

Town of Huntington Selectboard Special Meeting
Camels Hump Road (CHR) Community Forum



Monday, August 22, 2016
 7:00 pm – Annex, Community Church of Huntington

APPROVED MINUTES

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 DATE

[Handwritten Signature]
 September 9, 2016

Purpose:

- To gain an understanding of possible solutions to speeding on Camels Hump Road (CHR) and other traffic/parking related issues at the Camels Hump State Park trails parking lot.

Moderator: Nancy Stoddard, Huntington Selectboard

Panelists: Vermont State Police (VSP)
 Lt. Garry Scott, VSP Williston Station Commander
 Sgt. William Warner, VSP Community Liaison
 Vermont Agency of Forests, Parks & Recreation (FPR)
 Jason Nerenberg, Stewardship Forester
 Gary Sabourin, Forestry District Manager
 Jessica Savage, Recreation Program Manager

Process (Agenda):

- Introductions – Nancy Stoddard
- Review purpose of meeting – Nancy Stoddard
- Summary of problems reported to Town Administrator – Barbara Elliott
- Huntington residents voice concerns - Public comment
- Vermont State Police describes scope of their responsibilities to correct problems
- Forest, Parks, and Rec describes their scope of responsibilities to correct problems
- VSP and FPR describe possible solutions to address problems - VSP and FPR
- Summarize follow up items for VSP, FPR, and Town/Selectboard – Nancy Stoddard

Products (Anticipated Outcomes):

- Huntington residents feel heard
- VSP and FPR gain greater understanding of Huntington residents' concerns
- Huntington residents gain better understanding of scope of ownership by VSP, FPR, and Town
- Possible solutions to problems identified
- Clearly defined action steps for all involved

Attendees & Introductions

Moderator: Nancy Stoddard, Selectboard Vice-Chair
Selectboard Members: Dori Barton, Andrew Hendrickson, Roman Livak, Chris Norris, Nancy Stoddard

Guest Panelists: VSP: Lt. Garry Scott and Sgt. William Warner; Forest Parks & Rec: Jason Nerenburg, Jessica Savage, Gary Sabourin

Officials Present: Theresa Wood, State Representative
Residents: Laura Cameron, Pat Fitzgerald, Bill Hegman, Tessa Izenour, Helen Keith, Audrey Lewis, Everett Lewis, Andrew McPhedran, Rachel McPhedran, Bill Menning, Joyce Menning, Margaret Taft, Tim Taft,
Times Ink Reporter: Ruth Blodgett
Town Staff: Clinton 'Yogi' Alger (Road Foreman), Barbara Elliott (Town Administrator)

Opening	<p>Stoddard opened the meeting at 7pm with a welcome, introduction and review of the meeting purpose, agenda and anticipated outcomes.</p>
Summary of problems as reported to the Town Administrator (Elliott)	<p>Primary Safety Concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Danger to Personal Physical Safety <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Of kids, adults & pets b. Of residents & visitors c. Of walkers, runners, bicyclists & drivers d. Blocked roadway & driveway access for medical emergency vehicles 2. Danger to Personal Property Safety <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Emergency firefighter access due to blocked roadways & driveways b. Damage to personal property such as automobile break-ins or damage to people's lawns 3. Danger to Health Safety <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sanitation Hazards <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Dumping of garbage, trash, tires, kitty litter & other items ii. People using the roadside as a bathroom b. Air quality <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Dust from speeding cars <p>Primary Aggravating or Contributing Factors</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased level of State Park usage (hikers) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Year over year increase in the number of cars/hikers (currently 17,000 hikers signed in so far this year; 290 hikers signed in on July 30th alone) b. Year round increase in the number of cars/hikers 2. Inadequate parking <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Capacity of existing 'designated' Park parking lots 3. Topography <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Narrowness of the road b. Blind curves c. Hills 4. Weather <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Winter & mud season road conditions leading to out-of-control vehicles 5. Traffic speed, traffic speed, traffic speed, traffic speed & traffic speed 10. And traffic speed (Note: while the key problem on upper CHR is hikers, the problem on lower CHR is hikers, residents and delivery vehicles)
Resident Concerns, Current Status, & Possible Solutions	<p>Speeding</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Current speed limit per Town ordinance is 30 mph except for the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Zone = 25 mph Taft Road Intersection = 20 mph Winding Road sections = 15-20 mph One Lane Bridges = 20 mph 2. No posted speed limits: Signs are missing so by default the speed limit is 50 mph <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Note: signs are on order and will be installed by the Road Crew as soon as they arrive. 3. Speed limit for CHR in the Town ordinance is set too high. However, speed limits must be set based on traffic engineering studies. The lowest enforceable limit that can be set is 25 mph, however we can have warning signs with recommended speeds of down to 15 mph. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Need to investigate the cost of conducting a new traffic engineering study b. Need to install curve warning signs with recommended lower speed limits 4. Road Surface: Factors that would reduce speed include: tables & humps at strategic places (build dirt tables & dips) and allowing more potholes to accumulate. Residents do not want the road straightened or widened as that would just exasperate the problem.

