

DRAFT

February 27, 2020

Dear Cape Elizabeth property owner:

This letter is to invite you to participate in the naming of a water body on or abutting your property, as well as other water bodies in town.

Except for a handful of ponds and streams, most of the fresh water bodies in Cape Elizabeth do not have names that appear on standard maps. Over time, some of these water bodies acquire names, but it is unclear if town residents are involved in the naming.

The 2019 and 2007 Comprehensive Plans recommended that names be assigned to significant water bodies. Recommendation #72 in the 2019 Comprehensive Plan states:

#72 Assign names to significant unnamed bodies of water and streams.

The Town Council has assigned the Conservation Committee responsibility for the recommendation and the committee is sponsoring a public naming effort.

Maps showing ponds that are .75 acres or more in size and streams longer than 500' ("significant") have been prepared and each water body assigned a number. Both the maps and a poll will be posted on the town website to solicit suggested names. Because you are an abutter to an unnamed water body, you are also receiving this letter and attached map and encouraged to participate.

It is the town's hope that the names will not just be used on town documents, but also added to standard maps. After names have been adopted by the town, they will be submitted to the U.S. Board on Geographic Names (BGN). The BGN is

responsible by law for standardizing geographic names throughout the Federal Government, and promulgates policies governing issues such as commemorative naming, derogatory names, and names in wilderness areas. Therefore, an effort will be made to be consistent with BGN policies. One policy of note is that no natural feature may be named for a living person. A potential honoree must have been deceased for at least five years, and must have had either a direct or long-term association with the feature, or must have made notable civic contributions. <https://www.usgs.gov/core-science-systems/ngp/board-on-geographic-names/how-do-i>

The naming project should add clarity when discussing specific water bodies. For this reason, place names that are already in use should be avoided. For example, "Dyer Pond" is very similar to Dyer Pond Rd.

Please feel welcome to suggest a name for every water body on the list, and also note when your property abuts the water body. The Conservation Committee has already asked the Cape Elizabeth Historical Preservation Society to participate.

Once all the suggestions have been received and tabulated, the Conservation Committee will produce a recommended name list and post it to the town website. A final list will be submitted to the Town Council for action.

I hope you will participate in this effort and will submit your suggestions by **April 10, 2020**. Submissions can be made on the town website, [INSERT LINK] www.capeelizabeth.com or in writing to the town planner at Town Hall, 320 Ocean House Rd, Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04017. For more information, contact the town planner at 799-0115 or maureen.omeara@capeelizabeth.org.

Sincerely,

James Tasse
Conservation Committee Chair

Enclosed: map