

Herring River group filled with nonresident abutters

By Teresa Parker
Banner Correspondent

WELLFLEET — The Herring River Executive Council appointed 18 people to an advisory stakeholders group on Sept. 25, including representatives of town government and local organizations such as conservation trusts, the Center for Coastal Studies and the Audubon Sanctuary. Other members represent abutters to the estuary whose property will be affected by its restoration as well as the business community and citizens at large. Wellfleet Town Administrator Dan Hoort and Truro Town Manager Rae Ann Palmer had been given the task of coming up with a slate of candidates, which was accepted by the council.

Truro Selectman Maureen Burgess, who is also a member of the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission, was named chair of the group.

Abutter representatives are Laura Runkel of Cambridge, who owns a home on Route 6 in

Wellfleet near Upper Pole Dike Creek; Alfred Kraft of Boston, who owns a home on Old Chequessett Neck in the Mill Creek sub-basin; and Edouard Fontenot of Jamaica Plain, who owns a home on Old County Road in Truro, in the Upper Bound Brook sub-basin.

R. Paul Faxon was named member-at-large. A real estate attorney, Faxon owns a home on Chequessett Knolls Drive adjacent to the estuary. Bill Biewenga of Newport, R.I., who owns a home on Highmeadow Road in Wellfleet, was chosen as a recreational user of the river; he is a veteran ocean racer and writes a column for Bluewater Sailing.

Moe Barocas, owner of Abiyoyo, who serves on the Wellfleet Board of Health, and Judith Stiles, owner of the Newcomb Hollow Shop, were named as business community representatives. Stiles is a member of the group Herring River Concerned Citizens and established a website objecting to the use of herbicides in the restoration project.

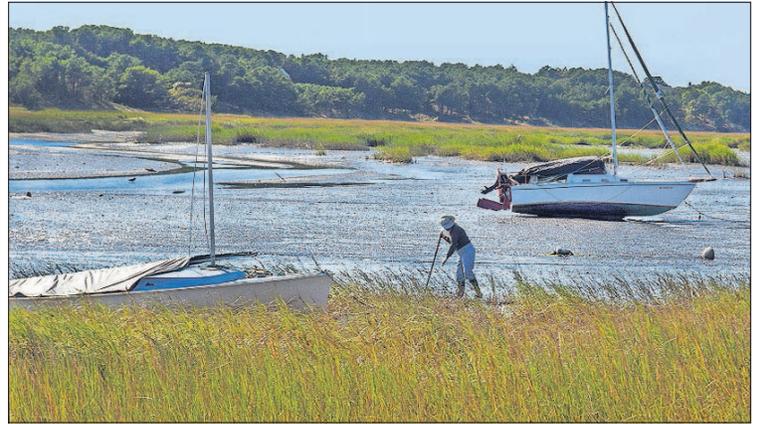
“I’m an abutter who is for the project,” Wellfleet resident John Cumber told the Banner. Cumber, who applied for a stakeholder spot but didn’t get one, said, “I just hope they haven’t chosen only abutters who are against it.”

“I don’t know six of these people,” said Wellfleet Selectman Helen Miranda Wilson, opening up debate on the review process. More vetting was discussed, but in the end the council agreed to appoint Hoort’s and Palmer’s slate for two-year terms.

The group will have the help of a neutral facilitator, paid for by the project, if they want it.

Suggestions on agenda items for the next executive council meeting — to be held early in the New Year — were considered, abutters’ rights and financing among them.

“As for abutters’ rights,” said council member Bob Weinstein, “KP Law should weigh in. We don’t want these kinds of questions to be answered by jailhouse lawyers.”



The first phase of the Herring River restoration involves 566 of a total of 890 acres of the estuary that will be affected. [PHOTO VINCENT GUADAZNO]

