



# Town of Brunswick, Maine

INCORPORATED 1739

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## Simpsons Point Citinens Advisory Council

### MEETIN;

Thursday October 26th 4pm  
via electronic devices

### A; ENDA

Minutes/ Correspondence PUBLIC COMMENT

1) *Finalize Draft Recommendations Report*

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# SIMPSONS POINT LANDING CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Final Report of Facility Recommendations to the Brunswick Town Council



## **Executive Summary**

The Simpsons Point Citizens Advisory Committee (SPCAC) is a citizen's board appointed by the Town Council to review and make recommendations regarding the facility design and management of Simpsons Point Landing (refer to Appendix for Committee charge and membership). Simpsons Point Landing is defined as the town owned land consisting of the former Cornell property (Tax Map 31 Lot 4 C) acquired in 2016, and the 30' right of way over Simpson's Point Road that terminates in the existing boat ramp and associated turn-around. Privately owned lands immediately south of the road (Tax Map 31 Lot 4A), and waterfront portions of (Tax Map 31 Lot 4) are regularly visited by the public but are not in public ownership. The SPCAC has reviewed each aspect of the Council charge and has prepared the following recommendation taking into consideration the recent Simpsons Point shoulder parking improvements and neighborhood road resurfacing work. The Committee's recommendations also take into consideration past changes in launch ramp operations resulting from the opening of the Mere Point Boat launch and subsequent Town Council correspondence with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW) regarding seasonal ramp re-opening.

## **Background**

Simpsons Point Boat launch is unique in location and character, as it is one of the very few improved boat launches so far up in the intertidal area within Brunswick waters. The original right of way to the water at Simpsons Point historically supported a broad variety of public access needs. Over time the Town installed a boat launch in the right of way at the end of the road to accommodate recreational and commercial watercraft. In 2006, MDIFW in partnership with the Town agreed to close the Simpsons Point Boat launch to use by submerged propeller powered craft in an effort to meet eelgrass mitigation requirements resulting from the construction of Mere Point Boat Launch. At that time, the town decided to close the Simpsons Point launch to all motorized craft given the enforcement challenges of allowing non-submerged propeller craft (e.g. airboats) and not traditional outboard driven craft. Since the closure, and in the following years Simpson Point Landing has become a popular destination point for swimming, kayaking, birding, beachgoing, sunbathing, bank fishing, dog walking, cross country skiing and the like.

This increase in usage has led to a related increase in user conflicts. In 2016 the Town purchased a 0.6-acre parcel of land situated along Simpsons Point Road, 350' north of the boat launch. Earlier this year the Town Council authorized road resurfacing and the addition of bump out shoulder parking along the frontage the newly acquired town land. The SPCAC has taken these initiatives into account in making the recommendations outlined below.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMENDATIONS BY COUNCIL CHARGE**

### 1. Advise the Town Council on Facility Operations and Maintenance Policies

***The Committee recommends that several overarching policies or initiatives be established to encourage responsible public use of this area and the limited Town-owned property. Each of these policies can be revisited by the SPCAC if future circumstances warrant.***

- Maintain the Simpson's Point boat launch as "hand carry access only"
- Modify town ordinance(s) to allow for swimming at this location
- Limit vehicle parking south of Pennell Way to the newly created parallel parking area, and one designated handicap parking spot
- Designate Town staff to work directly with the two direct abutters to develop appropriate signage or other means to delineate private property and discourage trespassing
- Although extensively discussed, no other policy changes are recommended to existing dog leash or overnight parking regulations, or restricting recreational fishing. However, all of these topics areas can benefit from better signage, education and enforcement (see Topic #4)

### 2. Provide Comments on Final Facility Designs

***The Committee identified several areas for improvement, to ensure public safety, improve access to Town-owned property, and preserve the aesthetic character of the neighborhood. No large-scale improvements are believed necessary at this time. Areas for improvement include:***

