

Meeting Minutes Parking Advisory Committee 1/25/2021

Members Present by Zoom: Cara LaBounty, Lou Borie, John Rankin, JC (John) Cohn, Diane Mariano

Town Officials Present by Zoom: Josh Arneson (Town Manager), Pete Gosselin (Foreman, Highway Department), and Kyle Kapitanski (acting Chief of Police)

Absent: none

6:01 PM Welcome and Public Comment

Diane read an email by Jane Miller, resident at the corner of Cochran Road and Wes White Hill. Sometime during the night of Saturday 1/16/2021 a car coming down Wes White Hill entered Jane's driveway and drove up along the side of her house for a distance of 10-12 feet, in the direction of Cochran Road. She reported the incident to Richmond Police Department. While she has no knowledge of the driver's intent, she wanted to make the point that this Cochran Road-Wes White Hill intersection has safety issues independent of the season.

6:05 PM 1. Additions or Deletions to Agenda - none

6:05 PM 2. Open Discussion with Josh Arneson (Town Manager), Pete Gosselin (Foreman, Highway Department), and Kyle Kapitanski (acting Chief of Police)

Cara welcomed everyone and thanked them for coming to our meeting and helping us sort out the history and concerns from each of their points of view. She also helped specify the point of conversation. So far, the PAC is mostly concerned with recreation parking, especially summer parking. Specifically, not The Richmond Park and Ride and not the Bridge Street parking.

Pete spoke first and we spent most of the time talking to him about the various projects and possible parking thoughts.

Lou mentioned that as projects come up in the town, we all need to take a look for potential parking places.

Dugway Road Topic

Pete gave detailed information about the Dugway Road project this summer. He also explained how and why ditches were dug in such a way, to improve drainage. And yes, that action does take away possible parking however provides longevity to our dirt roads.

All members continued to ask about the rebuild of the road near the gorge, was there any possible extra parking that could be gleaned. Pete confirmed there was none and there were constraints due to the major retaining wall that was to be built and the nature of the gorge itself. There was extra land needed to for the actual project build and that was being made available by the Rosen's and then returned back to them in its original condition.

Pete mentioned the constraints of Dugway Road, not only for drainage but also for the steep edges. There just is not much road to actually work with. He did say, if the conditions were right, with good line of site and with good access for drainage, there was theoretically a possibility to bury the drainage pipes.

Wes White Hill Topic

Pete gave us a history of the rebuilt at the bottom of Wes White Hill that was done in 2009. That intersection had been identified in 2000 as 1 of 5 dangerous intersections in Richmond. That was quite a rebuild. Previously, there was a dip that went up to a stop sign and line of sight was poor. Plus, the road went right next to the Miller's house, by a few feet. The road was lifted several feet and curved at the bottom for better line of sight. From that project, 4-5 public parking places were made in front of Miller's house and all land in that area is the Miller's.

Route 2/Cochran Road/Stage Road (Bullpen) Topic

Pete gave us another history lesson of the area of Cochran Road/Stage Road and Route 2/RR intersection. Here in 2001, VTRANS, in Operation Life Saver, took on this project to straighten Route 2 which required blasting 6,000 cu tons of ledge. This improved visibility in all directions. This area is referred to as the "bullpen".

Discussion continued with asking about possible parking across from the Jonesville PO, next to the motorcycle shop parking area to the corner of Cochran Road. That is part of the railroad right of way (ROW) and we need to talk with them. No one at the meeting knew if Bee There Towing had made a special arrangement with the railroad for their commercial parking of vehicles.

Lou had a conversation with Randy Snelling from VTRANS about this area. He also said this is RR ROW.

Richmond Land Trust (RLT) Bombardier Field Topic

Pete talked about the history of the east-end Cochran Road parking solution for last summer. He described the options and then the work they did in helping secure summer parking on the RLT Bombardier Field. Lou mentioned that parking was done as an emergency measure to help as a one-time solution. And the contracted farmer this year is going to do some work in the field to improve the hay quality.

State Land at Johnny Brook

Lou brought up the topic about the 1-acre State owned property at the Johnny Brook/Kenyon Road/Route 2 Conant Bridge. Both he and Diane had been wondering about the possibility of creating an end of town river and bike parking. Lou reported on his conversation with Randy Snelling from VTRANS about this. Randy had not thought of that as a parking area.

6:57 PM Cara invited Kyle to bring his perspective.

Kyle mentioned that the parking enforcement was already a nightmare. He sees fewer tickets being issued in town compared to Dugway and Cochran roads. Along with this he sees more property crime/lewd behavior. He generally sees public parking lots bringing "better behavior" than in areas where cars park along the roadway edges.

Kyle mentioned that any new parking areas would take 90 days to get the proper ordinances. The ordinances need to be there for enforcement. Josh confirmed a 3-4-month town timetable for creating a new parking area.

JC asked Kyle about his opinion about the cars parked on Cochran Road, both at the east end and around the RLT Canoe Access. Kyle found the number of cars parking there this past summer (2020) to be unbelievable. He would prefer no parking there due to the narrow edge and 45 mph.

John asked, as a lay person, how does one assess what is dangerous. Kyle mentioned there is crash data available to get actual data. And there are means such as line of sight, shoulder width, and speed that help decide potential risks.

Other Topics That Came Up during Open Discussion

In talking about the Dugway Road Project JC asked about if and how compensation could be provided to landowners for potential parking areas. Josh and Pete said usually these transactions happen on case-by-case basis.

Cara asked Pete if there is money in the budget for signage. He said yes for town designated parking.

Cara also asked Pete if there is money in the budget for gravel fill for some areas. He said yes and mentioned the work done for the Bombardier Field. He did say they do not add fill to privately owned areas such as the RLT Canoe access.

Both Pete and Kyle said that for privately owned land, like the RLT properties, they have no jurisdiction nor any right enforcing parking, such as the RLT Canoe Access.

7:15 PM Cara thanked Josh, Pete, and Kyle for taking the time to come help educate the PAC.

Only the 5 PAC members were on the Zoom call until adjournment.

Maps

7:22 PM Lou showed us the maps he had completed in the Jonesville/Richmond area. He had marked the various parking areas and the approximate number of cars within each. He also showed the VTRANS ROW map of the Jonesville/RR intersection.

Lou then went to the Johnny Brook/State Land area. John mentioned that he has been on that bank and it is quite steep and has poison ivy. Lou mentioned there was various aspects we would need to check in with such as preservation of the rivers edge.

Lou will put all maps into One Note under resources. Cara asked if the 911 addresses could be added. Diane mentioned that there is a Richmond Trails Map that might also be used to denote parking.

In the map discussion Cara asked about adding the spaces at the St Mary Cemetery on Cochran Road. Lou did mention that there was logging happening in the area right now and wondered perhaps some of that area might be added for parking. This is an area of future discovery.

Diane mentioned that we need to reach out to Cochran's Ski Area since they have been generous with bike parking.

7:55 PM Wrap-up

~ Lou & Cara were going to talk about VTRANS communication. And then Lou will find out more details of the Johnny Brook parcel.

~ JC is going to find the railroad ROW contact for Jonesville parking. He will talk with Josh and see who the Buttermilk RR contact was and reach out to that person.

~ John is going to find the Cochran contact and invite them to come on the 2/8 meeting.

~ Cara asked Lou if we as a committee should invite the RLT to come and talk about their plans for the Bombardier Meadow, since Lou was also a member of PAC. Lou thought that was a good idea.

8:04 PM Lou left.

8:06 PM Meeting ended. JC motioned to adjourn meeting. Diane concurred. And all said aye.