

# Manager Explains Pressing Issues

The following is Longboat Key Town Manager Bruce St. Denis' explanation of the issues the Town is addressing through the summer months.

## North End Beach

Tom Campbell has reviewed the situation and has recommended that we move forward with a complete new permit modification that will place additional sand, including coarse gray, in the area. This permit modification work will commence immediately. We

St. Denis

will also be requesting that this permit modification be handled on an emergency basis with Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Because we do not know how long it will take to get the revised permit modification, no decision has been made as to whether the contractor will be requested to place sand on the North end before the rest of the project is complete.

## Directional Boring on the Ringling Causeway

There is some work being done through the medians on Ringling Causeway. The contractor is performing an operation called "directional drilling." Rather than do an open trench excavation, the contractor bores a hole in the ground and pushes the pipe through. This is the

operation we anticipate will be used in making the Sarasota water interconnect under New Pass.

## Red Tide

Red tide seems to be coming and going throughout the summer months. To date we have picked up 96.27 tons of fish. To date the Town has incurred costs of \$199,143 for Grubbs Emergency Services and \$2,407 for the Manatee County Landfill for a total cost of \$201,550.

Grubbs is leaving their hyacinth harvesters on Town property so they can mobilize quickly for bay cleanup when contacted. Staff continues to monitor the situation, and we will do our best to keep Longboat Key dead fish and odor free.

## Pre-Authorization of \$10 Million Line of Credit

The Town Commission has authorized staff to pursue pre-authorization of a \$10 million line of credit in the event it is needed after a hurricane. As we move forward with the process, we have found that it would cost \$17,500 for a six month period if we never fund the full line of credit.

In the event the Town is hit by a hurricane, we could very well need the \$10 million line of credit. However, I do not see the need to pay the fee to hold the line at this time. Once the Commission is able to reconvene after a storm, it would be possible to start the authorization process on a timely basis. For that reason I am not moving forward with securing the line of credit this summer. In doing

so I am confident we can move forward in a short time frame if it is needed.

## Beach Blunder

Staff and our consultants are reviewing a proposal to address the carbonate issue that still maintains white sand on the beach face but eliminates that which would be placed under water. Details including an evaluation of the aesthetics of the beach face are still being worked out and a Change Order still has not been authorized. If we move forward with this proposal, the cost to modify the white and gray sand profile would be reduced from approximately \$500,000 to \$300,000. I will inform everyone when the issue is resolved and the change order is signed. At this point, the only claim from the contractor related to this issue is for the \$25,000 to regrade the coarse material where it had been put in place under the original profiles.

## Disabled In-Line Booster Pump

The Town has an in-line pressure booster pump to maintain operating pressures in the water system. This pump is scheduled for replacement as part of a project in the FY 2004-05 Capital Improvements Program. The project has been bid and the contract has been awarded. The contractor has not yet started the work.

In late July, the in-line booster pump failed. It was taken off-line to determine if it could be repaired. It is not salvageable. It is estimated that the project will not be completed for 4-6 months. We have asked the contractor to do what they can to

expedite delivery of the pump including the Town paying a premium if necessary.

In the meantime, we have altered our procedures, including asking Manatee County to pay special attention to their delivery pressure to the Key and insuring that our storage tanks are maintained at as close to full level as possible to ensure fire flow. Utilizing these procedures, we should be able to get by without any problems. The situation will continue to be monitored closely by Utilities staff.

## Perico Harbour Marina Agreement

We have received a response from representatives of the new owners of the Perico Harbour Marina project. They state "we are currently still in the process of preparing architectural plans and reviewing our options concerning development of the Marina, including possibly modifying the existing Department of Environmental Protection Permit. Based on the status of this matter, we would recommend that the Town of Longboat Key not rely on my client performing the referenced exotics removal in the near future. In fact, modifications may occur to the Marina plans that may substantially reduce or eliminate the mitigation needs for the project. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused the town of Longboat Key."

We will discuss the status of the Sister Keys Restoration Agreement at a fall workshop meeting. In the meantime staff is preparing to move forward with the removal of exotics on Sister Keys as outlined in the FY 2005-06 budget.

# Town to Tackle Longboat's Future

Caron Cooper  
Staff Writer

Longboat Key's Planning and Zoning Board is gearing up to address the most pressing issues facing the Island.

These issues facing the residents of Longboat Key were identified in the Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR), which was released in May of this year, and the Town will be discussing these, among others, at the Planning and Zoning Board's meeting on Sept. 12.

According to Jill Jeglie, director of the planning and zoning department, the issues that will be discussed, but not limited to, are: commercial revitalization, tourism strategies, Gulf of Mexico Drive congestion management, water conservation and irrigation alternatives, additional public open space and redevelopment of non-compliant structures.

