



PUBLISHED BY THE
NORTH END ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 98
SEA ISLE CITY, NJ 08243
EDITOR: IRENE JAMESON
FALL/WINTER 2007

Congress over-rides the president's veto of WRDA

Despite the veto by President Bush, the Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) was approved overwhelmingly by both houses of the federal government. That was the first hurdle needed to get the **Greater Egg Harbor Beach Replenishment Project**, which includes the south end of Ocean City, Strathmere, and Sea Isle City to Townsends Inlet, moving ahead. The next hurdle is to get included in the federal budget, a major step. However, without inclusion in the WRDA, the project would have been dead. Congress is supposed to approve a WRDA every two years, but this was the first one introduced in six years.

NORTH wants to thank Congressman Frank LoBiondo, Mayor Leonard Desiderio, North End Working Team (NEWT), SICTA, and everyone who wrote letters and sent e-mails to their congressmen, senators, and state representatives asking them to get the WRDA approved. Congressman LoBiondo has estimated that it will be **2010** before construction can begin once funding is approved. Because of the severe beach erosion, Ocean City, Upper Township, and Sea Isle officials need to keep the pressure on to get the project funded in 2008.

The North End Association and NEWT will continue to make this the #1 priority. However, the efforts to secure city sewers in the north end, lowering the speed limit from 40 to 35, and having pedestrian crossings designated in busy north end areas of Landis Avenue will not be abandoned.

Update on status of the proposed park at the former landfill

A committee was appointed by Mayor Desiderio and met to prioritize the various components envisioned for the Passive Park at the former landfill at 5th Street. City Engineer Andy Previti recommended that a meeting be held with the NJ DEP to determine what would be acceptable or doable. The Mayor set aside \$60,000 in the 2007 budget to hire a professional designer. NORTH sent a letter to the new city administrator, George Savano, requesting that the designer be hired and the meeting with DEP be expedited. Also, NORTH has recommended changing the name of the proposed park to Ludlum Bay Park because the name Passive Park is rather vague. The good news is that the park is included in the updated Master Plan approved by the Sea Isle City Planning Board on November 26, 2007.

Paid members for 2007: 127 Thank you for your continued support.



Avalon Files Suit Against DEP

By LAUREN SUIT

AVALON — The borough filed a lawsuit against the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) regarding a State Aid Agreement that includes requirements for additional parking spaces and public bathrooms near the beach.

According to a Nov. 12 press release, officials believe the agreement is "overbroad and vague" and could expose the community to unknown and potentially expensive stipulations.

The aid agreement, which the state asked shore communities to sign

by Nov. 6, asks towns to commit to the following:

- Provide parking sufficient to accommodate public demand to access the project and beaches along the portion on which the project occurs.

- Provide public access ways to all beaches.

- Provide public restroom facilities at intervals of no more than one half mile and within one-quarter mile of the landward edge of the beach or dune.

- Provide 24 hour access to all areas to be subject to the Public Trust Doctrine, including marinas.

"As far as I'm concerned, this action by the DEP is social engineering, when it was supposed to be about shore protections," said Mayor Martin Pagliughi.

Pagliughi maintains that it already has 62 public access points along its four miles of beachfront that provides an average of 15 access points per mile. Borough officials argue that Avalon provides more access points per mile, on average, than the rest of the state.

the already existing access points.

"This would effectively make the state co-owners of the points and require Avalon to apply for permits for simple projects like putting a walkover path over a dune, or a simple gravel walkway," according to the release.

"Currently, Avalon provides 15 public bathrooms, four of which are located close to the beach.

"The state may require us to put up portable/public bathrooms at street ends right next to residential properties," said Pagliughi.

Borough officials said that they had sent a resolution that outlined their concern to the DEP with no response. Other government and civic entities in shore communities have also filed formal objections to the stipulations in the state agreement with no resolution, according to the release.

"Avalon provides 5,700 on-street parking spaces in addition to 550 parking spots in lots for day trippers, with 370 of them within a quarter mile of the beach," said Pagliughi. "Under the terms of the State Aid Agreement drafted by the DEP, Avalon could possibly have to create even more parking spaces, either through private property acquisition or eminent domain just to satisfy state guidelines, which are very vague."

Additionally, the borough is concerned about a provision in the agreement that would provide permanent easements to

Results of survey on sewer extension

In the last newsletter, a card was included to survey owners' interest in continuing our efforts to get sewers extended from 2nd to 22nd Street.

We received the following responses (81):

Strongly in Favor - 69

Strongly Opposed - 7

Not Important Issue - 5

Thank you for your cooperation.

Beaches to benefit from veto override

■ The project included in the bill would also mean sand for Strathmere and periodic replenishment for the next 50 years.

By **RICHARD DEGENER**
Staff Writer, 609-463-6711

SEA ISLE CITY — The city is still in line to get its first major beach-replenishment project, but only because the U.S. Senate and the House of Representatives voted to override a presidential veto of the authorization bill.

Mayor Len Desiderio was on an airplane on his way to Florida last week when he heard about the 361-54 House vote overriding President Bush's veto of the Water Resources and Development Act, or WRDA. Two days later, the Senate also voted to override the veto.

