

January 2021 Security Report

Barbara Reilly for the PBA Board

1. SECURITY FOR PBA BEACHES AND THE SPIT

As most of our community knows, our security needs in Popponesset have continued to grow for the past 10 years and we have worked to address the increasing issues. Even with additional security personnel we haven't been able to keep up - there were simply too many people on the PBA beaches. This year we took a deeper look at the problems and developed a more complex plan to attempt to solve our growing concerns. We also decided to spend significantly more on the security budget this year in order to get the problems under control. We cannot afford to do this every year, but combined with our other efforts, we hope that this will stem the tide and send out word that people can't overuse our beaches or cause problems in our neighborhoods. We are trying to make sure Popponesset is not a destination for partying and drinking.

We developed a Security Subcommittee, made up of PBA volunteer homeowners

We held more security meetings after summer, working with our own team and the Mashpee Police Department, the Mashpee Town Manager, Save Popponesset Bay, New Seabury, and other homeowner's associations in the area.

We invited all homeowners via social media and emails to join Board meetings where we shared our initial plan and updates

The Security Sub-committee, headed by PBA Board member Connie Kickham, includes 10 other PBA homeowners, and met as often as every other week since September to identify the core causes of the problem and develop potential solutions. These key concerns are summarized below. The majority of these issues are focused on the worst 3 weeks of the summer - the weeks leading up to, including and following July 4th holiday - but they are not limited to this period.

Key Safety and Security Issues and Causes on PBA Beaches & the Spit

- An increase in underage drinking on the beach
- Increased disregard for the Police and Security teams
- An increase in the severity of the bad behavior and violence by younger adults and teens experienced by the community, the police and the security team
- Multiple groups of people trying to get access to the Spit and PBA beaches parking at Ockway Bay parking lot, Marketplace parking lots, Wading Place Road up to Community House and PBA side streets
- An increase in New Seabury homes being built, and those homeowners and their renters believing they have access to the PBA beaches
- A significant increase in boats pulling up to the Spit with significant amounts of alcohol on board
- Influx of people getting kicked off the Spit for drinking then trying to get onto PBA beaches without deeded beach rights - -some not knowing PBA beaches are not part of the Spit
- Large groups of kids gathering at night, drinking on the beach and spilling down the Poppy streets causing issues into the wee hours
- Rental market changing in Popponesset: No longer are we seeing just families with their kids renting. We now see large groups of teens, college-aged kids and young adults packing rental houses. Online rentals may result in landlords who aren't thoroughly vetting their tenants, leaving the neighbors to deal with the resulting problems

- Homeowners expanding invitations to large groups of guests, within the right of every homeowner to do so, but the impact is straining the beaches. This also leads to kids congregating, causing even larger groups who invite friends – some from Poppy, some not.
- Uber making it easy to bring kids in at night
- A new complication from last year was COVID, which could likely bring even more challenges to the community this spring and summer

As a result of all these issues, there will be new policies and efforts in place to bring safety and peace back to the community. Several of these new changes are outlined below, with many other efforts being developed as well.

PBA AND SAVE POPPONESSET BAY HIRED A NEW SECURITY TEAM

We have brought on board Pilgrim Security. Pilgrim has also signed up to work on the Spit. Pilgrim has hired two supervisors (former state police) with vast experience on Cape Cod, who are well known and liked by Mashpee town officials.

ALCOHOL USE ON THE BEACH

Popponesset rules prohibit alcohol on the beaches.

This summer, there will be a strict no alcohol policy on the Spit for everyone. The Spit has become a party destination, and like many other beaches in other parts of the Cape and Islands, that brought too much underage drinking and resulting safety concerns. With the support of the security team and the MPD, this will be strictly enforced this year.

EVALUATION OF SECURITY TEAM POLICIES ON PBA BEACHES

The flag system has helped over the years to quickly identify the PBA homeowners who have deeded beach rights to use the PBA beach, vs. those who do not. This is meant to help the security team do a quick check. We are looking at how many security, placement of security check points, increased efforts for the holiday period, gating and other ways to address the overcrowding on the PBA Beaches.

PARKING

The Mashpee Police Department and Town Manager are aware of the increased parking from people trying to access our beaches. We've discussed tow policies and ways to address overflow in parking lots such as Ockway Bay. More to come on this in the coming months.

2. WORKING WITH REALTORS AND SHORT-TERM RENTAL LANDORDS

Mashpee sent out a notice with the tax bills requiring all homeowners who rent their homes out to apply for a permit to do so. There are new COVID restrictions. The Board of Health is cracking down on this given what they saw last year, and we were informed by the MPD and Mashpee Town Manager, that if any neighbor sees any excessive overcrowding in a short-term rental, they should notify that homeowner and the Board of Health. We will reach out to Poppy homeowners on the Town's permitted list to ask that landlords monitor the number of renters in each home.

Town short-term rental regulations can be reviewed by clicking on this link:

<https://www.mashpeema.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif3426/f/uploads/shorttermrentalregulation.pdf>

PBA RENTAL GUIDELINES

PBA also has put together a list of considerations for homeowners who rent out their Poppy home.

1. Ensure your Tenants Know All Town and PBA Rules and Policies

Please ensure your renters know the Mashpee policies (link above) and PBA rules and regulations such as parking, beach flags, noise ordinance, etc. See:

<https://www.popponesetbeachassociation.com/>

<https://www.popponesetbeachassociation.com/rules-and-regulations.html>

<https://www.popponesetbeachassociation.com/rental-guidlinesregulations.html>

We suggest you outline the Town and Poppy Rules and Regulations in your rental agreements. Leave a package for renters, including information on fines for lost flags, and Board of Health violations if they break the rental agreement.

