



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of the Town Clerk

REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Shore Protection Board was called to order at 2:00 P.M. on February 17, 1998, in the Town Hall Town Council Chambers.

II. ROLL CALL

On roll call the following Shore Protection Board Members were in attendance: Chairman Garrison D. Lickle, Vice Chairman George M. Moffett, II, Eileen C. Curran, Wayne F. Dimm, Edward Hennessy, Jr., Charles C. Isiminger, Gerald H. Levy, and Richard Raffo. Board Member Joel Martino was absent from the meeting. Others in attendance for all or a portion of the meeting included: Town of Palm Beach Town Council President Lesly Smith, Town of Palm Beach Councilman Jack McDonald, Town of Palm Beach Councilman Sam McLendon, Town of South Palm Beach Mayor Margot Roberts, Town of South Palm Beach Vice Mayor Maury Jacobson, Town of South Palm Beach Mayor Pro-Tem Art Lavenhar, Town of South Palm Beach Commissioner Ernest Muro, Town of South Palm Beach Commissioner Robert March, Town of South Palm Beach Town Administrator Margot Beck, City of Lake Worth Commissioner Lloyd Clager, City of Lake Worth Projects Manager Ray Smith, Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resources Management Engineering Assistant Bob Clinger, Town of Manalapan Utility Director Mark Hull, Town of Lantana Director of Marine Safety/Sports Complex Dan Reidy, Regional Research President William Stronge, Regional Research Associate Ronald Schultz, and Applied Technology & Management (ATM) Vice President Dave Decker. Staff members in attendance from the Town of Palm Beach were: Town Manager Robert Doney, Assistant Town Manager Peter Elwell, Town Attorney John Randolph, Public Works Director Al Dusey, and Deputy Town Clerk Susan Eichhorn.

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Agenda was unanimously approved as printed, through motion of Board Member Richard Raffo, seconded by Board Member Gerald Levy.

IV. DISCUSSION WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS FROM TOWN OF PALM BEACH, CITY OF LAKE WORTH, TOWN OF LANTANA, TOWN OF MANALAPAN, AND TOWN OF SOUTH PALM BEACH REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF MUTUAL INTEREST

Chairman Lickle commented that he had reviewed a tape of a documentary on Channel 20 provided to him by Bob Clinger of Palm Beach County; it was extremely informative, and he recommended that each member of the Shore Protection Board view the tape, which described sand movement, onshore/offshore movement.

Chairman Lickle mentioned several recent newspaper articles, one concerning beach erosion in The Hamptons in New York, and the other concerning Federal funding for the New Jersey shoreline, which he had copied for distribution to the Shore Protection Board members.

Chairman Lickle noted that he had been approached by a group representing the Stabler Disc Beach Enhancement System, and his response had been that the stage had not yet been reached to consider a product. He suggested that the responses of the Shore Protection Board be consistent in requesting those companies submitting such material to await a response in the future.

Chairman Lickle expressed that there were many representatives from neighboring communities in attendance today, and suggested that each attendee identify him/herself. He noted that the meeting was informal, participation was invited, and that the inlet to inlet proposal of the beach renourishment project was being considered on a regional basis. Today there would be an opportunity to hear the presentation of Dr. William Stronge concerning the economic model proposed for the project with an open forum for discussion.

Town Manager Robert Doney requested that a sign-in sheet be passed out, so that all attendees could receive material regarding information received at the meeting today.

Chairman Lickle explained that Dr. William Stronge had been hired by the Town of Palm Beach to begin an economic modeling of how to pay for the beach renourishment project. The Shore Protection Board had been meeting for the past two years in an effort to develop a plan for beach

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

erosion mitigation, and the method of financing was an important component. The Shore Protection Board had discovered that expertise was required to determine the method of spreading costs as evenly as possible, and that there were pockets of public money that could be obtained without consideration of public access issues. As a result, Dr. Stronge, together with ATM, would put together a report and a recommendation, with a goal of having each citizen understand what the project would cost them on an annual basis.

V. PRESENTATION BY DR. WILLIAM STRONGE REGARDING HIS ECONOMIC STUDY METHODOLOGY

Dr. William Stronge advised that he had worked with a number of communities in Florida concerning the question of how to pay to have beaches restored. There were various methods available to communities in this regard, with four basic models being: ad valorem tax revenue; tiered assessment rates; special assessments on a front footage basis; special assessments based on calculation of the benefits received. He would be performing a benefit analysis to determine how much benefit would be obtained by various properties, both on and off the beach, with emphasis on recreational types of benefits associated with the beaches. He pointed out that his work would not impact beach access or beach ownership.

