

CHAPPY SHARED USE PATH SURVEY

Prepared by the Steering Committee of the
Chappy Path Committee *

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Submitted to the Community Preservation Committee and the Chappy community

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* **Acknowledgement:** We thank the Chappy community for their willingness to complete this survey in the busy holiday season and for their constructive comments and support. We also thank Terry Forde for his enormous help in distributing the survey and forwarding the email responses from the CIA.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. An email survey of about 500 Chappy residents was conducted 11/22/08-12/7/08 as part of the Chappaquiddick Path Committee's continued effort to:
 - Identify the degree of support in the community for the Committee's proposal to the Edgartown Community Preservation Committee to conduct an engineering design of an SUP from the Chappy Ferry to the Dyke Bridge and develop a Demonstration Path around the Gardiner Property from the Chappy Ferry
 - Engage the Chappaquiddick community in a discussion on the merits of a Shared Use Path (SUP) on Chappy
 - Generate support in the community for a SUP to facilitate the development and approval process
2. The survey results confirm that a majority (59-60%) of the 191 Chappy respondents support the Chappaquiddick Path Committee's Proposal to conduct an engineering design of an SUP from the Chappy Ferry to the Dyke Bridge and develop a demonstration path in the Gardiner Property from the Chappy Ferry. Only 35% of respondents were opposed.

BACKGROUND

- For at least 30 years there have been efforts to establish a bike/walking path along our roads on Chappy without success, due to opposition on a variety of grounds by quite reasonable people. In the meantime, the traffic and the opportunity for accidents have increased considerably. Many, particularly children, do not bike or walk due to the hazards and unpleasantness of walking or riding on the road.
 - In the summer of 2008 several of the veterans of the past Bike Path campaigns got together to assess the situation and formed the steering committee of the newly formed Chappy Path Committee[†]. Based upon our personal observations and from our friends and neighbors on Chappy, the Committee felt that there was an increased need and interest in re-opening this question.
 - The Committee did not however, want to work on this project, unless it represented the majority viewpoint. The Committee discussed the issue of a Bike path with the Selectman at the open meeting they held with Seasonal Residents in August and were pleased with their positive reception to the concept. The subject of the re-birth of the bike path effort was discussed briefly at the August meeting of the CIA – a show of hands at the meeting indicated that a majority of those in attendance were in favor of the idea in concept.
 - Recognizing that many of the Chappy community were not at the August CIA meeting and there are those who are not members, the Committee elected to assess the level of support for the concept of a bike path by an email survey, because it is the most efficient way to reach a large, dispersed group. Terry Forde was quite helpful and sent the survey questionnaire to the CIA membership. To be as inclusive as possible, the Committee also sent the same survey to all others on Chappy email addresses known to us, whether or not they were members of the CIA. The Committee believes that everyone on Chappy should be part of the process.
 - The results of this first survey were remarkable for two reasons:
 1. many responded—the Committee had 233 replies in 3 weeks;
 2. the vast majority of the respondents (70%) were in favor of the principle of a shared use path.
 - However, the Committee did not get replies from everyone—probably about 40-50% response rate of emails sent out. Furthermore, not everyone on Chappy has an email address or share it with the CIA or members of the Committee. Still, the survey served its principal purpose, to justify further efforts on our part to promote a new analysis of the opportunities for a path. The Committee communicated our results and comments at the end of August by email to all who wished to be kept in touch, whether they were for or against a path, and copied it to the CIA for distribution.
 - The interest stimulated by this questionnaire led many to volunteer to join the Chappy Path Committee now consisting of 39 Chappy homeowners (see Exhibit A). The members are a diverse group – CIA and non-CIA members, winter as well as
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summer residents, representing most geographic parts of Chappy. It is an open, voluntary and independent organization,. What members have in common is the belief that the time has come for a shared use path on Chappy, primarily for safety reasons, and that a design is possible that would enhance Chappy's beauty. The Committee is flexible in considering design alternatives, but wishes to have safety and aesthetics be the guiding principles. Furthermore, the Committee believes that open, informed discussion is the best way to find common ground among different points of view.

- In early October, the Chappy Path Committee met and reviewed the engineering survey that had been prepared several years ago. The Committee could see how a path might be achieved from the Chappy Ferry to the Dyke Bridge. However, the Committee realized that because the survey was outdated and not sufficiently accurate, the Committee needed a new more complete engineering survey to decide whether a path really could be constructed and how it might be designed. The Committee thought that this was necessary to enable a realistic discussion of the merits of a path by the CIA and other groups.
- In mid October the Committee learned that an engineering survey for shared use path could be eligible for funding through the Community Preservation Act. With a 3 day notice the Committee got together a grant application and submitted it to the Edgartown Community Preservation Committee (CPC). In addition to the engineering survey the Committee asked for funds to construct a demonstration path on the Gardner property using an aesthetically appealing sand-like surface that has proved durable in other shared use paths. The advantage of the demonstration path is that it would relieve congestion in the most used part of the road and would test the non-asphalt surface under Chappy conditions. It would also show the benefit of a path to the skeptics. The Committee communicated our update and the grant proposal in October by email to those who wished to be in touch and sent copies to the CIA for distribution to their mailing list.
- Ideally, the Committee would have had preliminary meetings among the Chappy residents to get input on this proposal. However the short deadline made this impossible. Some advised us to wait until next year so that it could be discussed at a CIA meeting in the summer. However, the Committee felt that such discussions about the bike path (now called shared use path) would be much more productive with the benefit of new and accurate information from our proposed engineering survey and with a demonstration path.
- Since the Committee values the importance of representing the majority viewpoint, just before Thanksgiving the Committee conducted a survey via our email list and that of the CIA to Chappy homeowners to assess the level of support for the two components of our proposal and these results are given in this report.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology the Committee followed in conducting this survey was as follows:

