

Geoffrey Kontje and Norma Costain Kontje
249 Chappaquiddick Road
Edgartown, MA 02539

Edgartown Selectmen
Town Hall
Edgartown, MA

Nov 14, 2008

Dear Selectmen,

We have several objections to the proposed Chappy Bike path and the use of CPA funds to fund its engineering design and construction. Multi-use bike paths naturally attract their own hazards including but not limited to: collisions between different types of users on a more narrow travel surface and the added risks of increasing the number of intersections for automobile drivers and path users. The cost of bike path construction in dollars and ecological premiums can be very high. Once built, bike paths require maintenance commitments of time and money.

This may be an inappropriate use of Community Preservation Act funds as the construction of a bike path may conflict with preservation of open space by degrading existing wildlife habitat.

As year-round residents and bicycle riders, we heartily disagree that a majority of Chappaquiddick residents are in favor of the proposed Chappy bike path. The survey conducted by the self-appointed bike path committee was expedient in design and distribution and did not engage the entire community. Open and frank discussions of the pros and cons of the bike path concept including specific design ideas should be required to reach a consensus of Chappy residents and landowners. Multiple open, detailed discussions should occur **before** a request is heard for public funds to pay for the professional services required by the committee for their planned preliminary steps.

Alternatives to the proposed Chappy bike path include:

1. Well maintained dirt roads. This is a well-demonstrated need that once fulfilled, will benefit the entire community, including bicyclists of all ages.
2. Police officer assigned to Chappy (alternately on bicycle, motorcycle or in car) in summer months to educate and enforce rules of the road for automobiles and bicyclists. Summer speeding is a problem regardless of bike traffic.
3. Education: Strategically placed signs, especially at the point, for arriving bicyclists. Island bicycle safety brochure distributed by Edgartown (and other) bike rental shops.

We do share the concern of people for safety when riding bikes on Chappy, but believe the alternatives above offer an effective solution that can achieve a consensus without the high costs of monetary, natural and community resources called for in the proposed bike path.

Thank you for taking our thoughts under consideration.

Sincerely,
Geoffrey Kontje and Norma Costain Kontje