Dr. Stronge specified that the study would involve a survey in order to determine who was using the beach, and would be conducted both during the winter and summer months, and he hoped to begin on March 7, 1998. The survey would continue for seven or eight days, would typically include 500 and 1,000 surveys, and would be done again in July or August.

Chairman Lickle mentioned that the legal defensibility of any assessment was an issue, and asked for the comments of Dr. Stronge, as well as Town Attorney Randolph.

Town Attorney Randolph responded that the expertise of Dr. Stronge would be relied upon for a defensible position relating to the assessments determined in the economic model.

Dr. Stronge commented that there had never been an actual challenge to an assessment plan that he had developed, although there had been public hearings where the public itself had objected and questioned the validity of the assessments as an objective and rationale approach.

Chairman Lickle remarked that a regional approach to the beach restoration was preferable, and the educational process would be beneficial for all communities involved. Town of South Palm Beach Mayor Margot Roberts commented that an inlet to inlet approach would be setting a

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

precedent; the Town of South Palm Beach could not accomplish a beach restoration project by itself, largely because of the necessary permitting involving the inland reef going through the area. In addition, she stated that she believed Federal, State, and County funding assistance would be more likely with the regional approach, which she suggested would help sell the project to the public.

ATM Vice President Dave Decker commented that, from an engineering perspective, a project undertaken sequentially, in a larger scale, would also perform much better than a smaller scale project. The life of a larger scale project would be extended considerably, which in turn, would reduce costs over the long term; there would be savings in terms of construction costs as well as the long term performance of the project. He explained that the restoration included eight individual projects, with the highest priority being the zone of most severe erosion. If the entire project could not be accomplished he was hopeful that the projects of lesser severity in the overall plan would not be undertaken; these areas were located toward the southern end of the island, where erosion rates were lower.

Palm Beach Town Council President Pro-Tem McLendon commented that he believed that beach front property owners should be asked for an opinion, as he believed it was vital to see that reaction.

Chairman Lickle expressed concern that there was a perception that the people living on the beach, or on the lake, were not being heard, which he saw as a political issue, rather than a statistical issue.

Dr. Stronge responded that he would take this issue into consideration when approaching the specifics of the study.

Town Attorney Randolph noted that legal defense would depend on statistical information, not a political standpoint.

Dr. Stronge explained that the contingent valuation survey was used because it would provide some idea of the value the public placed on the beach. A key question in the survey was asking people on the beach how much they would be willing to pay for that experience that particular day. Other questions would include where they were from, where they were staying, length of time spent on the beach, how often, and some economic impact data.

Mr. Dick Bresee commented that the best way for taxpayers to determine the worth of the project would be to ask themselves what they wanted from the island of Palm Beach, and how would that be affected if a new 300' wide inlet developed at Sloan's Curve? He explained that this would focus their minds on exactly how much the project was worth to them.

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

Chairman Lickle commented that public education should take place on what would happen if the project was not done, as well as the risks associated with doing the project.

South Palm Beach Town Administrator Margot Beck pointed out the South Palm Beach did not have public access, except for hotels, and questioned the availability of public funding.

Chairman Lickle responded that Federal, State, and County funding would be applied for after the project was developed and funded through the participating municipalities. Funding assistance from higher levels of government could then be considered as found money.

South Palm Beach Mayor Roberts directed a question to Dave Decker of ATM. She asked how many actual feet of sand would project out after the project was completed?

Mr. Decker responded that it was a design detail, and the projection of sand would vary, however, the top width of the beach would probably be approximately 100 feet wide on average. The northern end of the island was a much narrower width because of the proximity of the hard bottom habitat.

Board Member Raffo requested that Dr. Stronge give a brief history of his experience in other beachfront areas in the past.

Dr. Stronge stated that he began working with Captiva Island, where many years had been spent determining how to pay for the beach restoration, as most of the beach was privately owned, and the amount of publicly owned property was fairly small. The property owners on the island knew that they were going to pay the bulk of beach restoration costs. An economic analysis was then done, and the project went before the voters in a referendum, passing by over 80% in the vote. There was also an opinion poll done of the property owners, because many of them did not actually reside on the island, which also had over an 80% positive response.

Dr. Stronge pointed out that he had also done some work on Marco Island, and put together a plan, which had not been implemented; it was decided to go with an ad valorem approach and tax only the people on the beach. That decision had not been made in objection to the study, but it was decided that the ad valorem approach was a more simple manner in which to complete the restoration.

