

2/13/2012  
Accepted as Written  
Christine Ward

**Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force Meeting Minutes:**

**Monday January 23, 2012 8:30 am**

**Location: 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Meeting Room, Town Hall 334 Main Street, Great Barrington**

PRESENT: C. Ward (chairperson), D. Abrams, J. Dezieck, R. Dlugosz, N. Evans, D. Phillips,  
A. Sewall, S. Fowle Schroeder, J. Sokul, C. Rembold (ex officio), L. Vigneron (intern)

NEXT LMITF MEETING: Monday, 2/13, 8:30 AM, Town Hall

**OTHER RELEVANT MEETINGS:**

- 1/26 Castle Hill 319 grant: Dale Abrams and Ron Dlugosz will join Chris Rembold in interviewing engineers
- 2/4 Simon's Rock zebra mussel forum. C. Ward will disseminate information on this.
- 2/8 Gt. Barrington Trails
- 2/11 Lumber/milling trail work shop, Gt. Barrington Forest (see below for details)
- 3/8 Cabin Fever, Thursday, 5-8 PM, Crissey Farm
- 3/12 LMITF, 8:30 AM, Town Hall

12/12/11 LMITF MINUTES: Approved as corrected: 5-8% of vehicles must be trucks to trigger road weight limits.

LMITF MEMBERSHIP: Board of Selectmen will be requested to appoint C. Ward as citizen-at-large now that she no longer represents the Park Commission and to appoint a replacement Parks Commission representative to LMITF. C. Rembold will remain ex officio.

ETHICS TRAINING: has been completed by all task force members.

WEIGHT LIMITS FOR LAKE MANSFIELD ROAD: For public road weight limits to be imposed there are several requirements: 5-8% of vehicles must be trucks and there must be an alternative route. In our most recent traffic survey there were 629 vehicles/day of which fewer than 1% were trucks. Therefore it would be difficult to impose limits unless it were possible to prove the road is being stressed by current truck usage. Another engineering study, to start July 2012 if approved at Town Meeting, may prove that such stress in fact exists.

UNNECESSARY TELEPHONE POLES ON LK. MANSFIELD ROAD: J. Sokul is following up on this and will report on progress at next meeting.

LMITF REPORT TO BOARD OF SELECTMEN: The task force worked to revise draft. (Final Draft attached) It will be included in the 2012 Town Report at Town Meeting. It will be presented first to the B.O.S. by C. Ward or D. Phillips on February 13<sup>th</sup>. Some of the highlights of the report included: need for a new lake water quality assessment; improved mowing in sensitive habitat abutting lake; increase in use of beach and, particularly, forest, in the wake of improved safety of access and new Forest trails; continued Lake Mansfield Road deterioration.

LUMBER/MILLING TRAIL WORKSHOP: Scheduled for 2/11, providing winter conditions will support the planned activities. Oxen will be utilized to move lumber to trucks for transport to the Beach

area milling site. Therefore it will not be necessary to access the Town Forest via Dehon Road. Lumber will be pulled through the Dominic Leyden property. Greenagers will be clearing garbage and dead knot weed vegetation from Forest and adjoining land to clear a route for the oxen. Certificates of Insurance will be provided through Great Barrington Land Conservancy, Will Conklin's sawyer & Greenagers.

UPDATES:

CONSERVATION COMMISSION: Have spoken with Geosyntec re a new aquatic assessment of Lake Mansfield; examination will assess aquatic weeds. Assessment should also examine water quality (e.g. phosphorus levels) before mitigation efforts commence and report should highlight changes, if any, from prior assessments. Chris Rembold and A. Sewall will coordinate this.

TOWN PLANNER: Foresight has almost completed Knob Hill report. The state will work on boat launch plans. Complete discussion scheduled for FEB LMITF meeting

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN: Town Planner will review and summarize survey findings. There will be an open forum on this subject in March.

LMA: Planning 2012 Newsletter: Writers have been contacted, content outline will be presented at our next meeting.

PREPARING GOALS FOR COMING YEAR: LMITF should look at small beach improvements and further responses to zebra mussel threat.

N. Evans, Recording Secretary

## Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force: 2011 Report

### 2011 Task Force Members:

Christine Ward, Chair (Parks & Recreation Commission), Ron Dlugosz, co-chair (Citizen at Large), Deborah Phillips (Select Board), Joseph Sokul (DPW Superintendent), Dale Abrams (Lake Mansfield Alliance) Nina Evans (Lake Mansfield Alliance alternate), Jessica Dezieck (Conservation Commission), Suzanne Fowle Schroeder (Planning Board), Amanda Sewall (Conservation Agent, ex-officio) Chris Rembold (Town Planner, ex officio).

In March 2006, the Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force was created by the Board of Selectmen and charged with the development and implementation of a Lake Improvement Plan. The plan would provide for public safety, use and accessibility, water quality improvements, protection of the watershed and stewardship of the Resource area. In 2011, the Task Force continued to meet in order to provide guidance and direction for the care of the Lake Mansfield Recreation area. Below is a report on this effort as well as actions and goals for 2012.