- Developed a questionnaire (see Exhibit B) focusing on the Committee's proposal for an Engineering Study of a shared use path to the Dyke Bridge and development of the demonstration path on the Gardner property
- Developed an e-mail address list of 568 people from various available sources including those that responded to the first survey
- Set up a separate e-mail address (Chappybikepath@aol.com) to distribute questionnaires (and the Community and receive responses and distributed the survey questionnaire to the e-mail address list on 11/22/08. Some of the email addresses bounced or were blocked and thus we do not have an accurate count of the number received.
- Separately, the CIA distributed the questionnaire to its members (which overlaps to an unknown, but probably large extent, with our email distribution list). We did not have access to the CIA mailing list or the number sent.
- Eliminated duplications of responses from the various mailings
- Consolidated the results and developed percentages of those:
 1. In favor of the proposal as submitted to seek funding for an engineering survey and a demonstration path.
 2. In favor of the engineering study but not the demonstration path.
 3. In favor of the demonstration path but not the engineering study.
 4. Not in favor of the proposal at this time.
 5. Have no opinion at this time.
- The survey was closed December 7th and the results compiled according to total respondents with unique email addresses. The responders were classified as full-time or seasonal residents. A print out of the email responses will be provided to the Community Preservation Committee if requested.

RESULTS

The majority of the responses were in favor of the engineering study (60%) and the Demonstration Path on the Gardiner property (59%). 62% were in favor of at least one of the two components and 57% were in favor of both. Only 35% were opposed to both and 3% were undecided.

	Total Survey	
	Number	Percentage
1. In favor of the engineering study and the demonstration path	109	57%
2. In favor of the engineering study but not the demonstration path	5	3%
3. In favor of the demonstration path but not the engineering study	4	2%
4. Not in favor of the proposal	67	35%
5. Have no opinion	6	3%
Total	191	100%

When the respondents were divided according to full-time (23) or seasonal residents (168), there was no striking difference between the two groups, except for the larger number of responses by seasonal residents.

	Full-Time Residents		Seasonal Residents	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1. In favor of the engineering study and the demonstration path	14	61%	95	57%
2. In favor of the engineering study but not the demonstration path	0	0%	5	3%
3. In favor of the demonstration path but not the engineering study	0	0%	4	2%
4. Not in favor of the proposal	7	30%	60	36%
5. Have no opinion	2	9%	4	2%
Total	23	100%	168	100%

CONCLUSION

This survey indicates that a substantial majority of the Chappy respondents supports the Community Preservation Act grant proposal to conduct an engineering study of a shared use path from the Ferry to the Dyke Bridge and the demonstration path on the Gardiner Property.

The percentage that supported one or both parts of the proposal (62%) was similar to that supporting the principle of a shared use path in the August 2008 survey (70%), although the number of responses was lower (191 vs 233). We consider the number of responses to be a valid gauge of sentiment and quite gratifying, considering the 3 week time period for response occurred in the Thanksgiving holiday season.

EXHIBIT A

Chappy Path Committee (Updated 12-8-08)

Charlie Bass	Jim Beams
Paul Belazis	Lauren Bontecou
Phillip Brillante	Susan Clinnin
Bob Colvin	Gay Colvin
Ed Deveau	Lisa Deveau
Judy Didion	Judy Diamond
Hal Dvorak	Will Gereseey
Ann Gould	Eric Green
Julia Greenstein	Melissa Kagan
Dick Knight	Peter Kumpitch
Jack McElhinney	Carol McGovern
Jim Mullen	Sue Plaine
Dan Plaine	Tracy Schaller
Richard Schifter	David Slater
Clark Sole	Ellen Sole
Karen Stephens	Joe Sullivan
Tom Tilghman	Edward Trider
Judith Tucker	Sue Wacks
Peter Wells	Shelley Wilbur

Steering Committee

Bob Colvin, Chair	Melissa Kagan, Co-chair
Will Gereseey	Dick Knight
Joe Sullivan	Tom Tilghman
Peter Wells	

Contact: Chappypathcomm@aol.com

EXHIBIT B

CHAPPY SHARED USE PATH QUESTIONNAIRE

The Chappy Path Committee seeks your input on the enclosed proposal recently submitted to the Edgartown Community Preservation Committee. The short deadline precluded wide community input and we would like to know what percent of the Chappy community is in favor of our submission in total or in part, since our desire is to represent the majority viewpoint.

The proposal has two parts, one to do an engineering study to determine the feasibility of a shared use path and a second part to construct a demonstration path on the Gardner property.

After you have read the proposal we ask you to respond by returning this document via email indicating which statement best describes your opinion (1,2,3,4,or 5).

1. I am in favor of the proposal as submitted to seek funding for an engineering survey and a demonstration path.
2. I am in favor of the engineering study but not the demonstration path.
3. I am in favor of the demonstration path but not the engineering study.
4. I am not in favor of the proposal at this time.
5. I have no opinion at this time.

Name_____

E Mail Address_____