



TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Office of the Town Clerk

REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING HELD ON 1/11/96

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** The Shore Protection Board Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Acting Chairman Garrison D. Lickle.
- II. ROLL CALL:** The following Board Members were found to be in attendance: Chairman Garrison D. Lickle, Vice-Chairman George M. Moffett, Wayne F. Dimm, Edward Hennessy, Jr., Charles C. Isiminger, Gerald H. Levy, Joel Martino, Richard Raffo, and Judy Schrafft. Also attending were Town Manager Robert Doney, Assistant Town Manager Peter Elwell, Public Works Director Al Dusey, and Town Clerk Mary Pollitt.
- III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The Agenda was approved as printed.
- IV. CONSIDERATION OF REPORT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETING ON DECEMBER 13, 1995:** The Report was approved as presented.
- V. TOWN ATTORNEY'S REPORT REGARDING THE FEDERAL OBLIGATION TO MITIGATE DOWNDRIFT IMPACTS OF LAKE WORTH INLET** (*Continued from Meeting on December 13, 1995*): Mr. Doney announced that Mr. Randolph would not attend this meeting, because Mr. Randolph had not received a response to his letter to Gordon H. "Stumpy" Harris, the attorney in the Canaveral Inlet case. Mr. Doney read a memorandum from Mr. Randolph stating that the sixteen page attachment had some of the details of the lawsuit, and that Mr. Randolph hoped to have a full report at the next meeting of the Shore Protection Board.

Mr. Lickle referred to the Comprehensive Coastal Management Plan, the Section entitled Lake Worth Inlet, and questioned the outcome of Section 111?

Mr. Doney replied that after 1986 when the Comprehensive Coastal Management Plan was approved and received by the Town Council, the Corps was notified and a study was done under Section 111, but it was never finalized. A subsequent study was undertaken, but he did not know the outcome. Mr. Doney reported that Mr. Randolph is researching the entire chronology of events.

Mr. Elwell added that the subsequent study, the Coast of Florida Study, is still ongoing, and the last report from the Corps was a preliminary draft. Mr. Elwell said the Corps had acknowledged some responsibility because of both the creation of the inlet and the deepening over the years. Mr. Doney said that former Town Manager George Frost may have additional information, and that the

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representatives from Applied Technology & Management may also be able^{to} provide information on this matter.

VI. FORMALIZATION OF THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD *(Continued from Meeting on December 13, 1995)*

Mr. Lickle, with the agreement of the other Board Members, said item VI. would be heard later in the meeting, allowing for the representatives from Applied Technology & Management to be heard earlier in the meeting.

VII. PRESENTATION BY DAVE DECKER AND MIKE BARNETT, APPLIED TECHNOLOGY & MANAGEMENT, INC. : Dave Decker, Vice-President of Applied Technology & Management, addressed the Board and stated his company had looked at the Section 111 Study while preparing the Lake Worth Inlet Management Plan, including an analysis of Federal participation to contribute to downdrift erosion. Mr. Decker emphasized the Section 111 report did indicate the Corps had some obligations; however, that report was never finalized. According to the representatives of the Corps in Jacksonville, the Section 111 report has no significance at all at this point in time. The Corps moved forward with the Coast of Florida Study which is approximately one year behind schedule at this time.

Mr. Decker said the Town, working with the State of Florida, initiated the development of the Inlet Management Plan, which also addresses many of the same questions. In that plan, a concept was developed, whereby the Corps would participate in the on-going cost of placing sand on Palm Beach resulting from the dredging projects plus any other supplemental nourishment that may be needed from off shore borrow areas in the future. Mr. Decker said the Inlet Management Plan, in draft form, was presented to the Palm Beach Town Council and was forwarded to Tallahassee for the State's final review and adoption. This plan calls for participation by the Corps. If the Inlet Management Plan is adopted in its present format, the next step would be for the State, the Town, and the Corps of Engineers to meet and develop some form of a memorandum of understanding or interlocal agreement defining what those responsibilities will be.

