



## MEETING MINUTES

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MEETING DATE:	February 12, 2015	ESS PROJECT NO.:	F451-000
LOCATION:	Wellfleet Council on Aging	MINUTES PREPARED BY:	Craig Wood
SUBJECT:	High Toss Road 0% Design Public Meeting	DATE PREPARED:	February 23, 2015
ATTENDEES:	See Signup List	DISTRIBUTION:	File

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Preparers Note: While comments were entertained throughout the meeting, they are presented at the end of the notes organized by general heading and not in the order in which they were heard.

A High Toss Road 0% Design Public Meeting was held at 4:00 PM at the Wellfleet Council on Aging. D. Palladino began the meeting by welcoming the audience and introduced the project team in attendance. He reviewed the meeting agenda and laid out the primary purpose of the meeting, which was to 1) describe why changes to High Toss Road are needed, 2) hear public concerns, needs, and questions for consideration during the design phase, and 3) prepare for developing concepts and the start of engineering and design of High Toss Road to accommodate tidal restoration. A clear distinction was made between the portion of the roadway which crosses the floodplain (between Snake Creek Road and Duck Harbor Road) and the section between Snake Creek Road and Pole Dike Road. It is recognized that the maintenance of vehicular access on this latter portion is critical and provisions will be made to accommodate this use into the future. While no design has occurred at this point, the range to possible alternatives would include the complete removal of the roadbed with no accommodation for public access to the construction of a boardwalk-type structure spanning the entire distance between Snake Creek Road and Duck Harbor Road designed to accommodate full tidal restoration.

D. Palladino also reviewed to reasons why the project as a whole is necessary to restore self-sustaining, tidally influenced natural habitats and emphasized that with the restricted tidal flow we have today, the marsh will not stay the same and will continue to degrade. He also reviewed the wide range of both natural and social benefits of the project including nutrient cycling; improvements to water quality; restoration of finfish and shellfish habitat and eel and herring runs; sediment deposition to compensate for sea-level rise; replacement of existing degraded habitats with healthy tidally-dependent vegetation; public access; enhanced opportunities for recreation including boating, birding/wildlife viewing, finfishing, and shellfishing; and improved control of nuisance mosquitoes.

He then reviewed the overall project schedule and introduced S. Spear who presented more detail on the development and results of the hydrodynamic model and described why changes to High Toss Road are needed to achieve restoration goals. He explained how the existing culvert under the roadway is greatly undersized to pass future tidal flows and how the roadway, once overtopped, limits the ability for the upstream marsh to drain on an ebbing tide. If left in current state, portions of the roadbed will erode.

C. Wood reviewed a series of photographs and presented a profile of the roughly 1,000 liner foot floodplain crossing showing the relationship between the existing elevations of the road and predicted Mean High Water from the model.



Comments and concerns raised during the meeting include the following:

#### User Groups

Current recreational uses noted along High Toss Road include hiking/walking, jogging, dog walking, horseback riding, cross country skiing, birding, hunting, mountain biking, ATV use, and kayak/canoe launching.

With regard to frequency of use, there was general consensus that the roadway is frequently used by a wide range of user groups. It was noted that approximately 10 horseback riders use the roadway. Regarding horses, a comment was made that an earthen surface would be much preferred over a structural crossing.

It was noted that the roadway is used by both the abutting neighborhood as well as individuals who are travelling some distance from other points in town or just visitors to the Cape Cod National Seashore (CCNS).

It was recognized that kayak/canoe launching would not be possible at this point with no vehicle access. Future improved access is proposed above and below this location to accommodate this use.

It was mentioned that shallow fords in the road bed would negatively impact mountain bikers by exposing the bike chain to salt water.

Uncle Tim's Bridge was mentioned as a good low-impact example of a non-vehicular structure. Alternatives need to fit with the natural setting.

In general, there was strong support for the need to accommodate the existing broad range of non-vehicular uses year around. Restoration is likely to increase recreational opportunities (e.g., shellfishing) and the number of users. Additional access points and parking should be considered.

#### Public Safety

Concern was raised about the current and potential future flooding of Duck Harbor Road, which in turn could limit access for fire fighting vehicles should vehicular use of High Toss Road be eliminated. At present there are no plans by the CCNS to improve low-lying portions of Duck Harbor Road.

Concern was raised regarding portions of the High Toss Road access being overtopped during some portion of the tide (e.g., Lieutenant Island) as visitors would be unfamiliar with these unique access issues.

#### Miscellaneous

A comment was made that otters are frequently observed at the existing culvert.

A comment was raised concerning on-going beach erosion and whether these issues (including a breach of the Gut) could impact future tide heights in Herring River.

A concern was raised regarding how the Town is weighting in on the issue. The makeup of the HRRC was explained as an opportunity for the Town to be involved with the project as a whole. The Town's position on the fate of the High Toss Road floodplain crossing is not clear at this point, no decisions have been made, nor is it clear what aspects would need to come to Town Meeting.

General concern was raised regarding restrictions placed on ATV use and this group can be an important review source if its use were more broadly accommodated within the Town. Travel within the power line corridor paralleling Route 6 could be an important route during an emergency.

### Funding

A comment was raised concerning sources of funding for the entire restoration project. It was explained that the project is estimated to be in the range of \$40-50 million and would require a combination of state and federal funds appropriated through legislative action.

### CNR Dike

A comment was raised concerning provisions for maintaining traffic during reconstruction of the dike and whether High Toss Road may be important as a second point of access to Griffin Island. It was explained that the reconstruction of the dike will accommodate alternating one-way traffic throughout the construction period.

A comment was raised concerning how the dike openings would be adjusted over time.

### Ownership

A comment was raised regarding current ownership of the High Toss Road floodplain crossing. It was explained that the land is owned by CCNS but the Town has a right-of-way. The actual wording of this access will require deed research.

### History of the High Toss Road Crossing

A comment was raised about the history of the roadway and when it was constructed. Based on historic mapping, the roadway predates CNR so originally would have been subject to substantial tidal influence. Some believe there was a steel bridge over Herring River at some point in the past. The Friends of Herring River (FHR) will investigate the history further and share on their website.

A comment was raised that a portion of the floodplain adjacent to High Toss Road was once maintained as a field with tile drains in the soil.

One resident mentioned that portions of the road bed have oyster shells, it was unclear if this is part of an historic oyster bed or placed as a source of fill.

### Next Steps

In response to the concerns raised prior to this meeting, another meeting is scheduled for February 26 for those who were unable to attend the February 12 meeting. A request was made to have CCNS staff present so the community feels their concerns are being heard.