



Town Of Harrison *Maine*

August 13th, 2025

TO: Cumberland County Board of Assessment Review

RE: Follow-Up information for 46 Island Pond Rd, Harrison, Maine

The Cumberland County Board of Review met on July 23rd for the property of 46 Island Pond Rd. During the meeting the board requested the Town's Assessing Agent from Parker Appraisal, Jessica Westhaver, to review the property files as well as visit the property to examine flooding issues which were listed in the property owners appeal.

First a few housekeeping items from the prior submitted paperwork. It was noted in the prior meeting there was a discrepancy of water frontage on the subject parcel. In the spreadsheets it was listed as having 200 feet of frontage, however the property valuation report only listed 125 feet. After reviewing the property file, the correct water frontage of the property is 200 feet and is correctly shown on the spreadsheets as originally submitted. The property valuation report has been corrected with the appropriate description. The field on the valuation report is a descriptive field only, and the land assessment was originally calculated with the 200 feet of frontage.

- New valuation report is included as ADDENDIUM 1.

FINDINGS

I visited the property on July 29th, 2025, at 2:15pm with the Town Code Enforcement Officer Jim Fahey. Prior to my visit to the property the following steps were taken:

1. Discussion with Director of Public Works Jack Bueler:

Mr. Bueler has been in his position with the Town of Harrison for 2.5 years and worked with prior employees before becoming the Director.

My discussion was to gather information about Island Pond Road as well as plans for future maintenance to the road and culverts. According to Mr. Bueler, a 2-foot cross culvert was replaced between 46 and 50 Island Pond Road 16 months prior (spring of 2024). The Town has received no complaints of flooding and has never had



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an issue with the water running over the road. A small stream located between 50 and 46 Island Pond Road flows through this culvert and directly into Island Pond.

There was discussion of adding a culvert in a low spot of the road, which would require extensive ditching and taking of private property by eminent domain, but this is not near the subject property.

The road is shared with Camp Fernwood, which sits at the end of Island Pond Road. The Town maintains the first half of the road, with annual grading, from the beginning through to the property address of 350 Island Pond Road. Camp Fernwood maintains the remaining end of the road.

This concluded my discussion with Mr. Bueler.

2. Review of Property File:

An extensive review of the property file was completed. Documentation of items specific to the stream and any water issues were reviewed. Important items found:

- The stream that flows through the property and through the culvert across the road to the pond were man-made. This is documented many times throughout the file.
- There are two culverts installed in the man-made ditch by Ms. Allen and her father (verified with Ms. Allen at the property visit). The Town issued Notices of violation titled "STOP NOTICE" in October of 1994 to cease installation of the culverts.
- On September 11th, 2008, Ms. Allen submitted a letter to the Town regarding culvert placement near her property. In the letter it was indicated the Town would need to install a dug ditch to the right of the culvert to properly allow water to drain, as well as have riprap installed. Ms. Allen indicated in her letter she did not want additional ditching to divert water as it would disturb her rose bushes.
- On September 15th, 2008 a letter was written to Ms. Allen by another property owner on Island Pond. The were concerns with Ms. Allen contesting road improvements and maintenance to be completed.
- On September 15th, 2008, a letter written by Ms. Allen was submitted to the Town Manager. This letter is requesting the cross culvert under Island Pond Road not to be unplugged. Ms. Allen wished to have the culvert inactive to



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stop the flow of soil into the pond. The Town had previously suggested doing a ditch along the road to catch the soil runoff, but Ms. Allen refused this suggestion as noted on the letter of September 11th, 2008.

- On March 3rd, 2011, Ms. Allen submitted a letter of gratitude stating the new installation and repositioning of a culvert by her property was a job well done and she was happy with the action of the Town.
- On March 3rd, 2011, Ms. Allen submitted a second letter to the Town showing dissatisfaction with the annual grading of the road. She also insisted the Town return her property to its prior condition.
- Additional findings show Shoreland Zoning violations of building without permits, refusal of Planning Board site visits, as well as notices not complying with a required septic installation.

3. Property Visit:

I visited 46 Island Pond Road on July 29th, 2025, at 2:15pm with the Town Code enforcement Officer Jim Fahey. We arrived at the property in a white pickup truck with Town Emblems affixed to the outside doors of the vehicle. Ms. Allen was at home at the time of the visit.