Mr. Decker said the Inlet Management Plan contains an attempt at an initial calculation of a sand quantity in the system, and the plan calls for the continued operation of the Sand By-passing Plant by the Town and Palm Beach County. The Corps would continue to have maintenance responsibility for the dredging from the channel. The total annual quantity of sand which would need to be placed south of the Inlet would be approximately 175,000 cubic yards. Any additional material that would need to be placed on the Town's beaches would be made up by supplemental dredging, and the plan calls for the Corps of Engineers to participate in that. Mr. Decker added that Applied Technology's plan relies on those conditions, and the State and the County supported that approach. The Corps of Engineers is reviewing those conditions presently.

Mr. Decker understood that the Corps had helped several other inlets regarding downdrift

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erosion; however, Palm Beach is different because the Corps assumes total responsibility for the maintenance dredging of the Inlet. Mr. Decker said he was not aware of any other Federal navigation projects in Florida that have the same arrangement. Mr. Decker said the Corps is already contributing a large sum of money by being responsible for the maintenance dredging. Mr. Decker stated that in Palm Beach, the Corps' responsibility is exclusively navigation, and the Section 111 Study was to involve the Corps with the sand by-passing. A draft general design memorandum that was developed in the 60's called for a shore protection project to go along with the inlet dredging and bypassing; however, that project never materialized for lack of local sponsors.

Mr. Decker stated if the Inlet Management Plan is adopted by the State, implementation of the plan would require cooperative efforts from the County, the Town, and the Corps of Engineers. The next step would be to work with the Corps to see if they would accept that approach. If they do accept that approach, the Corps would have to go through a Federal project modification to allow the Corps to expend their monies differently from past expenditures. That would be a long, drawn out process that requires Congressional authorization.

Mr. George Frost, Professional Engineer and former Town Manager, addressed the Board. Mr. Frost reported on the historical element of Section 111 that was "born" in Palm Beach County by Colonel Gee, the District Engineer in Jacksonville and later the Division Engineer in Atlanta for the Corps of Engineers, U. S. Army. Mr. Frost reported that he had testified before the U. S. Senate in 1965 regarding the downdrift damages on Palm Beach Island. Mr. Frost credited Colonel Gee with drafting Section 111 and with his knowledge of Washington, D. C., the Section was passed. Section 111, codified at 426(I) in the U. S. Code, does not talk about per centage of damage but states, ".....is responsible for downdrift damages attributable to Federal Navigation Inlet". Mr. Frost said Section 111 was passed by the U. S. Congress without much discussion with the Corps of Engineers. When the Corps of Engineers received it, they were surprised and have "stone-walled" it since it was passed. Mr. Frost stated the County and the Town have repeatedly, over the years, contacted the Corps in attempts to have the Corps act upon Section 111, and nothing has happened. Mr. Frost said he is advised today, that the Corps has circumnavigated the problem by other avenues of approach to the coastal processes on Palm Beach Island. Mr. Frost mentioned the Corps had made a contribution to the construction and operation of the Sand Transfer Plant to mitigate downdrift damages in the 1950's. Mr. Frost recalled the Federal Government paid for 19.6% of the initial construction costs for the plant and contributed that same amount for ten (10) years for the operation. That contribution ceased. Mr. Frost stated the original intent of Section 111 was for the Federal Government to pay 100% for the mitigation of downdrift damages.

Mr. Frost, responding to questions from Mr. Lickle, said, as Town Manager and County Engineer, he wrote Congressman Rogers and Senator Smathers a letter every six months. Congressman Rogers and Senator Smathers would write letters to the Corps, and the Corps would respond that they intended to review the matter quickly, but it did not happen.

Mr. Doney recalled the Town pursued the Section 111 Study until the Section 111 Study was

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superseded by the Coast of Florida Study. The Corps of Engineers made the pronouncement that the Coast of Florida Study would supersede the Section 111 Study that was a draft report. The Town appealed that pronouncement and wrote to Federal legislators without success. Mr. Doney said the Town is currently pursuing the Lake Worth Inlet Management Plan in an attempt to have the Corps, the County, and the Port of Palm Beach assume some responsibility.

After discussing the current status of the Section 111 Study and the Coast of Florida Study, Mr. Doney said Mr. Randolph would be prepared to update his report with any information obtained from Mr. Harris plus the information the Board requested at this meeting.

