

HAMPTON BEACH VILLAGE PRECINCT
MEETING
October 10, 2007

Present

Maureen Buckley, Chairman & Commissioner
Gary Kubik, Commissioner
Chuck Rage, Commissioner
John Gebhart, Treasurer

Chairman Buckley called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.

Rosanna Wright of 5 Epping Avenue came forward. She spoke about a seniors program which she has been attending at HoloDek on Merrill Drive, off Towle Farm Road. The program consists of bowling by computer and it is possible to bowl against opponents from other areas and states. This company also has a program for children and the Recreation Department is working in conjunction with them. The seniors program meets every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The seniors group is looking for donations to use for prizes.

Beautification/Newsletter

Linda Gebhart said that her group has been very busy planting. They have planted two sugar maples and replaced a crabapple tree. Ben Helzberg has donated a tree which will be designated as the "Centennial Tree". The group has also received many other donations. Students from Winnacunnet have been very helpful volunteering their time. They will help next week when 160 daffodil bulbs will be planted.

Chairman Buckley said that the Commissioners should write a letter to all the volunteers thanking them for their help.

Geannina Scanlon said they are making the 1A garden the Mile Long Bridge Garden. She showed a picture of the plaque that will be placed there to identify it. There will be an article in the newsletter about this.

Ms. Scanlon said the second issue of the newsletter will come out close to election time. This will be helpful as dates, warrant articles, etc. will be included.

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Beach Commission Report

Fred Rice of 15 Heather Lane came forward to provide the Commissioners with an annual report of the Hampton Beach Area Commission's activities. He said the purpose of the Commission is to provide advice and planning assistance to the Town and the State on the implementation of the Hampton Beach Master Plan. This Commission was formed in 2003 by the NH legislature under a bill sponsored by Mike O'Neil. The Commission meets monthly a minimum of five times a year and has nine members, two from the Town, two from the Beach Precinct, one from the Chamber of Commerce, one from the Rockingham Planning Commission and representatives from three State agencies, DOT, DRED and OEP.

Mr. Rice said that during the first year the Commission put together the vision for the future of the beach, and hosted workshops that resulted in the \$12 million infrastructure project. During the second year, work was done on the master plan and four committees were formed. During the third year plans were made for what was needed to assist agencies and last year emphasis was on specific projects.

Mr. Rice emphasized that the Beach Commission is not an action or enforcement body. It doesn't "do things", but instead does the research to help other town and state agencies who do "do things".

During the past year, the Community Development Committee, headed by Tom McGuirk, worked on development of a design guidelines book. This committee also has a project review function and provides suggestions to developers on how to better conform to the preferred appearance of beach structures. This is non-binding advice which may or may not be adopted by the developer.

The Beachscape Committee, headed by John Kane last year, is a function of the Precinct, but the Commission needs the knowledge of all the things being done throughout the beach area to incorporate into other areas.

The Zoning and Redevelopment Committee, headed by Fran McMahon, gave suggestions to the Planning Board last year for potential warrant articles based on input from the master plan itself. Some of these were too large in scope and were not adopted by the Planning Board. This year the Commission will recommend only changing zoning from Beach Seasonal to Beach Commercial, and to limit building height to the occupied area only, rather than the total height.

The Transportation and Parking Committee, headed by Doug DePorter, has been looking at the bridge replacement project. Funding is being sought for a design study. Future options will be going for grant money and public/private sector money.

The Commission is working with Rockingham Planning Commission and the Coastal Economic Development Corporation on a grant to fund an update of the Parking and Transportation portion of RPC's Route 1A Corridor Study. It will be necessary to have an outside firm that is totally unbiased to do the study, so that everything will be looked at in an equal, objective manner.

Mr. Rice then spoke about the Earth, Sea & Space Center. He said this project has received very strong support. Many letters of endorsement have been received. Mr. Rice said he would be attending a meeting with Governor Lynch on this project on October 15th. This entire project will be done with private funds.

Mr. Rice said the Sea Shell is coming up for an upgrade. The Beach Commission has been asked to participate in the evaluation and selection of the contractor who will do the work.

Mr. Rice said the Commission looks forward to proceeding on these projects throughout the next year.

Mr. Rage emphasized that people who have questions or input for the Commission should go to their representative members of the Beach Commission.

Chairman Buckley said that when the Sea Shell is refurbished it is important to have public input. Mr. Rice said this would be done by the contractor selected, but that it is not a function of the Commission itself.

Rich Reniere of 29 H Avenue suggested a centralized access to a parking ticket that would accept credit cards, bills and quarters. This would generate a parking ticket that can be used anywhere in the designated area. Mr. Rice said he would put this on the agenda for the Beach Commission's next meeting, and advised that the Parks Division is already planning to convert its meters to accept credit cards by next year.

Mr. Reniere discussed coordination of the general appearance of buildings at the beach and asked if the Commission has ever met with the property owners and talked about this. Mr. Rice replied that this is already being done by Tom McGuirk's committee, but cautioned that they can only make suggestions, since the Commission has no authority to make anything mandatory.

Ms. Gebhart said that she and others had put in many hours of volunteering on the beautification projects and she is worried that when the gray garage is expanded it could destroy their hard work. Mr. Rice said that when the public hearings are held on the upgrade of these facilities, she could state her opinion.

Mike Scanlon said he was unhappy that the Commission meetings were not televised. Mr. Rice said that was only because there was no room on the schedule.

Advertising

John Kane thanked the Beautification Committee and all the volunteers for their help. Mr. Kane said he had received a letter from a Major General in the NH National Guard thanking the Commissioners for their help with the Tops in Blue event.

Mr. Kane asked the Commissioners to set up a meeting to go over the brochures. Schedules need to be confirmed.

An agreement has been signed with the State of New Hampshire and the Precinct is working with them on their website.

On the Beach website, it will be possible to have a French translation to accommodate the many Canadians who visit and speak French.

Old Business

There was no Old Business.

New Business

Ms. Gebhart said she has been attending the Enroc Group. There are sessions on how to build smartly for the future. The sessions are very informative.

Ms. Gebhard said the Beautification Committee is thinking about doing a Christmas tree. People could be asked to make or donate ornaments. Chairman Buckley said this was a good idea, but ordinances would have to be checked.

The garbage pickup issue was discussed. Mr. Scanlon said he felt this was a respect issue between the Town and the Precinct. He said people cannot survive on a once a week pickup of three barrels. Commissioner Rage said that it was originally thought that there would be public input on this issue, but there was not, and many people are upset. Health issues are also of concern. He said everyone should call the Selectmen and write the papers to express their views on this subject.

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Mike O'Neil said that some type of compromise must be reached between the Beach and the Town.

Minutes

Moved by Chairman Buckley, seconded by Mr. Rage, to approve the Minutes of September 12, 2007.

Vote: 3-0. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Rice
Secretary