

TOWN OF BERKLEY  
MASSACHUSETTS

HISTORICAL COMMISSION  
One North Main Street, Berkley, MA 02779

Mailing Address:  
724 Berkley Street  
Berkley, MA 0277

Stephanie Pollack, Secretary and CEO  
MassDOT  
10 Park Plaza  
Suite 4160  
Boston, MA 02116.

Dear Ms. Pollack,

On behalf of the Berkley Historical Commission, and as a member of the Berkley Master Plan Committee, I am writing to you regarding an area in the Myricks section of Berkley that is of urgent concern to both Committees. That area is the Historic Berkley fairgrounds and ball field; and also, the site of the Haskins Cemetery. (See enclosed history of the fairgrounds and Haskins Cemetery)

The new South Coast Rail is costing Berkley quite a price. Just from the historic point of view: two historic homes at 2 and 6 Wye Street must be vacated by the owners who have lived in these homes for over 40 years. Certainly, these homes will be destroyed (see history enclosed). This is an immense loss, not only to the home owners, but to the history of Berkley.

All of the residents who live in the Myricks area will also pay an enormous price: although their homes will not be taken, they will bear the great inconvenience of dealing with train whistles, and rail vibrations 26 (or more) times a day. Their home values will suffer. Although these residents are told that their homes will not be devalued because it will bring economy to the area, that may not be the case. Since there is no actual train stop in Berkley, there is no way that the economy in that area can improve. They are not even a "whistle stop" ...they are simply a corridor for the two-rail system flying by their homes.

On May 29, a meeting was held with South Coast Rail (Jean Fox), the Berkley Selectmen, and the Myricks residents. There is obvious displeasure by the residents, at not only the rail itself, but the way the preliminary preparation is being conducted: i.e. trucks dumping at 3 AM, trucks barreling down dirt roads (Cotley Street), and egregious disregard for the safety of the residents. Plainly, the residents are more than unhappy with the cards that they have been dealt by the South Coast Rail.

At a recent Berkley Master Plan meeting on June 8, hosted by SRPEDD & the Berkley Planning Board, with 2 dozen Berkley residents, it is clear that Myricks and its preservation as a Historic and Cultural area, an Open Space area, a Natural Resource area, and a Recreational area are on a high priority endangered list.

From 1858 to 1876 the Bristol County Central Cattle Show and Fair was held in Myricks. According to Assessor, George Moitoza, the area that was the Fairgrounds (Mill Street) is now occupied by homes; however, the property abutting that (Map 21/Lots #22 & 23) include approximately 25 acres of Town owned property. On that property is a ballfield that although is still used, is sorely in need of upgrading. There are also the remains of clay tennis courts. The Haskins Cemetery also is included in this property. Mr. Moitoza relates that since we have no sidewalks in Berkley, that walking trails in that area would be especially valuable. If paths are cleared, one could walk a trail that would connect from the St Yves ballfield to the Anthony Street complex of well used, maintained ballfields. There is an entrance (although chained off at this time) from Rte. 79 (Myricks Street)

I am writing to you now because I know that the State works very slowly, and the sooner the enclosed suggested project is underway, the better for all involved. Preferably before MassDOT leaves the area and moves to other towns, this project can be completed. On behalf of the Historical Commission, the Master Plan Committee, and the residents of Myricks, I am sending you this formal request: Since there are no recreational areas close to this site, that as a good-will gesture and honest show of appreciation to the residents of Myricks that the South Coast Team set an improvement plan for historic

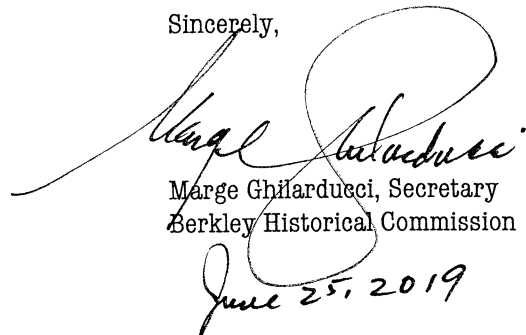
Elizabeth Amaral\* Marge Ghilarducci\* Edgar S. Hoak\* Barbara Hun\* Andrea Perry

Berkley Fairgrounds area on Myricks Street (Rte. 79) (Map 21/Lots # 22 & 23), and to that regard, specifically:

1. Open the area so it is visible from Myricks Street
2. Restore, expand and upgrade the Myricks ball field.
3. Restore, expand and upgrade and night lighting the tennis courts.
4. Install a state-of-the-art playground and basketball court.
5. Add composite no-maintenance picnic tables and benches
6. Add walking paths that extend from the St. Yves field to the Anthony Street Complex
7. Improve the Haskins Cemetery
8. Install a kiosk with the history of Myricks (the rail, the industry and the homes)

This would bring a community recreational area to a section of Berkley that at this time has no such resources for Myricks families. We know that constructed properly, this will in the least show good will by the Commonwealth for the sacrifices that these families have to endure in perpetuity. We ask that you allow these families to feel a modicum of thanks and respect for them and their properties and acknowledge the penalty that they must pay for the good of the State. It will give these residents a long-term legacy and a perfect win/win situation.

Sincerely,



Marge Ghilarducci, Secretary  
Berkley Historical Commission  
June 25, 2019

ENCLOSURES:

1. History of Myricks homes at 2 & 6 Wye Street.  
Additional information on file with MassDOT: *Technical Report: Historical Resources Intensive Survey South Coast Rail Phase 1 Project Report*, prepared by Public Archaeological Laboratory, Inc. and submitted to Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc January 2019.
2. 1871 map of Myricks with History of Fairgrounds
3. History of the Fairgrounds
4. Information on Haskins Cemetery
5. Assessors' maps showing Lot#22 (100AC (30)) & Lot #23 (126AC (46))
6. Aerial view of Lots 22 & 23
7. Residents of Myricks who are endorsing this request.

cc: Brona Simon, Massachusetts Historical Commission  
Jean Fox, Project Manager, South Coast Rail  
Bill Napolitano, SRPEDD  
Senator Marc Pacheco  
Representative Norman Orall  
✓ Town of Berkley Selectmen  
Donna Leary, Berkley Planning Board  
George Moitoza, Berkley Assessors  
Eden Jones, Berkley Historical Society  
Melinda Paine-Dupont, Berkley Historical Society

"People must know the past to understand the present and face the future." Nellie I. McClung

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