Continuing with the planned presentation by Applied Technology & Management, Inc., Mr. Decker introduced Mike Barnett, Coastal Engineer for Applied Technology. Mr. Decker said Mr. Barnett would give an overview of shore protection processes. Mr. Decker said the factors that come into play when a shoreline is being stabilized include the interference of man, and the best approach is to stand back and let Mother Nature act on her own. Mr. Decker said that Mr. Barnett would discuss several of the approaches used to combat downdrift damages.

Mr. Mike Barnett, Senior Engineer with Applied Technology & Management, Inc., addressed the Board and stated that certain regulations by the Federal Government are required in addition to the State of Florida's Department of Environment Protection's permitting procedure. Mr. Barnett said regulatory review takes place at both the State and Federal levels to ensure that the proposed protection solutions are consistent with State and Federal regulations in addition to being properly designed and implemented. The State recently has leaned to more non-structural techniques in the last few years, and a few years ago, new armoring structures were banned completely. Armoring structures include hard structures, i.e. sea walls, revetments, breakwaters, groins, jetties, and other structures that would hold the shoreline. Dune vegetation and restoration activities hold the reservoir of sand in the upper reaches of the profile to serve, in part, as a stabilizing feature and to provide additional, sacrificial material in the event of high water or storm events.

Mr. Barnett presented displays emphasizing the points of his presentation including the shoreline data base used as criteria for establishing the Coastal Construction Control Line. Mr. Barnett described the Coastal Construction Control Line as not a line of prohibition, but is a line that delineates how far landward a three foot wave, breaking on top of an elevated storm surge, associated with a 100 year storm event, impacts with a beach-dune system. Mr. Barnett reported on several events that affect beach profiles including the amount of sand in a particular system and the possible distribution of that sand.

Mr. Barnett commented on sea walls and said if the shoreline continued to recede, eventually the seawall would act like a groin where it traps sand on the up-drift side and starves the area of down-drift, causing some erosion impacts south of the structure. Mr. Barnett said that revetments serve approximately the same purpose of sea walls but are less impacted by reflected wave energy. Another commonly stated problem with sea walls is that wave energy causes scour at the base of the

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wall which removes additional sand from the base of the wall and transports the sand outside of the immediate profile.

Mr. Barnett said the purpose of a groin structure is to impound sediment that is moving down the coast and the north side of beach establishes a fillet. The beach fills out over time and more or less conforms to the incoming wave energy and the angle of wave approach. Until that structure is by-passed, a coincident erosion event will occur on the downdrift side of it if the structure is not properly designed.

Mr. Barnett explained the action of the sand on the Mid-Town Beach and the natural configuration that is occurring. Mr. Barnett said that if no stabilization of sand or structural features existed, the sand movement from north to south goes through an ebb tidal shoal or delta, and the sand would move off shore and down to the adjacent shore line.

During the question and answer period, Mr. Barnett and Mr. Decker provided details of the Miami Beach Project which has less wave impact and littoral drift than Palm Beach has. The subject of aragonite sand shipped from the Bahamas to South Florida beaches was discussed, and the cost was estimated to be approximately \$12 - \$15 per cubic yard.

Responding to questions from the Board, Mr. Decker said the Mid-Town Beach Project has been constructed in an attempt to anchor the sand in place. The spacing of groins is a function of the width of the beach that would be constructed. If a large volume of sand would be placed on the beach, the groins could be longer and spaced further distances apart. Mr. Decker pointed out that the groins at the Mid-Town Beach Project vary in lengths and heights in an attempt to assist with the transition to the area to the north and to the south.

Mr. Decker mentioned that the first renourishment of the Mid-Town Beach Project is planned for five years. Mr. Decker said the State required that the entire system be managed with groins and fill, and the groin compartments are substantially over filled. Mr. Decker stated that the over filling of the groin compartments would mitigate the downdrift effect with adequate design including tapering plus continued nourishment at 5 to 7 year intervals. Mr. Decker said Applied Technology had evaluated the cost per foot of a more traditional, rubble mound structure, or sheet pile structure in addition to the design that is currently being constructed at the Mid-Town Beach. Mr. Decker offered to provide relative comparisons for costs per foot to the Board.

