

Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
7:00 p.m. June 12, 2018

Present: Jeremy Gabrielson, Chair, Marti Blair, Mark Fleming, Zach Matzkin, Robert Petitt, Jim Tasse, Mitch Wacksman

Maureen O'Meara, staff

1. Mr. Gabrielson opened the meeting at 7:01 p.m. No members of the public wished to speak about items not on the agenda.
2. The minutes of May 8, 2018 were approved 4-0 (3 abstaining).
3. Cliff House Beach Interim Management. The committee noted email comments received and discussed a recommendation. Mr. Fleming noted the recommendation needs to change from what was discussed at the last meeting, based on the Police Department's inability to enforce policies that are not codified in ordinance.

Mr. Tasse confirmed the committee draft recommendation can be changed now. He supports paralleling Willard Beach rules, which allow some evening dog hours. There was some support for this.

Ms. Blair suggested working on the dog ordinance now, but committee members agreed that will take more time. The committee discussed abandoning a sign installation for now, installing a "soft" sign, or a sign with rules that cannot immediately be enforced. Mr. Gabrielson supported sending an interim recommendation to the Town Council.

The meeting was opened to public comment on this item.

Sheila Wellehan, 24 Rocky Hill Rd - She sent an email. The Conservation Committee used to be able to set policy and that seems changed, leaving you a bit hamstrung. There are great results with the committee focused on outreach and education and she supports efforts to promote good neighbor/responsible dog owner behavior. She is a dog owner, but agrees that it is reasonable to not allow dogs on the beach during the day.

Meg Springer, 2 Glen Ave - She goes to Willard Beach and follows the signs. She supports adding a sign. She didn't know dogs should be on leash and not sure a dog waste station is needed.

Mr. Gabrielson commented that there is confusion in the ordinance on whether leashes are required, depending on whether the beach is a "groomed or maintained" area.

Rick Jellis, 2 Seaview Ave- Groomed areas are grass. He would prefer no dogs on the beach at night as it is hard to enjoy a dinner when dogs interfere.

Suzanne McGinn, 1180 Shore Rd - Robinson Woods offers dog waste bags and it has helped dramatically reduce pet waste. They don't get other types of waste deposited there and she supports a dog waste station.

Nancy Ross, 12 Elmwood Rd - It is a small beach, so she prefers no dogs. She swims at Willard and she is ok with cold water, but not dog waste. At Willard, until there are lifeguards present, people walk their dogs even when they are prohibited. A sign is great, but also need enforcement. At the expanded off-leash area in Fort Williams, she was on the path and a dog jumped on her.

Tom Meyers, 4 Seaview Ave - He wants to clarify that dog leash requirements can be enforced if the beach is considered a "groomed and/or maintained" area and the town does maintain the beach. He appreciates the committee recommendations and efforts. Enforcement is difficult and the dog issue is a people issue. He supports a sign now that cites the ordinance and includes the police # for enforcement. He also supports asking people to walk or bike to reduce parking. He wants the dog ordinance revisions expedited.

George Ross, 12 Elmwood - He supports recommendations on parking.

Sheila Wellehan, 24 Rocky Hill Rd - She commented as a dog owner on the ordinance. It seems that people with dogs off-leash are not currently breaking the rules. She would like evening hours for dogs, but understands the small size of the beach may mean no evening hours. Scarborough Beach allows dogs on leash after 5 pm

Meg Springer, 2 Glen Ave - She moved here for the beach and won't let kids swim in water with dog waste. She has had good experience talking to people with dogs. We should help visitors understand.

The public comment period was closed.

Mr. Tasse said that voluntary compliance is better when rules are clear. He noted the Casco Bay Bridge sign and supports interim signage. Mr. Wacksman supports doing what we can now.

Mr. Gabrielson wants to expand outreach and education, ask for neighborliness and would change the tenor of the sign.

Ms. Blair suggested educating the public via the Cape Courier, but there was concern not to publicize the beach more than it has been already. Mr. Matzkin said that the beach is already known. Mr. Tasse suggested using a rigid, 2' x 3' plastic sign.

The committee drafted and agreed to the following wording for an interim sign:

**Town of Cape Elizabeth
Cliff House Beach**

Attention beach users

This is a small beach and good behavior on the part of all users is necessary for a positive beach experience. To that end:

- Be considerate of ALL users.
- Dogs should be under control.
- Remove all waste (including dog waste).
- Leave the beach cleaner than you found it.
- Consider walking or biking to the beach.

The Town of Cape Elizabeth is currently reviewing beach management policies. If you observe inappropriate behavior or have suggestions, please let us know. Thank you for your help in managing this waterfront resource.

Town of Cape Elizabeth Conservation Committee



The Conservation Committee voted 6-1 to recommend the sign to the Town Council.

4. General greenbelt trail maintenance. The committee briefly noted status of the Cross Hill Trail boardwalk, Loveitt Woods and Stonegate. It is ok to remove the low-hanging trees in Gull Crest. They also approved

improved signage at the Fowler Rd connector requiring bikers to dismount when crossing the pedestrian easement. No bids were received to replace the Spurwink Bridge and boardwalk decking, so staff will try again in 6 months and ask for funding to be carried over to the next fiscal year.

5. Winnick Woods rehab. Trail rehab in Winnick Woods starts Monday, June 18th. Ms. O'Meara will arrange for an announcement on the town website, press release. The committee agreed to install signs reading:

Rehabbing trails June 18th-29th Trails will be closed during rehab with orange tape. Please do not use trails when closed.

Ms. O'Meara will email student volunteers and copy Mr. Tasse, who is coordinating with the contractor. Mr. Tasse is also in contact with a group of Cape students.

Mr. Tasse said he has been approached to replace all the decking and bridges in Winnick Woods in exchange for engraving a name in the decking. Ms. O'Meara cautioned the Town Council has a policy regarding names on town property. The committee consensus is that the existing structures in Winnick Woods are in good shape and not to replace them at this time. They welcome contributions to other town locations.

6. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on July 10th.