That means the \$136 million needed to refurbish beaches in Sea Isle City and Strathmere has been authorized, although an appropriations bill still must be passed. Desiderio expects this to happen in 2008 or 2009. He said it can't come soon enough.

"It's extremely important to Sea Isle City to get this. We're counting on the money to help our beaches. Erosion is bad, from the north end to the south end," said Desiderio, speaking from Naples, Fla., on Wednesday.

Desiderio has seen Avalon, Ocean City, Cape May, Cape May Point and other towns get sand from U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Beach projects. The key is to get such a project authorized under a WRDA bill.

Once it is authorized, the funding usually follows.

This was the second time U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo, R-2nd, has voted to override a presidential veto in the past few months. The first involved children's health insurance.

"This bill includes several provisions that are critical for South Jersey, especially the residents of Sea Isle City whose property and businesses are threatened daily by beach erosion. It was never a question to me to vote to override the president on this important bill. The serious concerns of my district and my constituents always come first," said LoBiondo.

Bush said the bill "lacks fiscal discipline" and makes American taxpayers support "a pork-barrel system" of authorization and spending when the merit of a project is an afterthought. Bush noted the bill went into conference at \$14 billion to \$15 billion

and ballooned to more than \$23 billion.

Bush, who has been a critic of beach replenishment, said the bill could hinder other Army Corps priorities such as providing hurricane protection to New Orleans, restoring the Everglades and reducing flood damage in Sacramento.

But the bill does not only restore beaches in southern New Jersey. LoBiondo notes it also includes funding to clear debris from the Delaware River where a discarded anchor caused a major oil spill a couple of years ago. Such spills often threaten the fishing industry and shore tourism. It also includes money to revitalize the Delaware Bay oyster industry.

Several other beach pro-

jects are in the WRDA bill, including adding six beaches in Cape May Point to a periodic sand-pumping schedule. An already authorized project pumps sand from Cape May to Central Avenue in Cape May Point. This would extend the pumping past Central Avenue.

The bill also would extend an experimental beach program that has funded artificial concrete reef structures in Cape May Point. It would also provide funds to remove the structures when they fail. This would help Cape May Point remove a reef that was installed incorrectly and sank.

A provision from LoBiondo also keeps the federal government paying for 65 percent of the beach projects, with state

and shore towns paying the other 35 percent. There have been attempts to reverse this so the federal government only pays 35 percent.

LoBiondo has also inserted language making it clear that periodic beach replenishment is a "federal priority." Bush, and President Clinton before him, tried to get the government out of the beach business.

Opponents of the projects argue the pumping only protects the second homes of rich people, while shore tourism interests point to the huge impacts beaches have on the economy and a reduction in federal flood insurance claims in towns with restored beaches.

To e-mail Richard Degener at The Press:

RDegener@pressofac.com

- . **Status of police chief pending report** - The city hired an outside firm to conduct an investigation into whether any city policies or procedures were violated by Chief of Police William Kennedy, who is on paid leave of absence after his wife filed a restraining order following an argument and a 911 call to the police. The report is expected this week.
- . **County to construct new library in Sea Isle City** - The Cape May County Library System proposes to build a new \$5 million state-of-art library in Sea Isle City at the 48th Street lot owned by the city. There is no date for completion of construction at this time.
- . **Will there be the “clang, clang, clang” of trolleys this summer?** - At a recent meeting, Richard Adelizzi of Great American Trolley Co., who operates trolley service in Ocean City, Wildwood, Cape May, and other resorts, discussed ways trolley service may be funded. At the time of publication of this newsletter, no firm commitment has been made; however, because of parking problems, the sound of the “clang clang” of trolleys would be music to our ears.
- . **Spend the upcoming holidays in Sea Isle City** - Wait until you see the annual holiday lighting extravaganza by public works and individual home owners. Take a look at 1704 Landis Avenue. And don't miss the fireworks at 8:30 p.m. at JFK & the Beach. It's fun!
- . **Federal project to raise Sea Isle Blvd. to start in spring of 2008** - The federal government plans to raise Sea Isle Blvd. by 5 feet. The road is an evacuation route in case of a disaster. Work, which is slated to begin in the spring of 2008, will include recreational spots for crabbing and bird watching and improvements to the Sea Isle Bridge.
- . **Reassessment notices due out this month** - Rather than wait for the county to order another revaluation, the city's tax assessor recommended doing a reassessment, which is an outside inspection and costs less. Reassessments look at sales of comparable properties.
- . **On a personal note** - I will be retiring as the city's public relations director and as the Polar Bear Queen effective December 31st. At age 83, I need to take time out to “enjoy the view.” I accepted the PR position after 30 years with the School District of Philadelphia as a teacher and a PR specialist. The position was to be for just “a couple of months” until they could find someone. That was 18 years ago!! I've loved every minute of it - even the Polar Bear Plunge! Incidentally, the Tourism Commission is sponsoring a contest to find a new Polar Bear Queen. For an application form and rules, check out their website: www.seaisletourism.org. I'll be there to crown the new queen, who will serve for one year. Good news for NORTH members: I will have time for more newsletters and more action on behalf of the north end.

HAVE A HAPPY HOLIDAY AND NEW YEAR !!