At the Sept. 12 meeting, she and fellow staff members will update the Board as to what has been done to date.

"We have done personal interviews, had meetings with chamber members and commercial property owners and those sorts of things," said Jeglie. "So we are going to go over those materials and what we have done to get to this point."

According to Jeglie, the Board is very interested in public opinion about the future of Longboat Key.

"The public will be asked which issues the Town should take on, and hopefully those issues that came from the EAR will help as a guideline to the discussion and to narrow down the field for them," said Jeglie. "I would encourage any members of the public to come to the meeting. It would be valuable to anyone who is interested about what is happening on the island."

The issues are so important to the Town that it has decided to hire a consultant that will shepherd the development of a community plan, which will help guide the Key's next 20 years.

"There will be a discussion on the community plan process and consultant selection," said Jeglie. "We are just at the very preliminary stages of this with trying to get consultants to gear up and get into this process. It will be a good decision-making tool, to see what we know and what we have learned, and refocus the direction we want to go in."

The advertisement for a consultant went out at the end of last week. Based on qualifications and ranking, the Board will choose the top applicants and invite them to attend the Sept. 12 meeting to better inform them of Longboat's concerns.

The top candidates will then be asked to submit proposals and make presentations.

"We plan to select a few dates in October for the presentations from consultants," said Jeglie.

Following the presentations, the Board will rank and select the consultant or consultant team. The consultant will be expected to present a plan to the Board no later than April 2006, which would then be presented to the Town Commission in May 2006.

## The Issues

The following is brief description of the six main topics to be tackled at the Sept. 12 board meeting.

Commercial Revitalization: includes the vacancy rate, the demand for commercial property, the ratio of commercial to residential, why commercial values have not increased at the rate of residential, why property owners are not reinvesting, why the turnover rate is high and the economics of commercial revitalization. What can we do to improve?

Tourism strategies: includes what appears to be a decline in tourists. Do we need to encourage more tourism and how?

Gulf of Mexico Drive congestion management: includes transportation manage-

ment on and off the island and the traffic back-up getting off the island during season. Is public transportation the answer?

Water conservation and irrigation alternatives: is it reclaimed water, reverse-osmosis or something else?

Additional public open space: includes purchasing property by the Town for preserve, for recreation and/or to preserve Longboat's infrastructure. Are we going to have enough in the future, and what does the public want?

Redevelopment of non-compliant

structures: mainly addresses the issue of rebuilding after involuntary destruction of multi-family tourist high-rises, how they would be redeveloped based on FEMA standards, the review and approval standards of rebuilding, what that density would be, and if it happened to many buildings at the same time. What kind of impact would it have on the town, and how do we lessen it?

The Planning and Zoning Board will also welcome other topics of concern from the public.

# Grand Mariner Still in Limbo

Caron Cooper  
Staff Writer

Longboat Key will have to wait longer to find out if the super-sized 14-unit Grand Mariner condominiums will be built on the old Buccaneer property.

The Town filed motions last week requesting more time before answering Accursio Sclafani and Doreen Erickson's complaint.

Last month, the Town asked the Court to dismiss the complaint and strike it from the record, but the Court denied them and ordered the Town to respond by Aug. 9.

This is the latest development in Dream Island's attempt to develop the property, which began on Sept. 9 2002, when an application was submitted to the Town and approved later that year.

Sclafani and Erickson opposed Dream Island's site plan, arguing that the development would tower over their property and privacy would be lost. They filed a petition for a Writ of Certiorari, which is a request for the court to review and overturn the Town's proceedings. The writ was denied on April 13, 2004, and again on Feb. 2, 2005 by the appellate court.

But by the time the judgment was made, Dream Island's site plan approval

had expired. So Sclafani and Erickson asked the Court to declare the site plan approval null and void.

"How should you be expected to proceed with the project when there might be changes to it pending a petition?" asked Steven Chase, attorney for Dream Island.

Chase added: "The appellate court thought so little of the original challenge that they awarded us the attorneys' fees. Until that challenge was final, there was no requirement for Dream Island to proceed."

Back in December of last year, Dream Island asked the Planning and Zoning board to extend their building permit deadline, but the Town felt they lacked jurisdiction until the complaint was settled, so they tabled the issue.

"In February of 2004, they (Dream Island) filed a request to extend the time frame, and then in March, the Board tabled it because there was an issue about jurisdiction due to pending lawsuits," said Andy Cohen, assistant town attorney.

Now that the initial complaint has been settled, Dream Island has once again asked the Planning and Zoning Board to consider their plans, this time at the Sept. 20 meeting.

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