5. Enforcement: FPR has no enforcement authority. Adding additional hours to the Town's VSP enforcement contract is not feasible due to VSP staffing constraints, however we can designate CHR as a key problem area that we would like to have patrolled. (Note: speeding throughout the Town is a problem; additional enforcement is desired by residents throughout town.)
6. Speed cameras with remote ticketing is not currently done in VT.
7. Resident reporting of license plates? Residents would have to testify in court themselves (as the witnesses) and would need a way to validate what the automobile speed was.

Parking

8. Expand the existing parking lots: FPR only owns half of the current parking lot property at Burrows Trail and none of the property at Forest City.
9. Post NO PARKING signs on roadway & tow cars.
10. Residents can have cars that are parked on their property (outside of the right-of-way) towed
11. Town can post no parking signs and have cars that are parked on the traveled portion of the road towed. This would address emergency vehicle access.
12. FPR could have a shuttle bus from BPMS.

Volume of Hikers:

13. Increased demand on natural resources is a statewide problem; parks were not originally designed for the volume of hikers we see now.
 - a. Investigate options: additional staffing; cost-free lottery tickets for hiking; gate at the parking lot (similar to the gate to Bristol Cliffs – with a sign as to where to park)

Solving the problems will require a combination of enforcement, planned control and the involvement of residents.

Next Steps:	<p>Alger:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install new speed limit signs. • Install curve warning signs with recommended lower speed limits. • Install No Parking Signs and develop plan for having cars towed. <p>Elliott:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate cost of traffic engineering study in order to lower speed limits. • Contact Underhill to find out what they are doing on Stevensville Road to address speeding; are the complaints fewer because the houses are set back farther? • Organize/coordinate the 3-month follow-up meeting. <p>Selectboard:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a 3-month check in public meeting with FPR, VSP and residents to review follow-up that has been done. • Consider including cost of traffic engineering study in FY 17-18 budget if it is not feasible to implement it in the current fiscal year. • Investigate alternatives for supplementing the VSP enforcement contract hours. <p>VSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test additional areas of CHR with the speed cart and provide data to the Town after the speed limit signs have been posted. • Continue to patrol up to the parking lot as resources allow. • Follow up on the Case #: 16A103841 – the parked cars in resident's driveway.
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	<p>Forest Parks & Rec:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider modifying the role of the caretakers funded through the Green Mountain Club. • Look into the possibility of seasonal staffing for the parking areas. • Look into the possibility of providing some sort of shuttle service for weekends. • Provide additional outreach & education to hikers (press releases, public service announcements; signs at the trail head; signs welcoming people to the Park access road). • Consider fees, permits and shuttles – as has been done in the National Parks. • Research what other states are doing to address these kinds of problems. • What kind of testing of new strategies for addressing capacity can be done at Burrows Trail? • Is there any way to expand the capacity of the current parking lots (this may require working with adjacent land owners). • Determine what the capacity is for different trailheads. • Check to see if the Fish & Game Wardens can increase their presence in the area.
Closure	The meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm
	<p>08/22/16 – Meeting date 08/25/16 – Draft/unapproved minutes distributed and posted on website. 09/06/16 – Final/approved minutes approved 09/07/16 – Approved minutes to Town Clerk for recording & web posting</p>