

Norton Waterbody Access Master Plan

Neighborhood Meeting #1

Juniper Road Access Site

November 14, 2020

Introduction by Conservation Agent, Jennifer Carlino

Some issues of which the town is already aware and that are prompting this planning effort:

- Parking for site users is chaotic and spills over into neighborhood
- User conflicts (boaters v. swimmers v. kayakers v. picnickers)
- Lack of uniform signage presenting information and clear rules and regulations

Parking, Traffic, and Vehicular Circulation Issues

- Lagoon Island Road gets a lot of traffic, people come through all of the time looking to get to the access point, with no signage to redirect them, they end up having to turn around with their trailers and equipment, at times impacting resident's personal property (hitting fences, etc).
- There is a dead end sign, but it's not helping. Explicitly stating on signage that there is no public water access and where to go for public water access would be more helpful with these routing issues.
- Right now, people will come down and walk through yards to go fishing, will park and block driveways.
- The boulders at the end of Juniper Road were put there seemingly by one person. Removing them could be an option to create one-way circulation through the site (in through Lazy Lane, out through Juniper Road, with appropriate one-way signage at the Juniper Road / Lazy Lane intersection and access enter this way signage at Lazy Lane.)
- Charging a fee for parking is an untapped potential revenue stream.



THE JUNIPER ROAD NORTON RESERVOIR ACCESS SITE HAS LITTLE SPACE BETWEEN ADJACENT PRIVATE RESIDENCES AND THE SITE ACCESS PARKING AREA

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THERE IS NO SIGNAGE ON THE ROADWAY DIRECTING USERS TO THE CORRECT ACCESS ROUTE



BOULDERS CURRENTLY SEPARATE PARKING AREA FROM ROADWAY, PREVENTING ONE-WAY FLOW

Public Safety and User Conflict Issues

- Fire rescue boat access is often cut off by user parking
- Camping permitted on the island, for which campers are supposed to take out a permit. When they do, there is a point of contact listed so that fire staff can check in on any smoke or fires reported. When this is not used, the fire company is called out to fires on the island when there is not necessarily a problem. Putting the camping permit online, as the town is going to do, might help with proper permits being used more often.
- Those using the beach for swimming and water play use the same area as trailers and motorized boats.
- Would it be possible to direct different users to different sites in order to reduce conflicts? Keep trailer-transported boats here, water craft launch a different place, swimmers a different place? This site is the only place to launch large motor boats safely and easily.
- Is Evergreen Road a potential access site? Or Mansfield Avenue town-owned site?



CARS AND TRUCKS CURRENTLY PARKED IN THE NEWLY DEMARCATED PARKING LANE



TRAILER-TRANSPORTED BOAT ACCESS IS GREAT! HOWEVER, THERE IS THE POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT WHEN CHILDREN PLAY ON THE WATER'S EDGE.

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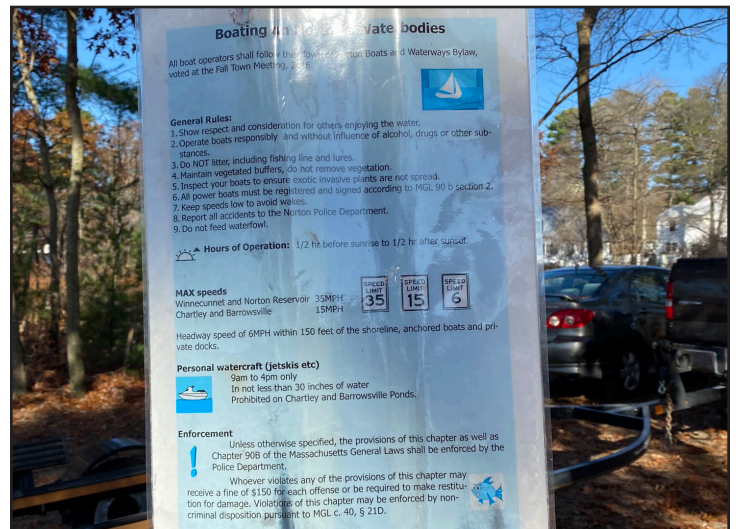
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Information about and at the Site

