from Davy's Locker in New Bedford to Fort Phoenix in Fairhaven on July 7, 2012. Our own Debby Gove swam the course in a blistering 35 minutes 5 seconds.

Oak Tree Deaths – Board members have noticed the death of large oak trees along Sippewissett Road. This has been happening elsewhere on Cape Cod and is under study by UMASS and the Cooperative Extension Service. Early results suggest the disease results from a virus carried by a gall wasp, most lethal to trees already weakened by defoliation by winter moths. We are not aware of any remedy as of yet.

Rachael Carson Statue – Merle proposed that SA provide support for the Rachael Carson statue to be established on land of the Marine Biology Laboratory in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the publication of *The Silent Spring*. He suggested the sum of \$500. Rachael Carson has a special connection to Falmouth because she spent time working at the Fisheries Laboratory between 1929 and her death in 1964. For several years she served on the Board of MBL. Publication of her epic book brought attention to the hazards of pesticides, such as DDT, and played a major role in a new environmental consciousness in America. We recommend the Board formally approve this expenditure.

Next meeting: The next meeting is Tuesday, December 4, 2012 at Nancy McDonalds's house.

A. Gaines