Review of the property found the following:

- a. Fully clear culvert intersecting the properties between 50 and 46 Island Pond Road. The culvert runs to the opposite side of the road by the pond. The distance from the culvert to the below ground is approximately 4 feet.
- b. Review of the ditch that is located between the two mentioned properties curves up and behind the subject property. The depth of the ditch varies in places. It is located to the far left of the subject driveway, which slopes down away from the driveway. There is debris which has been piled in this area by the homeowner.
- c. A private footbridge bridge is located over the ditch between 50 and 46 Island Pond Road.
- d. Past the footbridge are the two unpermitted culverts, which sit one above the other. The area before these culverts is at least 8 feet deep and 10 to 12 feet wide. It would take a substantial flood to fill this with water where it would impact the property.
- e. At the water, Ms. Allen has stairs and a dock on the water with a paddle boat.



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Mr. Fahey asked about the culverts and Ms. Allen stated she installed the top one, and her father installed the bottom one (he was the prior owner of the property). We asked if the property had ever flooded, and Ms. Allen said no but it could.

Island Pond is an important asset to the quality of life and economies of Waterford and Harrison. The shoreline is fringed with 16 seasonal and year-round residents. Fernwood Cove Summer Camp for Girls annually attracts 355 campers to the lake and has 100 staff members. Island Pond drains to the Crooked River, which flows to Sebago Lake and provides drinking water for more than 200,000 people in southern Maine.

Included in this submission are the following:

- ADDENDUM 1 – Housekeeping Documents
 - 1a – Corrected Valuation Report
 - Documents throughout the Addendums show verification of frontage.
 - Documents throughout the addendums how verification of man-made ditch.
- ADDENDUM 2 – Documents from the property file.
 - 2a – Notice of Violation “STOP NOTICE” for private culvert installation.
 - 2b – Letter: September 11th, 2008 (REFUSAL OF DITCHING)
 - 2c – Letter: September 15th, 2008 (LETTER FROM ANOTHER PROPERTY OWNER)
 - 2d – Letter: September 15th, 2008 (DO NOT UNPLUG CULVERT)
 - 2e – Letter: March 3rd, 2011 (JOB WELL DONE)
 - 2f – Letter: March 3rd, 2011 (DISSATISFACTION OF ROAD MAINTENANCE)
- ADDENDUM 3 – Property Pictures from Site Visit
 - 3a – Map indicating location of pictures
 - 3b – Picture 1 – Taken from the bottom of driveway showing the distance of the culvert.
 - 3c – Picture 2 – Culvert entrance inlet.
 - 3d – Picture 3 – Culvert exit outlet



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- 3e – Picture 4 – Taken from the bottom of the driveway looking up at the house
- 3f – Picture 5 – Picture of the footbridge going over the man-made ditch
- 3g – Picture 6 – low area where stream flows. Debris pile of sticks.
- 3h – Picture 7 – Man-made ditch behind the house
- 3i – Picture 8 – Man-made ditch approximately 6 to 8 feet deep
- 3j – Picture 9 – 2 non-permitted culverts installed by homeowner. This area is at least 8 feet deep.
- 3k – Additional Pictures – pictures included show the property's dock/boat, as well as Camp Fernwood at the end of the road. These are included to show the beauty and desirability of the location.

It is of our opinion the property is assessed equitably and fairly with the 10% reduction for size/shape and topography. The property has a very low chance of flooding. There has never been an issue with the cross-culverts installed by the Town, not handling proper drainage and no overflow of water over the road in this location.

The homeowner's refusal and clear avoidance of proper ditching and road repairs could lead to the concerns Ms. Allen is describing. The ditch behind the house is man-made and is almost 10 feet deep in places. There is a very unlikely chance of flooding on the subject property. Ms. Allen has stated no flooding has ever occurred. The house and all recreational areas are above grade, and it is unlikely for any flooding to occur other than in a situation of a rare natural disaster. The ditch/stream does not impact the driveway.

Sincerely,

The Town of Harrison Board of Assessors & Parker Appraisal Co