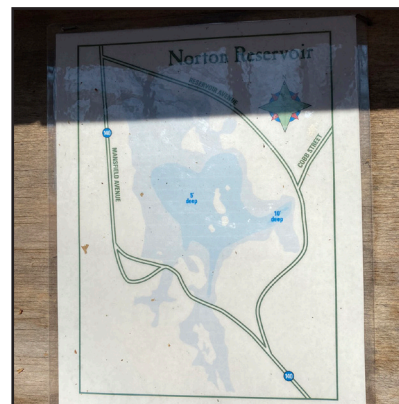
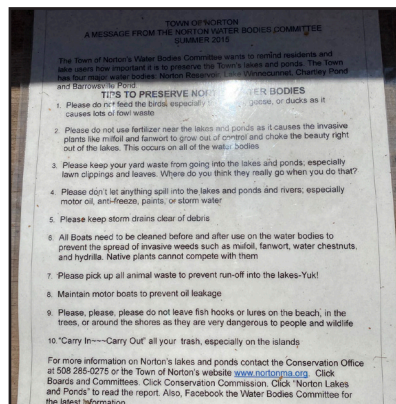
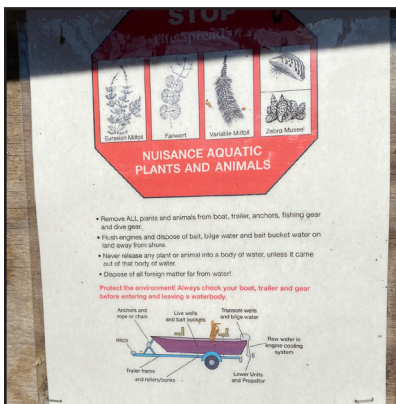
- Additional online information about the site and what is allowed with an access route map and parking information would be very helpful.
- Talk to Google and Ways to move the beach pin or to show one-way route access, if implemented.
- New signage needs to be developed that is consistent with site hours - should be access prohibited from 10PM to 5AM.
- While parking access is limited to these hours, there is no rule for when people need to be off of the water itself (exception: jet skis, see enforcement section below).
- Additional signals needed for fire line - red painted curbing an option.
- Seasonal interns or volunteers could be used to staff an informational kiosk to remind people of rules, parking regulations, and environmental information like how to prevent the spread of invasive plants and animals..



OLD SIGNAGE NOT CONSISTENT WITH NEW ACCESS RULES OF NO TRESPASSING 10PM TO 5 AM.



RULES AND REGULATIONS SIGNAGE MAY NEED FORMALIZATION TO BE MORE PROMINENT / LASTING



OTHER SITE SIGNAGE

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Additional Regulations to Consider / Enforcement Issues

- Boat speed limits are often ignored.
- Jet skis are on the water way past the 4:00 PM cutoff time. Is there a way to have better enforcement?
- Enforcement is a challenge - the police themselves do not have a boat, but must rely on the ability to borrow the fire department's boat.
- The environmental police from the state come out once in awhile, but they cover the whole state, so relying on them for enforcement is a challenge.
- Should horse power rating or motor size limits be considered? Or matching boat / motor size to certain launch sites? [open question, no consensus]
- Could a local sticker parking system be put in place? Local residents would pay for sticker, and certain on-street parking areas would be signed as being limited to those with parking stickers. Feeling that people would not mind paying for the sticker AS LONG AS the revenue generated stays in a pot that will be used and reinvested in boat launch site maintenance.
- There is an on-going investigation into which residents around the Reservoir have beach access association rights.

Environmental and Natural Resource Protection

- Water quality has improved greatly over the years.
- The town does not have a water quality testing regime for the Reservoir, it is not currently tested.
- Despite this, swimming at your own risk is permitted, and there are some swimmers / those that play in the water.
- It does appear that there are some dead or damaged trees on site that should be evaluated for removal. If trees and vegetation are removed, other suitable trees should replace these. For example, hemlock bushes could be provided as an alternative along site borders and boundaries with neighboring residences.
- The need for site reconfiguration and water access should be balanced with preserving critical habitat.
- There is great fishing, even without stocking.

Additional Site Amenities for Enhanced User Experience

- Families do come down to eat and play at the beach, which is something the neighboring community likes to see and welcomes more of.
- There are presently few amenities for these types of users. Additional benches and picnic tables would be a benefit to the site.
- Sometimes dumping does occur at the trash area. The town picks up trash once a week, but this is not adequate during the peak summer season months, when two times a week would better match the demand.

