

Mt. Agamenticus Parking & Lease Planning Subcommittee

Monday, February 26, 2018

York Water District Office 4:00 PM

SUBCOMMITTEE FORMATION: This subcommittee was formed after a workshop with Town of York Selectmen & York Water District Trustees on February 12, 2018 discussing water quality and safety concerns related to inadequate parking and restroom facilities at Mt. A. on property owned by the YWD for the protection of water quality in Chase's Pond and leased to the Town of York for access and egress to the Summit Park. The existing 50-year lease expires in May 2030. Attendees of the workshop recognized the need to improve parking and restroom facilities. The consensus was to form a sub-committee to work toward mutually acceptable and beneficial improvements to parking and restroom facilities at the base and the Summit and to update the lease agreement with the Town. The sub-committee will report progress back to their respective Boards for possible action.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS: Two Town of York Selectmen, Dawn Seigny-Watson & Mike Estes, Two YWD Trustees, Andy Belliveau & Rick Boston, Mt. Agamenticus Conservation Coordinator Robin Kerr, YWD Superintendent, Don Neumann and YWD Resource Protection Manager Gary Stevens.

OVERVIEW OF CURRENT CONDITIONS:

EXISTING BASE PARKING AND RESTROOM: there are 10 – 12 spaces, in this unimproved dirt parking lot at the base and a single portable toilet. On weekends and some week days and evenings it's common to see the parking lot full with 20 to 30 additional vehicles parked along Mountain Road and Mt. A Road. There are no defined parking spaces at this location. On one weekend in the spring of 2017, 100 vehicles were parked at this intersection, a day with no organized events scheduled. Parking along Mountain Road severely chokes the traffic flow at times. Also, a concern with the staff; are buses, multiple busses unload and load school groups at the base throughout the year, loading, unloading, turning around and parking all need to be addressed.

EXISTING Mt A ROAD PARKING: Ring Trail west access, 3 spaces. Ring Trail east, 5 spaces, both are unimproved dirt parking lots. These parking areas are on land within the leased area, but not called out as approved parking. These parking areas should be defined and improved.

EXISTING SUMMIT PARKING AND RESTROOMS: there are approximately 30+/- spaces at this unimproved dirt parking lot on the summit nearly all parking is on District property. There are two portable toilets on the Summit on Town property, however it is on the edge of the Chase's Pond watershed. There is additional overflow parking in a grass area in front of the barn. When parking is full at the summit it is difficult to turn around to come out and Mt A Road becomes choked before the parking lots with cars parking along the road. Parking spaces are not defined leading to confusion by motorists and congestion.

EXISTING LEASE COVERS: The Mt. A Road (the summit road), powerlines and 2.5 ac. On the right-hand corner of Mountain Road and Mt. A Road where the existing 10 – 12 space parking lot and single portable toilet is now.

EXISTING LEASE DOESN'T COVER: Any of the summit parking lots on YWD property. The existing double portable toilets at the summit are on Town property although they are in the watershed.

FEBRUARY 26, 2018 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING NOTES;

Member Attendees: Dawn Sevigny-Watson, Mike Estes, Robin Kerr, Andy Belliveau, Don Neumann, Gary Stevens

Guest Attendee: Jon Edgerton of Wright-Pierce, Engineering Consultant

Member Invitees unavailable to attend: Rick Boston

This was a productive meeting where all parties were able to explain their goals and concerns related to parking and restroom facilities at Mt. A. Jon Edgerton of Wright-Pierce Engineers (W-P) has been contracted by YWD to complete design and engineering for parking and restrooms at Mt. Agamenticus.

FUTURE PARKING

BASE: It seems the idea of the original 2.5 ac. parcel set aside for future parking has been, all but abandoned by the subcommittee due to the terrain, (ledge, gaining elevation quickly) and is entirely in the Chase's Pond Watershed with no hope of engineering the runoff out of the watershed. The idea of constructing a new parking lot at the site of the current Center for Wildlife (CFW) site is acceptable to all members. The CFW site is on YWD property and leased to CFW. CFW has purchased the property to the East of the existing site and plans are under way to move their operation in the coming years, this may coincide with the Town budgeting cycle for this project

This site is somewhat level, there is existing entrance and large driveway, well and power it also includes a septic system although it may not be acceptable for the volume of people a future restroom may require. Most importantly this site lies on the edge of the watershed allowing runoff to be engineered out of the watershed. There may be some opportunity for collaboration with the CFW who also needs a large parking lot at the future facility. This site looks promising for traditional flush toilets with a septic system.

FUTURE PARKING AT SUMMIT: Mt. Agamenticus Conservation staff wants to keep parking at the summit to a minimum to protect the summit visitor experience, less vehicles competing with the view. At this time the Mt. A. Summit Concept design prepared by Barry, Huff, McDonald, Milligan Inc. Engineers, Surveyors of November 2016 is acceptable to improve traffic flow. It does not address the summit restrooms.

FUTURE LEASE

LEASES: Due to Public Utility Commission (PUC) rules the YWD will need to make the case as to why the YWD would want to enter into a new lease agreement. YWD would need to explain the benefit to the District, improvement to water quality, functioning restrooms, possibility of engineering this project to shed any run off away from Chase's Pond watershed. Another issue is the PUC would not allow YWD to enter into a lease agreement longer than 20 years on property that is resource protection land. The District would be agreeable to multiple renewals with the Town.

The PUC allows leases of under 5 ac. without their approval however, YWD chooses to follow the process of PUC review and approval. Mt A Road alone is 5.1 ac. so, two or three separate leases may be required for the 1. Mt A Road, 2. base parking and 3. summit parking. Currently multiple lease agreements seem to be acceptable to the District and the Town. Future lease discussions may be put off until later in the process.

From this meeting Jon will create a “Final” Scope of Work document that W-P and this sub-committee can work from during the design and engineering stage. YWD is funding the design and engineering to be sure the Districts interests are addressed related to protection of water quality. The District does not plan to pay for any further costs related to parking and restrooms at Mt Agamenticus.

Many items will need to be discussed throughout this process. The table below are some of the issues that were discussed at the meeting.

BASE & SUMMIT PARKING, EXISTING AND PROPOSED

Possible parking collaboration w/CFW.	Gated parking vs. not gated.	ME. Drinking Water Program Concerns (community water system)
No Parking Zones.	Pay to park?? Permits?	Traffic Flow concerns
Guardrails on Mountain Road to choke off street parking.	Pet waste?	Connector trail construction and financing (parking-trail).
Future of existing Base Parking (busses only?).	Number of spaces and size of parcel area, 2.5 ac negotiable.	Zoning, setbacks, planning, permitting
Protection of water quality.	Possibly 3 lease agreements.	Flush vs. composting toilets.
Community Water System requirements.	Bus parking, loading, unloading, turnaround.	Lack of water on summit for flush toilets.
Quantify septic requirements (sizing).	Can Town generate any revenue from Mt. A.	Facility staffing requirements.
Quantify parking needs	PUC concerns/requirements	New signage & enforcement
Paved vs gravel vs permeable	Expiration date of CFW lease.	Base parking security
Welcome Center/Contact Station Placeholder	Public outreach for this project	Bonding restrictions.
Stakeholder meeting		

NEXT MEETING WILL BE ONSITE;

Weather permitting, the next meeting is scheduled for March 20, 2018 3:30 PM at the existing base parking lot on Mountain road. After viewing the base site, we will move to the CFW property to view the proposed site. If time permits or weather is an issue we will move to the YWD Resource Protection Office 9 Eber Drive, York, Maine.