- Inspect and maintain the existing boat ramp to allow for safe public access
- Survey and mark the boundaries the recently acquired 0.6 acre parcel (former Cornell property), as well as locate rare plant locations to be protected
- With abutter input, develop a design for public access to the newly acquired parcel that keeps in the character of the neighborhood and respects adjacent private property
- Stripe the recently created shoulder parking area to clarify where vehicle parking is allowed
- Locate one new designated handicap parking place, ideally close(r) to the turnaround
- Replace current "no parking" signs with fewer, clear signs designating allowable parking.
- Generally, limit signs to reduce aesthetic impact. New signage should be clear and concise.
- Install 3 permanent bike racks in an easy to access location(s) along Town-owned parcel
- Replace existing signage at turn around with a new informational kiosk to be installed near the newly acquired Town-owned parcel (see Topic Area #4)

### 3. Assessment of Transportation Management Issues

***The vehicle parking policy recommendations mentioned previously at the southern end of Simpson's Point Road should address most unsafe and illegal parking in that specific area. Vehicle traffic concerns on Simpson's Point Road and the Pennellville Road needs further assessment to develop recommendations to address vehicle speeding & safe use by all users.***

- Designate Town Staff to develop a plan to assess local area road uses (car, bike, pedestrian) and implement appropriate approaches for traffic calming in the Simpson's Point/Pennellville area.

- Encourage bicycle and pedestrian use of the facility through community outreach and education via the Bike and Pedestrian Committee
- Consider designating a commercial harvester parking spot(s) for low-tide access only, monitor need for this in upcoming year of operation

#### 4. Development of Facility User Education Programs

***The Committee recognizes that better public education on a number of topics is essential to allow all facility visitors to feel safe, preserve neighborhood quality and to respect private property. The following recommendations should be adopted:***

- Provide information at kiosks to includes facility specific information, including a map of the boundaries of public property, reinforces key Town policies on leash and parking regulations, and highlights contact information to report concerns or issues.
- Similarly, post Simpson's Point specific policies and maps on the Town's website
- Update the Coastal Waters Access Guide with new policies and facility specific information related to Simpson's Point.
- Encourage continuing public interaction with the Park Rangers, Marine Resources, Police Department, and other Town staff to ensure responsible use of the area and that Town policies and regulations are enforced.

#### 5. Assessment of Annual Operating Expenses

**TO BE DEVELOPED AND ATTACHED or INSERTED**

#### 6. On-Going Stewardship

***The Committee recognizes that successful long-term stewardship of this unique location in Brunswick requires regular review and re-assessment. The following recommendations should be adopted:***

- Task the Rivers and Coastal Waters Commission to conduct an annual review of the operations of this public access area, and to alert Town Staff for any needs or adjustments. This review should be conducted with input from Town staff and departments which have an overlapping responsibility for the facility.



Simpsons Point Landing is defined as the 30' right of way to water accessible between private lands by Simpsons Point Road (Tax Map 31 Lot 4 & 4A) & the 0.6 acres Town owned parcel (Tax Map 31 Lot 4 C). NOTE: Outline of pier is relic of tax map GIS data.



Draft sketch plan of Town owned parcel with suggested amenities

## Appendix

# Simpsons Point Public Access Facility Citizen's Advisory COMMITTEE CHARGE

Adopted the by the Brunswick Town Council – March 15, 2021

This Citizen's Advisory Committee (CAC) is to serve in an advisory capacity to the Brunswick Town Council providing recommendations addressing safety, environmental, managerial and neighborhood concerns and the broader Brunswick community interest at the Simpsons Point Landing (the "Facility").

The CAC charge includes the following five aspects of facility development and operations:

1) Advise the Town Council on Facility Operation and Management Policies:

The CAC will review public comment received to date regarding facility operations and management. The CAC will work with town staff including representatives of the Parks and Recreation Department, Coastal Resources Office, and Police Department in crafting suggestions for Facility operation. These suggestions will inform future ordinance revisions.

2) Provide Comment on Final Facility Designs:

The Brunswick Town Council has approved an approach to funding parallel parking construction and removal of the deteriorated concrete ramp planking. Public comment on the preliminary design has been received, and it is expected that the Town will soon draft final plans to satisfy permitting requirements. As these plans are drafted the CAC will review steps taken to address public concerns. Access improvements for the former Cornell property have only been presented conceptually. The CAC shall provide recommendations to guide the final design of these improvements.