### I. **Water Quality Improvements and Assessments:**

- a. Utilizing the 604b planning grant (\$10,500) from Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) awarded in 2010, the Town's engineer has been developing a storm water mitigation plan for Knob Hill Road. The necessary right-of-way and topographic survey work has been completed. The Town has also been coordinating with the Department of Fish and Game for possible improvements to the boat launch area. Conceptual plans and cost estimates are due to be completed in early 2012. These plans can be used to pursue additional grant funding to pay for implementation. The unpaved parking area at the beach continues to contribute sediments the lake in form of unfiltered run-off during storm events.
- b. One of the major threats to the Lake's health, runoff from the Castle Hill Avenue storm drain system, will be addressed by a \$266,500 grant from Massachusetts DEP. This project will reconstruct the catch basins and storm drains on Castle Hill Avenue, to better catch and filter the runoff before it empties into the Lake. Engineering work and bid documents will be prepared in 2012. Construction will begin in 2013. The grant will be matched at 40% by Town funds including volunteer and staff time. This grant is a direct outgrowth of previous planning supported by a grant from Berkshire Regional Planning.
- c. The unpaved parking area at the beach continues to contribute sediments the lake in form of unfiltered run-off during storm events.
- d. The Task Force noted the need for an updated Lake Assessment. The last complete Lake Assessment of Water Quality and Weed Growth was provided by in 2005. A current assessment is needed to provide a baseline that can be used to demonstrate the efficacy of the upcoming storm water mitigation.
- e. The summer season's water testing results, provided weekly by The Town's Health Agent, showed that Lake Mansfield waters were healthy for swimmers throughout the 2011 swimming season.
- f. New signage and a dispenser for Clean Boat Certification Forms were installed at the beach area, providing information on ways to protect the lake from the threat of zebra mussels and other invasive species. Clean Boat Certification Forms, required to be completed by all boaters, are made available at the kiosk and are also provided at [www.mass.gov/lakesandponds](http://www.mass.gov/lakesandponds). This new signage duplicates information previously installed at the boat launch.

### II. **Protecting the Buffer Zone and Sensitive Habitats – Application of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act**

- a. The Task Force worked with the DPW superintendent to develop a mowing policy in the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area aimed at supporting sensitive habitat area and encouraging plant growth that can help prevent erosion. The plan was reviewed and supported by the Conservation Commission and successfully utilized in 2011.

- b. The illegal cutting of cattails was noted in the buffer zone at the northern edge of the Lake. Lake Mansfield Alliance will work with Conservation Commissioner Jess Dezeick to educate the public on the protection of wetlands plants and the importance of these plants to the habitat.
- c. Lake Mansfield Alliance volunteers worked to control the spread of invasive phragmites in the beach park area. Permission was granted by the Conservation Commission for repeated cuttings of the invasive weeds. This work will continue in 2012

III. **Use and Accessibility** - More and more community members are using the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area. The Beach Area continues to grow in popularity as the DPW and Parks Commission provide an inviting space and strong summer programming. Improved trails connect the community with the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area and allow enhanced access to the Lake Mansfield Conservation Forest.

- a. Improvement of the cross walk speed hump is recommended for the safer crossing from the parking area to the beach area. This work is scheduled for April 2012.
- b. Trails in the Lake Mansfield Conservation Forest are improved and maintained through the efforts of Lake Mansfield Alliance (LMA), a project of Great Barrington Land Conservancy, and the oversight of the Conservation Commission. This work is provided by volunteers, LMA donations & grant funding. 2011 efforts included regular trail maintenance, the donation of two new trail head kiosks constructed and installed by GreenAgers, and the initial clearing of a trail spur designed to support a future improved connection with Christian Hill Commons. The trail work of 2012, including the development of a trail brochure and improvements of kiosk information & trail signage, will be accomplished in partnership with Housatonic Heritage through the grant supported GB Trails 2012 Collaborative Trail Project.

IV. **Public Safety** - While use increases, the safety of recreational users continues to be a priority for the Task Force.

- a. On Lake Mansfield Road, the degradation of the bank and road surface challenges motorists and makes multi-use (two-lane traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.) passage difficult. Flooding and freezing of the road at the Whale Rock and at the lake outlet area compound these difficulties. The task force urges that these conditions continue to be carefully monitored and that solutions be provided for in upcoming planning & budgeting.
- b. Obsolete telephone poles, which carry only two telephone lines, constrict the roadway and pose potential risks. The Task force recommends moving lines to existing, up-to-date, poles and removing unnecessary poles.

V. **Continued work In the Coming Year** - The Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force (LMITF) will continue to work to provide for the health and safe recreational use of the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area. We appreciate the Town's dedication to this invaluable natural resource and recreation area.

Provided by Christine Ward, chair  
January 23, 2012