

Topsail Beach Citizen Roundtable on Beach Nourishment

Summary of Key Points – March 6, 2010 Meeting

By John Stephens, School of Government, UNC-CH, March 9, 2010

Desired presenters for March 20 (not in priority order)

- A. Ken Wilson or Tom Jarrett -- Coastal Planning and Engineering (were involved in the development of the Topsail Beach Interim Beach Nourishment – IBN plan) – can speak to features of the IBN plan and FEMA matters.
- B. On the Question of the Easements (temporary, permanent, or drafted to focus narrowly on beach nourishment activity): Jan Broadmerkel of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and/or Topsail Beach Town Attorney.
- C. Jim Gregson, NC DENR – Division of Coastal Management.
- D. Dr. Joseph Kalo, UNC-Ch School of Law (and Co-Director of the North Carolina Coastal Resources Law, Planning and Policy Center at UNC-CH) and editor/writer of Legal Tides
<http://www.nccoastallaw.org/publications.htm#legaltides>
- E. Spencer Rogers (Sea Grant – UNC-Wilmington -
<http://www.uncw.edu/cmsr/documents/po.APR09.EMAIL.pdf>) – knowledgeable on history of barrier island dunes, storm recovery, also where sand would come from for IBN plan.
- F. Auditor and/or N.C. Local Government Commission staff (Formal name - State & Local Government Finance Division. Staff: <http://www.nctreasurer.com/dsthome/StateAndLocalGov>

Mayor's comments on likelihood of the presenters coming to the March 20th meeting:

- Jim Gregson – unlikely to come
- Ken Wilson or Tom Jarrett – could come, but will be a cost to the town
- Jan Broadmerkel - maybe

Potential Additional presenters – up to individual Roundtable participants

- a) Roundtable agreed: any Roundtable member or alternate can submit a name and the invitation will be made. However, the Roundtable does not have budget authority, so any costs to Topsail Beach must be decided by town officials
- b) Submit names, their area(s) of expertise, and contact information sent to John Stephens ASAP. John to share with Roundtable participants and Town officials for making the invitation and follow-up (any potential costs)

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If desired presenters cannot attend – questions to address:

See document = *Questions-March6-CR* [Stephens and SOG staff transcribed questions, Stephens organized into categories]

Two preference votes by Citizens Roundtable

Participants held up cards to vote: Green = Yes, Yellow = Unsure/Maybe, Red = No

Question [in the morning]: Is there some solution other than putting sand on the beach?

Green = 0

Yellow = 8

Red = 8

In the afternoon: Setting aside costs, putting sand on the beach should be part of any beach nourishment approach. [Judy and Gary Compton were absent]

Green = 11

Yellow = 2

Red = 1

Areas of questions

Summary of categories of questions offered by the facilitators at the beginning of the afternoon session (edited for brevity):

Financing Beach Nourishment

- A. Interim plan [One or more members asked for Butch Parrish to address this point]
- B. Federal plan
- C. Other – concern about maintenance costs – are they built into the Interim Plan?
- D. Seeking an unbiased source about the town's financial situation

General sources for expertise: N.C. Local Government Commission, the company that has audited the town's books

Easements – seeking a legal answer on what is required, what options may exist for temporary, permanent or “limited to pushing sand” instead of an open-ended easement: Source: US army Corps of Engineers or Town Attorney or Jim Gregson, CAMA

Details of Interim BN plan

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- A. How long will it last?
- B. Other

What is the relation between the IBN and FEMA hurricane recovery?

Town action – completed, or pending, on:

- A. FEMA eligibility
- B. Federal eligibility

Sand sources – options, costs, impacts: for Interim or Non-interim BN approach?

How would the IBN plan affect individual property owner's insurance policies? Answer from a Roundtable person: should have no effect – insurance only covers structures.

Beach protection structures – such as jetties or groins? Answer: state law prohibits.

How does land use plan, zoning or other plans affect beach nourishment options? Answer: description of those documents and what they accomplish by audience member Chair of the Planning Board. No specific guidance on if, when, and how of beach nourishment.

What are “engineered” beach nourishment impacts – economic? – ecological? Etc.?

For the Town Commission members who acted to slow down/halt the IBN plan – what are their concerns? What should the Roundtable know and address?

Is the beach nourishment fund designated just for the federal plan? Answer: no.

Have we lost the time table from the original IBN plan, RE: to execute the contract for dredging in November 2010? If we have missed that time window, will the permits and other plans carry forward to a later date?

Other Options for dune/escarpment protection:

- A. Individual owners doing fencing and plantings to protect the dune. Example: The Meeses at 900 block of Ocean Blvd. Several speakers were skeptical, based on their individual experience and observation of other properties how much protection can be gained.
- B. Pushing sand until the federal project is set
- C. Moving structures

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D. Wait for federal project

E. Do nothing

Speakers from audience

- Nash Gray (morning and afternoon)
- Dave Hansen (morning)
- Terry Buschbach (morning)
- Terry King (afternoon)

Draft March 20th agenda

AM – Presenters, Written replies to questions from invited people who could not attend, Roundtable question and answer with the presenters

PM – Roundtable discussion and seeking as much agreement as possible on one or more recommendations to the Town Commission.

Sharing email addresses among Citizens Roundtable participants

Context - near end of March 6th meeting of Roundtable:

John Stephens asked if it would be helpful to Citizens Roundtable members and alternates to be able to email each other. To date, John has only sent information to Citizens Roundtable participants using bcc: so the email addresses could not be seen.

Polling: [Bill and Judy Compton absent] - Grayson ReVile – red card; does not want her email shared. All others: green cards – John will send an email showing those addresses to those participants. [Implied: if Bill or Judy Compton wish to join the “green card” people, they can do so]