



CAPE COD TIMES

Wellfleet, National Seashore collaborate on land transfers

By Denise Coffey

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WELLFLEET — Members of the Herring River Executive Council were brought up to speed last week on the most recent design plans for parking and water access when the new Chequessett Neck Bridge is completed.

Nils Wiberg, engineer with Fuss and O'Neill, walked the council members through plans to clear a staging area for the Herring River Restoration Project, and that area's eventual transformation into a small parking area and restored meadow.

Plans call for six handicapped accessible parking spaces on a permeable gravel surface. An ADA-compliant pathway will lead to the bridge on a 5% slope. That pathway will turn into an elevated platform over the marsh and will also connect with a stairway providing access to the water.

Paddle craft users will be able to access the water on both sides of the bridge via wide stairways with platforms, which would work as launch pads at low and high tides.

Who controls the operation and maintenance of the structures and areas are part of an ongoing discussion between the town and the Cape Cod National Seashore.

The parties are in the midst of determining land transfer agreements. The parking lot currently lies within the Seashore's jurisdiction. Who operates and maintains the lot is going to be part of the discussion going forward.

The town has started to identify parcels of land to swap with the Seashore because of the project's encroachment on Seashore lands.

High Toss Road, for one, will need to be elevated because of tidal flow. The

encroachment from that elevation will extend onto Seashore land. The same is true for other roads that lie within the Seashore.

The encroachment amounts to about 10 acres of land in total.

Project coordinator Carole Ridley is getting four permit applications ready for submission this calendar year. They include Sections 401 and 404 of the federal Clean Water Act, a Chapter 91 waterways license application and a federal consistency review required by the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Act.

“The permitting process is a long one that requires a lot of patience,” Seashore Superintendent Brian Carlstrom said. “It requires attention to detail. It’s an arduous process.”

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