

## **Bonnet Shores Fire District**

### **Little Beach Committee Meeting**

**Place: Virtual Technology via Zoom Date:**

**Wednesday September 2, 2020 Time: 7:00 pm**

Attendees: Marlene Bellini, Anita Langer, Janice McClanaghan, Bill DelGizzo, Anthony Salvatore

Janice opened the meeting at 7 pm and welcomed Dr. King, Professor of Oceanography at URI. There were 40 residents at the zoom meeting. She reviewed the format to be followed for the meeting tonight and then turned the meeting over to Bill to make the introduction of our speaker.

Bill introduced Dr. King, Professor of Oceanography, URI School of Marine, Geology and Geophysics. Bill invited Dr. King who brought with him another faculty member and together they did a site study of Little Beach and are here tonight to present a proposal that would allow URI to help us restore Little Beach and make it more recreationally friendly.

Dr. King began by describing the proposal which is divided into 4 Phases. The proposal is as follows:

### **Developing a Plan for the Little Beach Area of Bonnet Shores**

#### **Phases of a Plan:**

1. Baseline Studies

(Cost estimate: ~ \$50,000)

Baseline studies are a key piece of understanding the sediment transport (and seaweed transport) processes within the area and are needed to developing conceptual plan options, and for the permitting phase of a specific engineering plan. These studies should include:

- (a) Produce a bathymetry and topography map;
- (b) Map seagrasses;
- (c) Do a circulation pattern study; and
- (d) Develop a circulation and sediment transport model for the area.

2. Develop and Evaluate Conceptual Alternative Engineering Plans for the Study Area

(Cost estimate: ~ \$10,000 - \$15,000)

This phase uses the information obtained in Phase 1 to evaluate engineering

solutions for the study area. Best done in collaboration with CRMC.

3. Develop a Conceptual Shoreline Architectural Plan  
(Cost estimate: ~ \$20,000)

This phase will utilize the information derived from the first two phases to develop a user and environmentally friendly plan for the Little Beach shoreline.

4. Developing a Specific Engineering and Landscape Plan and Permitting  
(Cost estimate: ?)

This phase builds on the information obtained in the first three phases and produces a specific plan that is used for permitting the project.

Dr.King said the first three phases of the study would be done by URI and much of work done by students which will make it less costly. Cost may seem high but having it done by URI will be less than a professional organization. Phase 4 is the most expensive but once the conceptual designs are done it can be handed off to engineering/landscaping company. This is likely to cost \$200,000 up to construction.

The meeting was opened for questions:

Janice McClanaghan:

Question: Can you do phase 2 before phase 1

Answer: No. Without sufficient mapping or understanding how sediment is transported, you can't begin to understand the area.

Carolyn DiLeo:

Question: What would you see as the time line and when should you start phase 1.

Answer: URI is already beginning to do a study for the Town of Narragansett and it would make sense to piggyback onto that study while the weather is cooperative. Suggest starting this fall and mapping in April. The winter storms impact the area and it would be good to start before the hurricane season ends. The sea grass study would need to wait until June, July and August 2021.

Anita Langer:

Question: Is there any data when army corps of engineers put in the jetty and what is its purpose.

Answer: It appears that it was put in around the ramp to protect it. There is not enough information but an historical review of aerial photos can pinpoint it. For certain, the current design almost insures that the sand will stay off shore.

Joe Thomas:

Question: Are you saying the jetty is holding the sand from coming on shore. Shouldn't it be just the opposite.

Answer: In actuality, it does. You need to be careful not to remove all of the sand from the sandbar, bar because if you do, waves will just break on the hard shoreline and take it back out. You need to design and build something to last and before you do that you need to understand the system.

Anita Langer:

Question: If we start with the premise of taking the road out how would that change the design.

Answer: You now have a hard shoreline. This would build a soft shore line which would likely bring sand back to the beach. This might also assist with the sea level rise that is inevitable.

Ann Natale:

Question: Any suggestions for remediating the tremendous amount of sea weed landing on the shore.

Answer: The mapping study will determine where it is coming from and assist in developing a remediation plan. First thing need to do is find out where its coming from. We will do drone topography studies at a low cost.

Wenley Ferguson (Habitat Restoration Specialist, Save the Bay)

She has worked for 10 years with the BSFD and CRMC to identify potential sites to address erosion. They looked at Colonel John Gardner after hurricane Sandy and see this area as a potential site. There are grants offered by National Fish and Wildlife, the Coastal Resiliency Program and Save the Bay, all have funding for which we may be eligible. Much of these funding agencies look for shovel ready project and now is the time to do the preliminary work to be ready.

Janice again thanked Dr. King.

Janice then reviewed some of the things the district has tried to remediate the seaweed problem and described equipment and procedures that have been both discussed and tried over the past two years and possibility of buying equipment.

We have used volunteers and while it was effective, it was inconsistent and the problem came back.

Joe Thomas commented about the difficulty accessing the beach to clean daily.

Bill felt that it is not necessary to buy equipment but rather contract with a professional contractor and arrange to clean the beach on a regular, consistent basis.

Anthony reiterated all that people had said and recommended we develop an action plan to outsource the job for a season while simultaneously assessing the results and looking into other resources.

Tom Lonegran commented that residents are anxious to see a solution for Little Beach.

Janice agreed and felt we need to get our ducks in a row to be ready for next budget season.

Bill wants the next meeting to address Phase 1 of the Study and to look for grants. He has arranged with a grant writer to meet with him during the week of 9/7. In addition, we should work with Wenley to identify funding sources.

Next meeting with be October 7, via Zoom at 7 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn DiLeo