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SITE USERS ACCESSING THE WATER IN KAYAKS



THE SITE'S EASTERN AND NORTHERN PARKING AREAS, RESPECTIVELY



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SITE AMENITIES INCLUDE AN INFORMATION BOARD, TRASH CAN, BENCH, AND PLACE TO SIT AND VIEW THE WATER; A BIKE RACK, NOT SHOWN, IS ALSO PRESENT ON SITE

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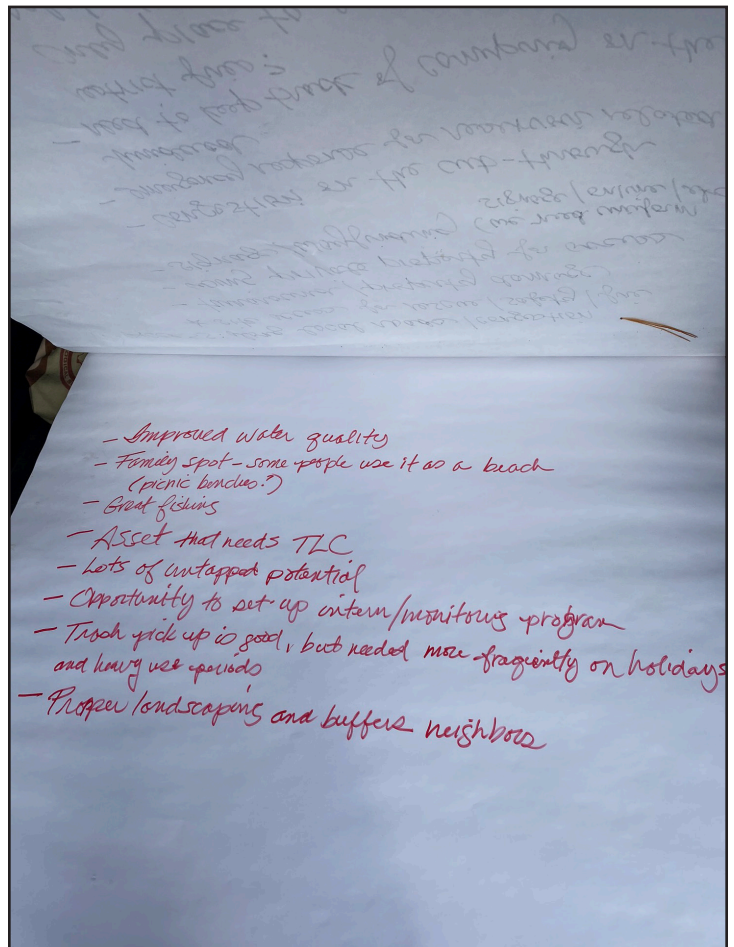
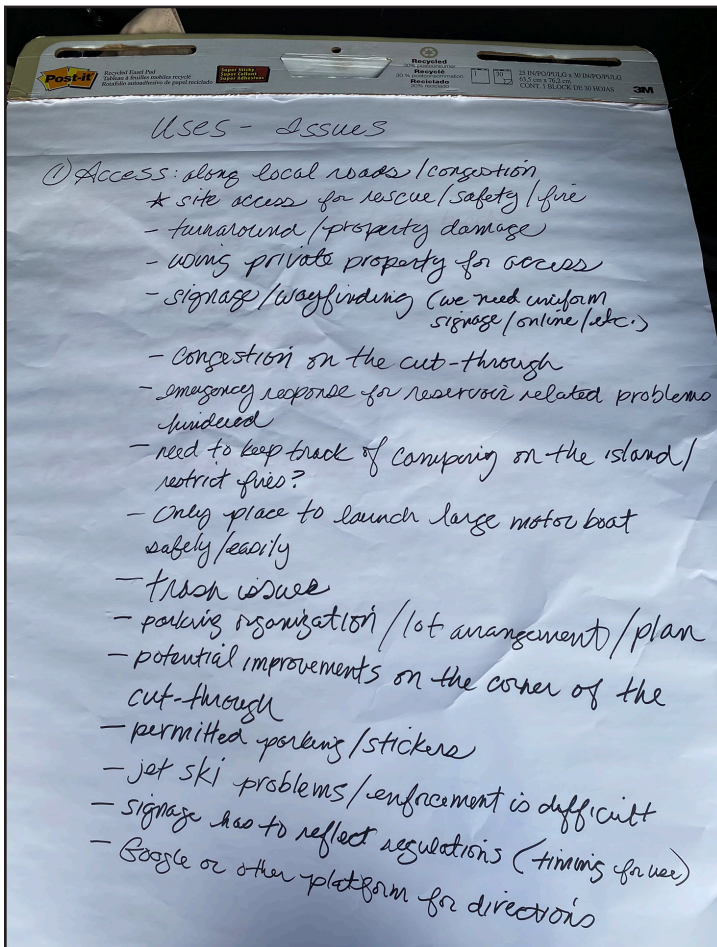
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PICTURES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING ON NOVEMBER 14, 2020



GROUP DISCUSSION NOTE PADS FROM THE MEETING