

**Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force**  
**Minutes of Tuesday, September 10, 2019 meeting**

TOWN CLERK  
GREAT BARRINGTON  
OCT 2 2019 AM 9:37

Present: Dale Abrams (Lake Mansfield Alliance), Jeff Cohen (Conservation Commission), Bill Cooke (Selectboard), Brandee Nelson (Planning Board), and Christine Ward (Citizen at large).

Absent: Peter Franck (Citizen at large), Ilana Siegal (Parks Commission),

Staff Present: Chris Rembold, Shep Evans, Sean Van Deusen

Ms. Ward called the meeting to order at 8:30 AM.

**1. Administrative Business**

Cooke moved to approve the minutes of July 30, 2019, Cohen seconded. All were in favor.

**2. Interim Paving of Lake Mansfield Road:**

At the request of the Task Force discussed whether or not the worst portion of Lake Mansfield Road should be paved this fall or not, as a short term solution. This is the section of the road from the boat launch / Knob Hill area to the residential and pool club driveways.

Rembold summarized: the question is whether or not DPW should use funds this fall, if funds are available, to put a thick overlay of asphalt on this worst section of the road. He said that as DPW has indicated, pothole paving in order to keep the road open to vehicle traffic is very harmful the health of the lake because potholes just break apart, and the patches do not last long. It also requires a good bit of road salt to keep ice from forming. To avoid these issues, a thick layer of paving would be the best solution if vehicle traffic is to be allowed.

Rembold said the Task Force has pointed out that paving may lead to faster driving and an expectation that the road will remain open for the foreseeable future, which of course is not the long term design.

Abrams asked about timeline for implementation of the long term design. Rembold said you would not see a full design finished and shovels in the ground for at least two years and likely three years.

Cohen said we can save some money by not repaving and begin to prepare people for what is to come.

Van Deusen said if DPW cannot maintain it during winter there will be no access through this portion. He said there is no real detour plan and cars will be turning around in private driveways and using the private road.

Ward said we would have to help redirect traffic by using signs.

Nelson said when the Board voted to close as a long term design, there was not a decision as to when to close it. We need to deal with that.

She said if there is no paving it means this section of the road would be closed. It may require barriers across the road and signage provided on both ends. We need to understand that closing it now means it is closed for good. It's a change to the traffic patterns and to emergency services.

Cohen said closing now would accomplish all of the things the Task Force hopes to achieve by permanent closure and if we could save some money that is good.

Van Deusen said some money would be spent on barriers and signage and plow routes would have to be altered. Signs would be installed that say the road is closed. There would be access to the

recreation area from the north end. Access to the residence at #30 and to the pool club would be allowed but nobody could go south from that.

Abrams asked if there are alternatives to jersey barriers. Van Deusen said a gate would get pushed over by snowplows. Barriers would be the best and quickest.

Abrams asked if there is an option to make it plowable. Van Deusen said yes, with asphalt.

Abrams the road is not optimal but we're just trying to make do for two or three years. Van Deusen said still we'd have to patch and salt, which would end up in the lake.

Ward said with a closure, there won't be such traffic stress on the road, and perhaps it won't break apart so much during the warmer months, so in the spring at least people can walk and bike on it. She said she believes the resulting decrease in broken pavement would also have a positive benefit to the water quality of the lake. She added that closing the road it now will help us all get used to changing our driving habits. It will impact everybody—whether you live north or south of the lake, you will have to go around.

Cohen asked if there is liability to the Town to leave it in the condition it is in now, knowing it is in bad shape. Van Deusen said yes but that liability is limited. If liability were a big issue I would say pave it in order to cover ourselves but also close the road. Let's protect liability make safe for bike and pedestrians but start the process of saying this is not a road you can cross with a car.

Nelson moved that the road be closed to all vehicular traffic until the permanent redesign plan is implemented, and to not pave anymore, the 1,000 linear-foot stretch of Lake Mansfield Road from Knob Hill Road northwards, to just south of the 30 Lake Mansfield Road driveway, and the task force should help coordinate signage and make communications to the community.

Cooke seconded.

There was a comment from the audience that people are still adjusting to the closure of the Division St Bridge. This would be another new traffic pattern.

Nelson suggested adding a time frame to the motion. She amended her motion to add that the road be closed beginning November 15, 2019, and not be reopened in the spring. Ward seconded. Amendment passed.

The task force voted on the amended motion which reads as follows:

Lake Mansfield road be closed to all vehicular traffic until the permanent redesign plan is implemented, and to not pave anymore, the 1,000 linear-foot stretch of Lake Mansfield Road from Knob Hill Road northwards, to just south of the 30 Lake Mansfield Road driveway, beginning November 15, 2019, and not be reopened in the spring, and the task force should help coordinate signage and make communications to the community.

All were in favor.

### 3. Project Updates:

CPA Grant: Rembold said he will develop a CPA grant application for funds to pay for the next step of design to implement the final, approved plan. This design process will take us from the 25% conceptual designs developed and approved in the 2016 comprehensive plan, through to 100% permitting and to construction. It would involve public input at various stages as designs are finalized.

Abrams moved, and Cooke seconded, to support a CPA grant application for the above 100% engineering design. Rembold said he's not yet sure what the cost of this would be, but it will be north

of \$100,000. All members were in favor. Rembold said that in October we could discuss this cost and scope.

Parking Lot Grant: Rembold said we will receive from the DEP the 604(b) grant for the beach parking lot stormwater designs; we're just waiting for a signed grant contract. This is an approximately \$30,000 grant and will develop conceptual design. The parking lot design can happen in parallel with the road design process. It might happen faster than the road design and could be wrapped into the final design of the road. Completion of this project could lead to a 319 stormwater improvement grant. He said this DEP grant serve as "match" to the CPA grant, and vice versa.

Outlet: Evans asked about the status of the Outlet structure design and construction. Rembold said all permits are in hand for this design, we just need to identify funds to implement it. Grant applications could occur next year, with implementation perhaps in 2021.

Weeds: Van Deusen said the Parks Commission has concerns about weed growth across the lake. He said they wanted to consider chemical treatment of weeds or mowing. Abrams said he has discussed with one of the Commissioners why these options are not the best. Van Deusen said he has told them that neither is a good idea. Ward said the mowing just encourages the growth of the weeds. The innovative and most effect approach is the biological control using milfoil weevil. At the beach area we have used weed barriers but it is costly on annual basis.

4. Citizen's Speak Time

There were comments during the road discussion, above.

5. The next meeting will be Tuesday October 1 at 8:30 AM. Topics will include the scope of work for the 100 % design. Nelson will chair.

6. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 AM

Minutes prepared by:

  
Christopher Rembold