**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Cape Elizabeth Town Council

FROM: Conservation Committee

DATE: June 30, 2017

SUBJECT: Paper Street Technical Assessment

In October of 2016, the Conservation Committee received the following charge from the Town Council:

Moved by James M. Garvin and Seconded by Jessica L. Sullivan

ORDERED, the Cape Elizabeth Town Council directs the Conservation Committee to revisit and review the 2013 Greenbelt Plan, previously adopted by the Town Council on January 6, 2014, specifically as it relates to the potential trails indicated along the paper streets of Surfside Avenue (U12-5) and Atlantic Place (U12-8), as well as any potential future trail development along the paper street at Lighthouse Point Road (U15-1), and provide an update to the Town Council within six (6) months. It is requested that the review encompass a thorough assessment of the technical and logistical feasibility, along with all other practical considerations, to determine a complete cost-benefit analysis of any potential trail development. (7 yes) (0 no)\*

\*The Town Council extended the deadline to June 30, 2017 at the March 13, 2017 meeting.

The Conservation Committee used the town’s engineering firm, Sebago Technics, to conduct the “assessment of the technical and logistical feasibility” of putting trails in at Surfside, Atlantic Place and Lighthouse Point Road.

A report on the technical feasibility is attached, and finds that there are no significant technical or logistical barriers to putting simple, 2-3 foot wide trails at either location. The Conservation Committee concurs with those findings.

With regard to “other practical considerations,” the Conservation Committee construed this to mean any other factors that might impact the creation of a trail, including current and future connectivity, neighborhood attitudes and comments, and issues such as parking and access.

Lighthouse Point Rd: Lighthouse Point Rd was not recommended as a potential trail in the 2013 Greenbelt Plan. Since undertaking this work, the Conservation Committee has received a number of citizen statements recommending against any potential trail development at the Lighthouse Point paper street, which are part of the public record of Conservation Committee deliberations. The Conservation Committee does not consider the Lighthouse Point paper street a suitable location for a trail at this time. Should ownership change, or official public access become available on the adjoining property, a trail connection should be reconsidered at that time. Consideration should include the solicitation of citizen comments.

Surfside/Atlantic Ave: The Surfside/Atlantic potential trail is identified as Link #23 in the 2013 Greenbelt Plan. This potential trail supports five goals of the 2013 Greenbelt Plan. They include: Opportunities, Underserved neighborhoods, Informal trails, Water body access and Long distance walks. Support for a more formal trail at Surfside Avenue is divided. The Conservation Committee considers Surfside Ave/ Atlantic Place as suitable for a trail, however, the committee has no plans to put in a trail at this time.

The Conservation Committee reaffirms its previous recommendation to the Town Council that the town maintain the rights to the paper streets in both locations to preserve potential future access for utilities, transportation, or recreation in the decades to come. The Conservation Committee also reaffirms its recommendations in the 2013 Greenbelt Plan for both trail locations.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Conservation Committee,

James C. Tassé, Chair

30 Cliff Avenue

Cape Elizabeth, ME 04107

**Executive Summary**

The Town Council referred to the Conservation Committee the task of conducting a technical feasibility study for the installation of trails on Lighthouse Point Rd, Surfside Ave and Atlantic Place. The Conservation Committee prepared a scope of work and the Town of Cape Elizabeth retained Town Engineer Steve Harding and Sebago Technics Inc. to conduct a technical assessment.

The Sebago Technics reports include a standard boundary survey of the paper streets, potential trail alignment and an assessment of technical feasibility, permitting and costs. The technical analysis concludes that the trails can be built with minimal disruption to existing topography and vegetation and for modest costs.

The Conservation Committee reviewed the Sebago Technics Reports, referenced the 2013 Greenbelt Plan recommendations, and received public comments at 6 meetings and in writing. The Conservation Committee reaffirms the recommendations in the 2013 Greenbelt Plan. The Conservation Committee does not recommend that a trail be constructed on Lighthouse Point Rd at this time. It also reaffirms its recommendation in the 2013 Greenbelt Plan that trail link #23, which represents Surfside Ave and Atlantic Place, is a potential trail that meets 5 of the Greenbelt Plan goals. The Conservation Committee has no plans to install the trail at this time, but would support trail construction in the future.

The Conservation Committee also supports preservation of paper street rights held by the town.