Responding to questions concerning the placement of the pipe from the Sand Transfer Plant to the north end of the Island, Mr. Barnett said the swirling effect south of the south jetty does affect the placement of the discharge pipe and consideration is being given to the placement further south in recognition of that phenomenon.

Mr. Barnett stated that he believed that beach restoration activities are the most cost effective and, over the long-term, the best management solution for addressing shoreline erosion problems.

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Mr. Barnett continued that he would throw everything out in the water that was possible to insure that the sand would not go away. Mr. Decker added the renourishment project from north to south is the first step in shoreline protection but not so much to create a nourishment project, but to make up for the sins of the past. Mr. Decker said he would never advocate doing that until the problems at the north end of Palm Beach were solved to allow the maintaining of the flow of sand from north to south.

Responding to the suggestion that groins be built on the north end of the Island and pre-filled for the first mile, assuming the Sand Transfer Plant were operational and the Corps was doing periodic maintenance dredging, allowing the sand from the north end to bypass the north end and continue south, Mr. Decker responded that would work as long as the groins were kept filled. Mr. Decker continued that by the regular, proposed incremental filling of the groins, the need for the groins would be lessened. Mr. Decker said that the additional cost of the groins, while they would help to hold the beach, would have to be evaluated including the costs of the potential negative effects down drift. During seasons of mild conditions, sand would continue to move north as well as south and could be captured without moving in two directions.

Mr. Decker and Mr. Barnett responded to a question regarding sea levels rising on an annual basis. Mr. Barnett referred to conservative, moderate, and high projection rates, but he did not have a confirmed rate.

Mr. Lickle stated the primary problem for the Town was the Inlet, which has caused a major deficit of sand. Mr. Lickle questioned if the sea level rise was significant as it related to the operation of the Sand Transfer Plant?

Mr. Barnett responded that compared to the problems associated with the Inlet, the rise in sea level was insignificant. As an individual concern, it is a problem that could be addressed on a very long-term basis.

Mr. Decker reported that approximately 175,000 cubic yards of sand have to go across the Inlet on the way to Lake Worth where the requirement is less. Mr. Decker said if that volume of material can be kept moving from north to south, the groins would not be needed to hold the sand if the beach were built to an adequate width, and the system would work as intended by Mother Nature.

The Board discussed the Sand Transfer Plant, and Mr. Dusey explained that Counties Corporation, Inc., the contractor for the Sand Transfer Plant, planned to obtain some seismology results to determine the depth of the jetties which they think are lower than shown on the design plans. Mr. Dusey reported that the contractor had broken three drill bits during the initial attempts to drill under the jetty. Mr. Decker said the attempts to re-start the Sand Transfer Plant are to bring it to the capacity that it pumped previously, and one of the first steps, assuming the Inlet Management Plan is adopted by the State is to increase the capacity of the plant upwards of 100,000 cubic yards

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per year as compared to the 60,000 or 70,000 cubic yards that it pumped previously. One of the considerations that will affect the amount of sand pumped, is the pulling back of the shoreline on the north side of the Inlet. The recommendation is to maximize the potential of the plant and monitor the effects on the north side. Devices called fluidizers could be added to the north side of the plant to liquefy sand and brings the sand to the pump to avoid periods when a crater is created and no wave activity is present to move the sand. Horse power at the plant could be increased to increase the volume of sand.

After discussing the importance of the start up of the Sand Transfer Plant, **THE BOARD RECOMMENDED THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD'S VICE-CHAIRMAN, MR. MOFFETT, APPEAR AT THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON JANUARY 16, TO EXPRESS THE BOARD'S CONCERN THAT THE TOWN COUNCIL RECOGNIZE THE LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF GETTING THE SAND TRANSFER PLANT OPERATIONAL BECAUSE IT IS SO CRITICAL TO THE CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF THE BEACHES.**

The Board directed Mr. Moffett to read the following action at the January 16, 1996, Town Council meeting:

THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD SUPPORTS THE TOWN COUNCIL'S EFFORTS TO RESTORE SAND BY-PASSING AT THE LAKE WORTH INLET. THE BOARD OFFERS THIS STATEMENT IN AN EFFORT TO HEIGHTEN THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS OF THE LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE OF THE SAND TRANSFER PLANT IN ADDRESSING THE DIRE NEED FOR CONTINUED MAINTENANCE OF THE TOWN'S BEACHES. FROM EVERYTHING THE BOARD HAS HEARD AT ITS FIRST THREE MEETINGS, WE BELIEVE IT IS IMPERATIVE TO RESTORE SAND BY-PASSING TO AT LEAST PARTIALLY OFFSET THE SAND-STARVING INFLUENCE OF THE LAKE WORTH INLET.

IF THE SAND TRANSFER PLANT WILL NOT BE OPERATIONAL IN THE NEAR FUTURE, A CONTINGENCY OR ALTERNATIVE PLAN SHOULD BE DEVELOPED. THE BOARD ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT THE SAND THAT WILL BE PLACED ON THE BEACH BY THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS, BE PLACED AS FAR SOUTH AS POSSIBLE.

Mr. Isiminger, responding to questions by Board Members, offered to provide "rough numbers" on groin costs and the sand fill quantities required.

The Board Members discussed the permitting costs and time frames of potential beach projects with Mr. Dusey who said design plans must be completed before permitting can begin. Mr. Lickle suggested the Board should hear from Kirby Green or someone similar at a future meeting-- someone who could present the State's policy position regarding what projects the Town could or

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could not do.

new Mr. Doney provided an exhibit that showed the shore line back to 1883 and pointed out what is new in the Town of Palm Beach Shores' beach area immediately to the north of Palm Beach. Mr. Doney said, many years ago, Palm Beach extended almost to Martin County before any dredged inlet existed. Mr. Doney added the Lake Worth Inlet was a natural inlet at one time, prior to the 1928 construction at the present location, and Mr. Doney offered to provide shore line historical documentation as listed in "Surface Waters, Submerged Lands, and Water Front Lands" that was prepared for the Area Planning Board (1967 or 1968) by David B. Smith, Engineering.

Mr. Isiminger noted that less erosion to the south has occurred than accretion to the north.

VIII. PRESENTATION BY PETER ELWELL, ASSISTANT TOWN MANAGER, REGARDING THE PALM BEACH COUNTY WIDE BEACHES AND SHORES

COUNCIL: Mr. Elwell's presentation was deferred until another meeting because of the length of the presentation by Applied Technology & Management, Inc.

VI. FORMALIZATION OF THE MISSION STATEMENT OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD - CONTINUED FROM EARLIER IN THE MEETING: The Board discussed the Mission Statement Draft prepared by Mr. Lickle and Mr. Raffo's memorandum distributed at this meeting.

Mr. Doney reported that his memorandum dated January 11, 1996, identified the papers that were distributed to the Shore Board Members as: the newspaper articles from Mrs. Schrafft; the 1/9 memorandum from Mr. Martino; and the November-December issue of Frontline Newsletter from the Florida Shore and Beach Preservation Association, Inc. Mr. McLendon will be attending the FSBPA conference with Mr. Bowser, the Town Engineer, in a few days. The last item mentioned in Mr. Doney's memorandum for distribution was Mr. Randolph's information concerning the Applegate-Canavarel Harbor Project.

Mr. Raffo referenced the last part of his memorandum that stated the Town's biggest problem is north and south of middle beach. The Town Council has informed us the best solution for the erosion problem is the use of the groins, build the beach back up, and put more sand on it. Mr. Raffo said, because of the importance of the erosion and the severity of it, the Board must meet every two to three weeks and should not take any more than a three to five month program to conclude and appear before a Town Council no later than April or May. Mr. Raffo stated the Board knows what has to be done and the people who have to appear before the Board. Mr. Raffo stated the Board should hear these people, stop wasting time, and make recommendations. Mr. Raffo said the decision of the Board will be very simple--no grass on the beaches, no radical remedies. The Board knows what works, let's get it done.

Mr. Raffo said the Town needs help from the press regarding the beaches to the north. Mr.