3) Assessment of Transportation Management Issues:

The CAC will work with Town staff to identify potential signage, and traffic controls necessary to accommodate the existing level of use and minimize traffic impacts on the neighborhood resulting from public use of the Facility. This task will include recommendations for promoting bicycle and pedestrian access.

4) Development of Facility User Education Program:

The CAC will suggest approaches to promote responsible and safe use of the Facility. Recommendations will be used in the development and/or improvement of informational on-site signage / kiosk, Town website information and written materials regarding Facility use.

5) Assessment of Annual Operating Expenses:

Based on CAC recommendations for Facility operations and management, the CAC will work Town staff to assess the likely annual operating budget associated with the Facility.

6) Ongoing Stewardship

The Committee will consider ongoing measures to ensure the proper level of oversight of the Simpsons Point site to protect the ecological, historical, and recreational values. The Committee will work with town staff to explore the feasibility of a park ranger and/or a volunteer Friends of Simpsons Point group

Report on Simpsons Point Landing with Town Council Recommendations



*Prepared by the Brunswick Coastal Resource Office*

to aid in the year-round supervision of the Point. Consideration will also be given to the development of an annual review and report to the Council, including but not limited to (a) the effectiveness of the facility management policies, (b) the identification of any environmental concerns, and (c) any opportunities for additional land acquisition abutting the Point.

Expected Timing: It is expected that the CAC will deliver its recommendations to the Town Council by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021, or as soon as possible thereafter. Nothing herein shall prevent the Town Council or staff from taking appropriate actions in the meantime to address near term Facility safety or managerial issues.

*The CAC consists of the following 10 members:*

**Members Appointed by Town Council**

2 Town Councilors (**Steve Walker & Dan Ankeles**)

2 members of the Brunswick Recreation Commission (**Mike Lyne & Melissa Archbell**)

2 members of the Brunswick Rivers and Coastal Waters Commission (**Marko Melendy & Will Wilkoff**)

1 member of the Brunswick Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (**Jared Woolston via Planning**)

1 neighbor to the facility (directly across street, or abutting) (**Jon Muench**)

1 Pennellville/Simpson's Point Road neighborhood representative (**James Ecker**)

1 resident at large (**Anne Banks**)

*Staff support for the CAC to include:*

1 representative of the Coastal Resources Office (**Dan Devereaux**)

1 representative of the Department of Parks and Recreation (**Tom Farrell**)

Representatives from Public Safety Departments, Public Works, and Planning will be invited as needed.

**(Officer Dan Sylvain, ACO Heather Brown, Park Ranger Ben Gould)**

### Televised Public Meeting Links

### Meeting Minute Links

[August 5, 2021](#)

[August 5 Minutes](#)

[August 19, 2021](#)

[August 19 Minutes](#)

[September 2, 2021](#)

[September 2 Minutes](#)

[September 16, 2021](#)

[September 16 Minutes](#)

[September 30, 2021](#)

[September 30 Minutes](#)

[October 7, 2021](#)

TBA

# Simpsons Point Public Access Facility Citizen's Advisory Committee

## MINUTES

October 7, 2021, 6 p.m.

**Members Present:** Marko Melendy (RCWC), James Ecker (Citizen), Jon Muench (Citizen), Will Wilkoff (RCWC), Mike Lyne (BRC), Anne Banks (Citizen)

**Members Absent:** Bike and Pedestrian Committee Member

**Town Councilor Present:** Steve Walker (District 2) (Chair) Dan Ankles (At Large)

**Staff Present:** Dan Devereaux (Coastal Resources Manager), Dan Sylvain (Harbormaster), Tom Farrell (Parks & Recreation) Ben Gould (Park Ranger)

**Minutes: (:38)** Minutes Accepted Unanimously.

**Correspondence: (1:35)** Walker stated the Committee has received correspondence from two individuals that are concerned with parking and increased traffic and the greater Penneville neighborhood. Devereaux explained that because of the fishing fowling and navigation rights in the intertidal zone directing citizens to certain areas to fish is not within the Towns rights.