2. Respect and Cooperate with Your Neighbors

Tell your neighbors about your rental plans. Ask if they can help look out for your home. Tell them your car limits, the number of renters you expect to see, and the like, so that, if a renter abuses your home, you can know about it. Consider giving your neighbors a phone number they can call to report to you if problems occur. If a neighbor complains, try to address the problem immediately and let them know you have done so.

For neighbors experiencing issues with rented properties, notify the homeowner to let them know what's going on. We have found that, when an issue is reported to the PBA by neighbors, most times the homeowner is unaware of the incident.

Please call the Mashpee Police Department if there are any issues that warrant police involvement.

3. Screen Your Renter-Guests

The best way to avoid complaints from your neighbors is to carefully screen your guests. Poppy is a family destination. Loading 10 college kids in to a 3-bedroom cottage is shaking up your neighborhood. Many vacation "rent by owner" websites provide guidelines for communicating with and screening renters/guests.

4. Parking/Vehicles

Be sure to outline in your rental agreement the number of guests allowed, the number of cars, and the like. Cars must not be parking on our narrow streets, nor should they overload the property.

Remember, the fire department needs the roads kept clear, and we have a policy of two wheels on the property. Renters cannot park their cars on someone else's property. The affected homeowner can tow the car.

5. Monitor the Usage of Your Beach Flag

In recent years, there have been instances of renters abusing our beach access rights. Please instruct your tenants that the PBA Beach Flag is not an open invitation to invite dozens of friends and create a party scene on the beach. All organized events must be first approved by the PBA:

<https://www.popponesetbeachassociation.com/events-and-gatherings.html>

REALTOR SALES AND RENTALS

We have also identified the need to connect with real estate agents in the area, to ensure that they are aware and educated on the rules of the PBA beaches so that when they sell or rent a home in New Seabury, they communicate the PBA and Spit rules.

As mentioned, we have formed stronger alliances with many local entities to work together to solve this problem as we are all connected. The Overlook Knoll and Wilson's Grove Homeowners Associations, many of the New Seabury Associations, the Marketplace, the Town of Mashpee, the Mass. Dept of Fisheries, and others, are all working together with us.

3. WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE TOWN OF MASHPEE ON POLICIES AND ISSUES THAT DIRECTLY IMPACT US IN POPPY

As you may remember from our September 2020 Annual Meeting, we have asked former PBA Board President Barb Reilly to assist in leading a Task Force on identifying interrelated issues that occur in Poppy (i.e., water quality, building/zoning, drainage, parking, vista pruning, etc.) and decisions and authority placed with the Town of Mashpee that impact these. The first issue that has been studied by a separate group – the water quality issue – is an example of the interrelation of these issues, because it is the nitrogen loading that is in great part a result of our septic systems not being able to adequately process the waste, which runs directly into the Popponesset waters, which is causing the increasing algae bloom issue. (See Nicole Corbett's report with this letter).

Popponesset homeowners live with the problems and the damage occurring to our beaches. If not addressed, these will impair our use of the beach and impact property values. However, PBA does not control the Mashpee Planning Board or the ZBA or BOH, so we must work more closely with them than we ever have before.

We've begun to take a more active role in efforts here to improve awareness of the activities that impact Popponesset and to engage in ways to protect our community. See the full report from the Annual meeting here: https://www.popponessetbeachassociation.com/news_blog/category/zoning. A full updated report will be shared at the Spring 2021 Annual meeting this June. As a board, we do not prevent any homeowner from building on their property. We do, however, want to try and control drainage onto our streets and to help stop the new drainage issues that are straining our resources.

4. EVENTS

With the increase in people spending more time in Poppy and the closing of many event spaces and restaurants (a direct correlation to COVID) we are getting requests or hearing of parties and events being planned on the beaches for the Spring, Summer and Fall of 2021.

PBA beaches are private, owned by PBA, with deeded beach rights granted to all (584) homeowners within PBA. Events and activities that are held on the beach impact those who also use the beach for swimming, solitude, etc. PBA requires prior notice and approval for any planned social event on the beaches of Popponesset - that is a planned gathering, private or public, such as a wedding, graduation party, etc.

In order to protect the rights of all PBA Homeowners and ensure a fair process, PBA has applied the following policies:

PROCEDURES FOR EVENTS IN POPPONSETT

1. Pre-approval

Any planned event must be pre-approved and voted on by the PBA Board. No organized events/activities can be held on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays from June 15 to September 10th.

2. Scheduling your event

Any PBA Homeowner planning to host an organized activity/event for more than 20 people, for anything other than normal beach use, must submit a written request to PBA at least 2 weeks in advance of the event. Requests must be made by the homeowner and may not be made by a renter. See [PBA Event Form](#)

3. Rules for beach use

All usual beach rules apply: no furniture on beach, no catering on the beach, no alcohol, no fires or loud music is allowed at any time, etc. You are responsible for clean-up after the event. The event may not impede normal use of the beach by any other legitimate stakeholder. You may not block off any part of the beach or beach access point.

For 2021, all State mandated COVID-19 restrictions such as mask-wearing, social distancing and limits on gatherings will apply.

4. Community House Rental

We've allowed for rental of the PBA community house. See the website to inquire about dates and info. For 2021, due to considerations of COVID-19, we may not be able to make the Community House available for rental.

5. Blocking off of streets

The fire department has told us that they do not want streets blocked off, and, if there is to be a block party, the fire department wants to be informed in advance, so you should inform both the PBA Board and the fire department.

The PBA Board