

Minutes of the Sound View Beach Commission Formation Committee
UNAPPROVED

Meeting held: April 26, 2010 at Town Hall, 7.30pm

Present:

Regular Members: Frank Pappalardo (Chairman), Michaelle Pearson (Secretary), Bonnie Reemsnyder (ex officio), Skip Sibley (ex officio), Harry Plaut.

Absent: Russell Carlo (alternate), Joann Lishing (alternate), Gail Fuller, David Griswold.

Guest: Scott Boulanger

Call to Order: 7.30pm

Acceptance of Minutes: Mr. Plaut motioned to accept minutes of the March meeting. Ms. Pearson seconded. Minutes accepted.

No Public Comment.

7.49p Business

Frank Pappalardo reported on his meeting with Don Bugbee of Parks & Rec to ascertain Mr. Bugbee's views on topics we could work together on or any potential problems or changes he might foresee. Mr. Bugbee's responsibilities at Sound View are solely in operating parking lot and putting up the swim lines. He ensures that the Parking Lot is adequately staffed, and collects the money for the Town. He has no responsibility for the sand, etc. According to Mr. Pappalardo, Mr. Bugbee expressed some strong views, stating that he felt there were way too many people for a small patch of sand, and that any means of limiting access would be beneficial. Frank asked about lifeguards, stating that there were lifeguards at White Sands and Hains Park, but no longer at Sound View. Mr., Bugbee said that he worries about the potential liability of the town having lifeguards at two public beaches and not at the third. Mr. Pappalardo also explained some of this commission's ideas, and reported that Mr. Bugbee seemed very receptive, especially to the idea of developing Standard Operating Protocols (SOPs), which could be used year-to-year to keep policies consistent. Mr. Bugbee would also be interested in helping us develop future SOPs for aspects he doesn't currently control. Anything we could do to stop the flow of cars

would be good. Frank mentioned that he was going ask the Selectmen to reduce parking in the Lot by 30 percent, and reported that Mr. Bugbee thought that was a good idea. Mr. Pappalardo discussed the proposed traffic plan and also his discussions with OLPD last year. Mr. Bugbee felt that revision of traffic patterns would be a good idea. His concerns are very similar to ours. He said that people often complain to him, as a point person, about everything from zoning to policing, and that he'd be happy to see less overcrowding and more policing. The Bocce court is the responsibility of Public Works. Again, according to Mr. Pappalardo, Mr. Bugbee was interested in finding solutions to many of the issues we hear about regularly, including the Pavilion's tractor on the sand, jet skis tied to swim lines and in the swim area, etc. Frank asked if there's a sign posting beach rules at the Lot. Don said every time it's posted, the sign is stolen. Beach rules are not posted anywhere in town, except right at the beach, and those signs don't match, and contain contradictory language. Don says that if we get together and see what all the signs say, he'll post them on the town Parks and Rec website.

Mr. Bugbee told Mr. Pappalardo that there were a surprising number of out of state vehicles making use of the Lot. He was also quite vocal about the problem of illegal parking, stating that beachgoers park at the rest area, Mile Creek, etc., and that monitoring of those areas is not as vigilant as it could be. He suggested stronger police enforcement of parking violations.

Selectman Sibley stated that he had also had a meeting with Mr. Bugbee regarding some of these issues, including the idea of making the lot smaller and possibly installing a small park there, with kiosk-metered parking around it. Selectwoman Reemsnyder added, if you have more of a family park-like setting where you could enjoy the seaside, you'd change the type of people who come here. We need to change how people view the area.

Mr. Sibley also said that this would make the no-cooler rule on the beach easier to enforce, because there will be a picnic area available. Ms. Reemsnyder added, If there was a lifeguard, they could blow a whistle and get the cooler off the beach. Wouldn't it be a good switch to have someone on the beach enforcing rules rather than in the parking lot? She also pointed out that another advantage or reconfiguring the Lot is that organizations around town would likely make use of a pleasant space at the beach. If you have a park there, and the local organizations start using it for events, it could serve as a summer Town Green that would pull the entire community together.

Selectman Sibley said that he had heard from Mr., Bugbee that there are simply too many people at the beach and in the Town Lot, and that the current system feeds into that by giving them a place to park all day. The fee is only \$20, and these visitors leave a significant mess behind, which the town has to clean up.

Mr. Plaut said that he was under the impression that the town kept the Lot because it made money.

Selectwoman Reemsnyder replied that the Lot costs the Town a lot of money in policing and maintenance, and that she was excited that money was allocated for the parking lot study, and felt that this could really be a catalyst for improvement.

Selectman Sibley said he had been looking for solutions to these problems for eight years. Ms. Reemsnyder agreed, stating that there have been tickets, there have been fines, but we don't have control of the courts when they dismiss.

Frank Pappalardo asked, Why isn't Maratta's parking lot lined and graded like all of the other lots? Why does the Pavilion have a tractor on the beach? The Town has to make the bars operate within the rules. In the short term, we should try to reduce parking by a third, and hike rates by a third.

Selectman Sibley said, we could get some security guards with radios to enforce the swim lines, and other regulations. It is time to have consistent signage with the correct rules, and if Don's willing to help, he can put it up on the website. Frank Pappalardo: Private parking lots could be given signs to post too. Selectman Sibley agreed to place the proposed reduction in on the Selectmen's agenda.

Last Saturday, Frank Pappalardo met with the Federation of Beaches (FOB). He explained the differences between the Sound View Beach Association (SVBA) which is a nonprofit, voluntary association; and the Sound View Beach Committee to Form a Commission (SVBCFC). The latter, this Committee, is a Town Committee, under the auspices of the Selectmen, which has been charged with the task of establishing an entity to deal with issues regarding the Town owned property at Sound View. The SVBA differs from other beach associations in town in that it does not require its

residents to become members, and that as a 501(c)(3) it is prohibited from engaging in any advocacy.

Other Business:

Mr. Pappalardo: Update List of Recommendations and submit formally to the Selectmen. The bus signs are inadequate. Need to deal with the issue of party bus limos. Discussion of one-way streets, and closures on weekends. Bonnie, David and Tim have been working with the police to address some of these issues. Frank Pappalardo and David Griswold to set up a meeting with Selectmen, and State Trooper Scott O'Donnell.

Mr. Pappalardo then made a motion to table the remaining items on the agenda due to the late hour. Ms. Pearson seconded. Motion passed.

Mr. Plaut motioned to adjourn, Ms. Pearson seconded. Motion passed.

Next meeting: TUES. May 25, 2010, 7.30 pm
Shoreline Community Center, 39 Hartford Avenue.