### 1. Finalize Draft Report (2:45)

Lyne asks that we correct the spelling grammatical errors. Lyne suggested under the use section there should be consideration for bank fishing. Lyne stated that if swimming is allowed there should be some mention and recognition in the report that bank fishing does occur at the site. Lyne suggested that adding signage in the kiosk may be a soft approach to inform visitors that BOTH activities occur at the site.

Ecker pointed there is little the town can do regarding fishing on site.

Devereaux suggests using the kiosk and signage to inform the public.

Anne Banks stated that she has seen some conflict with fishing in the past but that it is impossible to regulate all the different uses.

Melendy suggests using different wording to address issues surrounding dogs of leash.

Ecker suggests that the recommendation sections of the report need to have more clear wording. Ecker explains his approach to the report.

Ecker to supply suggested language to Deveraux and Walker to be incorporated into the report and sent back out to the members for review.

Ecker asks consideration to be given in the report to include a recommendation that would develop a detailed plan or design for public access to the beach on the newly acquired town property. The design should keep with character of existing neighborhood. Walker agreed.

Muench, whose property abuts the town owned parcel, stated that the property should be maintained as close as possible to what currently exists. He stated that increased development on the site could result in increased trespassing on his property. Ecker stated that he had brought this up because he was unclear on the report recommendations.

Farrell reviewed the task from the last meeting (kiosk and bike racks relocated to the town property). He also indicated that a citizen would like to donate a bench to be installed somewhere on the property. Farrell indicated that he was tasked with coming up with a cost of repairs. He is unsure of the other improvements and will need to know at what scale.

Ecker stated that he understood that the bike racks and kiosk would be relocated but was unaware of trail development and direct access to the water from that site.

Walker reiterated that since the town has purchased the property a few years ago, there has always been a goal of supplying public access to the gravel beach below.

Melendy agreed that since the purchase of the property there has been discussion on how the town could develop public water access from the property.

Muench stated that the beach is very small, and he believes that if the public is encouraged to use this area as access it will lead to more intertidal trespassing. He also mentioned that the bank is steep and unstable, and he doesn't believe that it would support much activity without damaging the bluffs.

Ankles stated that he is in support of installing a properly sited bench on the property, and that he had always assumed, based on previous meetings, that the property would be used to help alleviate some of the visitor water access congestion at the end of the road.

Ecker suggests that if the town is going to encourage people to use the property there needs to be a detailed plan on how people get down to the beach.

Anne Banks suggested private property signage and/or fencing of some sort to discourage the public from trespassing.

Ankles suggested we use Cedar Beach as example.

Ecker pointed out the recommendations do indicate that staff should work with abutting landowners to develop private property signage or fencing.

Walker reiterated that survey has been recommended to help determine property lines, which will help the town develop appropriate signage siting that is consistent with abutting landowner suggestions and the character of the neighborhood.

Walker reiterated the process and stated that a second draft that clarifies the charges and incorporates the suggestions noted tonight would be sent out to the members for any additional comments.

Farrell asks for clarification on facility/site specific budgets. He stated based on the information from tonight's meeting he would likely prepare a report that includes just a few line items, which would include staff time spent at the site and some ongoing maintenance, however he would note in the recommended budget that there is additional consideration of the development of the town owned parcel and that the town will work with abutters on any new features proposed for the site and once a plan was approved he would then submit a more detailed budget with those improvement cost added.

Walker provided budget clarification.

Lyne asked for clarification from Farrell on the existing kiosk location and if it is possible to move it to an area at the end of the road where it wouldn't succumb to damage from town and trash maintenance vehicles, possibly on the Ford property.

Farrell suggests that the town do some work on marking ALL the property lines. Furthermore he states that the Fords have been gracious for many years allowing the public to use a portion of their property, however he

stated that having the property boundaries marked similar to how the town of Harpswell has marked Cedar Beach.

Melendy suggested using softer signage like "END OF TOWN WAY".

Ecker reiterated that town staff should work with both abutting landowners to develop tailored messaging that discourages the public from using their private property.

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:00 PM