

To: Sub-Committee for DRI review members: Elizabeth Taylor, Chair; Cheryl Andrews; Richard Elkin; Kevin Grunwald; Charles McCaffrey

Re: Town of Wellfleet's application for DRI review

Date: March 30, 2020

Dear Sub-Committee Members,

I am a resident of Wellfleet and a supporter of the Herring River Restoration Project. I am writing regarding a suggestion made by a member of your sub-committee proposing the creation of a parking area for recreational kayak users at the westerly end of High Toss Road in Wellfleet. The idea was put forward at the end of your March 9 public DRI hearing and review of the Town of Wellfleet's DRI application. Because the suggestion came after the close of public comments, and at the end of a long meeting, I was not able to express my concerns at that time.

Although I am writing to take issue with the suggestion that parking for recreational kayakers be created on High Toss Road, I want to state at the outset that I look forward to having increased recreational kayaking on a restored Herring River, and I am not opposed to new or expanded parking in a different location. (The project currently plans to provide improved parking at the site of the proposed new dike, where off-road parking currently exists. This location is on a road that is currently well traveled by the public, especially in the summer months.)

My opposition to the specific suggestion that a parking area should be created on High Toss Road is based on the following :

- 1.** The matter of creating a parking area for kayakers at High Toss Road was raised during the project's planning stage when future recreational use of the restored river was discussed. The absence of a plan to create a new parking area at High Toss Road in the DRI application, was, I believe, not an oversight.

- 2.** It is my understanding that a wetland restoration project should not be viewed as an opportunity to make changes that are beyond the scope of what is necessary to return an area to a state or status that once existed... and that a wetland restoration should avoid unnecessarily interfering with, or altering, existing neighborhood uses of the area.

High Toss Road has been an asset enjoyed by its surrounding neighborhood during the 100+ years that have passed since the Chequessett Neck Road Dike was constructed. During this time the road has been used by residents living close by for recreational walking and for riding horses onto Griffin's Island. It also has been, and continues to be, a second means of egress for neighborhood homeowners. In the approximately 30 years that I have lived in the area it has been a preferred local spot for walking dogs because it is a road that is not heavily traveled, and, therefore, it is a place where a family pet is not easily spooked. While some residents travel from other parts of Wellfleet to walk on High Toss, the road has been, for the most part, a word-of-mouth kind of place. Automobile traffic has been light and mostly local, to my knowledge.

The addition of a parking area specifically for recreational activities in connection with an important wetland restoration such as the Herring River Restoration Project- which, when it is completed, is likely to receive widespread publicity and attention- would change the quiet local character of the area. As I mentioned above, there is an alternative location on Chequessett Neck Road, where parking for recreational access to the Herring River currently exists, which the project identified as appropriate for enhancement.

(If this committee were to recommend the addition of parking at High Toss Road for recreational users -and thereby effectively amend the DRI Application which has been submitted by the Town of Wellfleet- would that change not deserve specific notice and a public hearing, or at least a public feedback session, before it took effect?)

I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of my concerns. I had planned to attend your April 2 continued DRI review, but because so many things have been rendered uncertain by recent events I thought it would be best for me to set out my thoughts in a letter.

Respectfully,

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CC:

Janet Reinhart - Chair, Town of Wellfleet Selectboard

Daniel Hoort - Administrator, Town of Wellfleet

Brian Carlstrom- Superintendent, Cape Cod National Seashore

Carole Ridley - Project Coordinator, Herring River Restoration Project

Martha Craig - Project Manager, Friends of Herring River