Dr. Stronge noted that he had also worked on Sanibel Island on a small project, and developed an analysis there. Captiva Island was doing its renourishment at the same time, and Sanibel Island decided it could save costs in mobilizing charges, so an analysis had been done which divided the costs of the project between those right on the beach, and those in the same gated communities that were near the project, but not on the beach. Sanibel actually picked up all the non-

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

beach front property owners share, which was the much smaller amount.

Dr. Stronge expressed that he had completed an analysis for Vero Beach, although they had not yet implemented the project. They were still discussing whether they wanted to set up a special taxing district county-wide. Originally they had been focused entirely on the City of Vero Beach, and then problems began to develop elsewhere in the county, resulting in a county-wide approach.

Dr. Stronge established that he had completed a number of economic impact studies in Broward County, designed to develop the public support for maintaining the beaches and to strengthen their hand in seeking Federal and State participation for maintaining their beaches.

Chairman Lickle asked if there were ranges or percentages on the projects regarding contributions from Federal, State, and County participation?

Dr. Stronge replied that the Sanibel Island project had no contributions from anyone other than Sanibel and the beach front owners. Captiva Island received both Federal and State funding of approximately 20% each. Marco Island did not receive any Federal or State funding.

Chairman Lickle requested that Bob Clinger, Palm Beach County Engineering Assistant, to comment on the plans of Palm Beach County in regard to beach restoration.

Mr. Clinger responded that Palm Beach County had a 30-year plan that included some dune restoration projects on the island of Palm Beach. However, in the most recent application to the State, the County had asked that the Phipps Park area be changed from the designation of a dune project to being an expanded beach restoration project, and it was now called the Palm Beach South Shore Protection Project. The County therefore had an interest in working with the Town of Palm Beach in that specific area in a beach nourishment type project. There were some other areas on Palm Beach Island that were dune restoration projects. The 30-year plan could be developed and changed over time, and as money became available. He noted that typically, in projects that were initiated by the County, there was an understanding that Federal and State involvement would be sought, with County participation in the 10-15% range. In areas where there was no Federal involvement, it was assumed that the State participation would be approximately 50% of the project cost, and the County then would try to come to a 50/50 relationship with the municipality. Typically, County participation was kept in the 10-15% range, which was not always possible on every project because of specific funding circumstances. He explained that the County may not be interested in all of the projects that the Town of Palm Beach may wish to construct, primarily because of public access to those areas, so the County would partner with the Town on specific projects, rather than on the inlet to inlet concept. While it supported the inlet to inlet concept, there were certain areas that the County could not at this time become involved with. When faced with a specific request to participate in a project that County staff could not present as being beneficial

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

to the public, then the Board of County Commissioners would be asked to consider the project without a staff recommendation, and it would be left up to them to determine the public benefit, if any.

Assistant Town Manager Elwell commented that the intent was to fund the beach restoration locally first, then gain back any Federal/State/County funds that would be available. With that philosophy, there would be some flexibility from Palm Beach County, although the State and Federal government were not as flexible about how projects were planned and implemented. He noted that the process of funding beyond Palm Beach County would certainly slow down the implementation of the project.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF "PEER REVIEW" REPORT REGARDING THE COMPREHENSIVE COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE (*Recommend deferral of this item to the Shore Protection Board's next meeting*)

Consideration of this item was deferred to the next meeting of the Shore Protection Board.

VII. IDENTIFICATION OF TIME, LOCATION, AND ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday March 17, 1998, at the South Fire-Rescue Station, 2185 South Ocean Boulevard, Palm Beach, FL 33480. The primary item for consideration would be discussion of the "Peer Review" Report regarding the Comprehensive Coastal Management Plan Update.

VIII. ANY OTHER MATTERS

Mr. Elwell requested formal consideration of the Report of the Shore Protection Board Meeting of January 21, 1998. The report was unanimously approved through motion of Vice Chairman Moffett, seconded by Board Member Levy.

Public Works Director Al Dusey mentioned that the Mid-Town beach would be monitored

**REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING
HELD ON FEBRUARY 17, 1998**

for compaction, and noted that tillers would be on the beach during the next week.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 P.M.

SHORE PROTECTION BOARD

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Garrison duP. Lickle", is written over a horizontal line.

Garrison duP. Lickle, Chairman

Prepared by: Susan Eichhorn
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