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Raffo said the Beach Club has no beach dating from the 1991 Halloween storm.

Mr. Hennessy responded some new technologies exist and the representatives from Stevens Institute will be in Florida for the FSBPA Conference and he would like to have them address the Shore Protection Board. Mr. Hennessy offered to pay any expenses connected with the appearance before the Board, and he will contact Dr. Michael Bruno to see if will be able to come to the Town of Palm Beach after the seminar in St. Petersburg on January 24.

Mr. Lickle offered to create a special meeting of the Shore Protection Board if Dr. Bruno would be available at the time he was in Florida.

Mr. Lickle agreed with comments from other Board members who stated the mission of the Board is to focus on the long term solutions and to digest all of the information that has been available for years and make sure that every area is investigated before a conclusion is determined. Mr. Lickle continued that the conclusion may well be that the groins, armoring, and renourishment are the answers; however, the Town Council may have been concerned about making the mistake of a sudden rush to judgement based on pressure, time, funding from federal funds or otherwise. Mr. Lickle said he would like to conclude the Board's mission quickly too, but the mission of the Board should be to take whatever time is necessary, even if it ends up being more than a year, to attempt to distill all of the information and arrive at the best possible answer while investigating every area that is out there and not jump to a conclusion that groins are the only answer.

Mr. Martino added that the Board should be active throughout the entire year although a conclusion may have been reached. The Board should monitor different things as they come up. Mr. Moffett said that a stopping point has to be reached. Mr. Lickle replied that the Board will probably come to a point where agreement is reached that the best determination, based on all of the existing evidence, has been made.

Mr. Lickle requested comments concerning the mission statement regarding modifications, discussions, etc. After discussion by the Board Members, the words "beaches and shores" were added to the second paragraph, first sentence, on page one. The sentence was amended to read: "The Board will research and then recommend to the Town Council of the Town of Palm Beach, the suggested course(s) of action for the near and distant future with regard to the maintenance, protection and preservation of our Atlantic beaches and shores."

The Board discussed including the issue of Lake Worth shores as an additional item for the Board to consider. Mr. Lickle concluded that the Town Council appointed the Board to deal with the problems of the ocean side of the island, and he did not see the Lake Worth issue as a potential crisis situation as the beaches and shoreline have become. Mr. Lickle said some of the other particular issues may be addressed by the Board as time allows.

Mr. Doney reviewed the resolution that created the Shore Protection Board which indicated

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that the purpose of the Board shall be to serve as an advisory committee to the Town Council on all matters relating to maintenance, protection, and preservation of the beaches within the Town of Palm Beach. Mr. Doney recalled the intent of the Town Council was principally the oceanfront beaches.

Mr. Doney reminded the Board that eleven of the twelve miles of shoreline are privately owned, and when the Town is going to construct projects and create beaches easterly of the present mean high water line, the Town has to establish an erosion control line according to Chapter 161. That erosion control line is the demarcation of what is privately and publicly owned.

Motion made by Mr. Levy to approve the draft Mission Statement as prepared by Mr. Lickle. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hennessy. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL INDIVIDUALS AND/OR ORGANIZATIONS TO INVITE TO ATTEND FUTURE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD MEETINGS FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE (*Continued from Meeting on December 13, 1995*): This item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

X. IDENTIFICATION OF DATE & TIME FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE SHORE PROTECTION BOARD: Mr. Lickle said the consideration was could the

Shore Board live with the meetings as stated with the two exceptions of moving the May and October meetings to accommodate absence of residents during the summer months. Mr. Lickle suggested retaining the meeting dates as listed with the exception of the May and October dates which may be moved to one week earlier in May and one week later in October. Mr. Elwell confirmed that the February meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Elwell reported that one or two speakers will be scheduled for the February 15th meeting, based on the length of presentations.

XI. CONSIDERATION OF TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF MONTHLY MEETINGS
This issue was discussed under items XIII and X.

XII. ANY OTHER MATTERS
There were none.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT
There being no other business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

SHORE PROTECTION BOARD

Garrison D. Lickle, Chairman

Prepared by:
Mary A. Pollitt
Town Clerk