

Sea Isle City Taxpayers Association, Inc. – A non-profit taxpayer advocacy organization

Call to Action on Sea Isle City Beaches

There is an opportunity before us that is important to everyone who loves Sea Isle City beaches. The Greater Egg Harbor-Townsend's Inlet Beach Replenishment Project of the Army Corps of Engineers has been on hold for a number of years. The area south of 32nd Street in Ocean City down through Strathmere and all of Sea Isle City is included in the project. The funding for this was originally targeted for 2002, postponed to 2004 and has not advanced.



However, there is a small window of opportunity. Recently, issues raised by the NJ DEP Land Use Division, which had delayed the issuance of the Chief Engineer's Report, have been resolved. We have been told that the Chief Engineer's Report is very near completion and the GEH-TI project could be included in the Water Resources Development Act bill, contingent on the issuance of that report by year-end.

Last month e-mail alerts were sent to a number of you and posted material and pictures on the SICTA website to urge you to write your Congressmen and Senators to make sure that our beach replenishment project was included in the conferenced bill. Posters and flyers were also displayed at the Family Fall Festival.

Thanks go out to the great many of you who responded and contacted your legislators. The SIC Environmental Commission chairperson and the Sea Isle City Engineer have both contacted

nal bill and the Chief Engineer's report would be released before the end of the year.

The legislature broke for their election year recess without resolving the differences between the House and Senate bill, but are expected to pick this up again in November. It is not over until it is over, but, it is time to prepare for the next steps. The WRDA bill authorizes the projects, but each project must now vie for funding in the next phase. Mayor Desiderio has scheduled a meeting with the mayors of Upper Township and Ocean City so that they can coordinate their efforts, along with their constituencies, to see that GEH-TI gets funded.

This is a matter of great importance. Based on recent congressional actions, it could be many years before we get our funding...or it could be never. The current funding formulas call for 65% federal monies and the remainder to be picked up by state and local authorities, usually split 75/25. These funding formulas are likely to be less generous in the future, so we must act now. If you haven't contacted the city or your senators or congressman to express your support for this project, please consider doing so. We must do everything we can to restore and protect our beaches. We hope to work with many of the organizations in town, since this is an issue that touches each of us.

On the SICTA website we have attached "before and after" photos of other beaches in Cape May County involved with similar projects. You can see **the results are dramatic**. Also attached are sample letters sent to our Senators and Congressmen.

http://sicta.org/WRDA_Letter.pdf

Note that many of our membership are Pennsylvania citizens. In Sea Isle City, more than 50% of the taxpayers are Pennsylvania citizens and tens of thousands of our visitors are from Pennsylvania.

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Judge tosses City's Biased Ballot Statement

On September 25, 2006 Superior Court Judge Valerie Armstrong ruled in favor of the Committee of Petitioners' contention that the Board of Commissioners had attached a biased and prejudicial statement to the November ballot that was "designed to sway voters in one direction...". Judge Armstrong's decision follows the precedent written in a prior case by Chief Justice Poritz that an interpretive statement to ballot questions should be "informative and fair".

The decision means that the Nov. ballot will have 2 Interpretive Statements:

No. 1: A Yes vote means the Sea Isle City government will be comprised of six (6) elected officials, consisting of five (5) council members and a mayor, plus an administrator.

No. 2: A No vote means that there will be no change in the current commission form of government in Sea Isle City comprised of three (3) elected commissioners.

SEA ISLE CITY MASTER PLAN IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED

Sept. 15, 2003. Planning Board expresses concern relative to residential development in commercial districts.

Sept. 16, 2003. A. Previti to Board of Commissioners: "Commercial land is traditionally important to a Municipality for its effect on the tax base ... However, the real value of commercial land and commercial uses to a City such as Sea Isle City is the services that these uses provide to the year-round and seasonal residents. Elimination of these commercial uses would make Sea Isle City a less attractive place to live, and if the loss of commercial uses is severe could adversely affect the market value of all properties in the City."

October 28, 2003. A Petition signed by the majority of the owners of downtown properties, is presented to the Board of Commissioners. The Petition includes several recommendations for changes in Zoning Ordinance.

TRY

Spring 2004. The City hires Taylor Design Group to develop recommendations for reviving the City's business districts. A draft Zoning ordinance is promised by the Winter of 2005.

COST: \$17,650.56

RESULTS: 0

TRY

January 10, 2006. The Board of Commissioners charged the solicitors for the Planning Board and Zoning Board with the task of conducting "a comprehensive study of the commercial development issues facing the City and to reconcile the concerns highlighted by ... recent judicial decisions".

COST: \$13,721.32

RECOMMENDATION: HIRE A PROFESSIONAL PLANNER

AGAIN

August 8, 2006. The Board of Commissioners hires a Planner for Master Plan Re-Examination Report

COST: \$68,750.00

RESULTS: ??????

Where is the Fiscal Accountability? EXCERPTS from the Auditor's Management Letter

FORD SCOTT, SEIDENBURG & KENNEDY, L.L.C.

March 25, 2005

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5. Recreation Department

- It was noted during our testing of Recreation Department cash receipts that a fee ordinance has not been adopted setting forth the fees for various Recreation Department activities such as tennis fees and daily skate park fees. We recommend that a fee ordinance be established for all fees charged for Recreation Department services and activities.
- We also noted during our testing that a cash receipts log, although maintained, was incomplete in that it did not provide totals for the month and by source. We recommend that necessary modifications be made to the cash receipts log to allow for better control over cash receipts.

FORD SCOTT, SEIDENBURG & KENNEDY, L.L.C.

March 10, 2005

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5. Recreation Department

- It was noted during our testing of recreation Department cash receipts that a fee ordinance has still not been adopted setting forth the fees for various Recreation Department activities. We recommend that a fee ordinance be established for each fee levied for recreation department services and activities.
- We also noted during our testing that a cash receipts log, although maintained, was incomplete in that it did not provide amounts collected, nor totals for the month and by source. We recommend that necessary modifications be made to the cash receipts log to allow for a reconciliation of fees collected to amounts deposited and recorded by the treasurer.

WHY DOES THE CITY IGNORE THE AUDITOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS ?

ABSENTEE BALLOTS NOVEMBER 7, 2006 ELECTION

If you are a registered Sea Isle City voter and will be voting by absentee ballot, application for a ballot may be made at either City Hall in Sea Isle City or the County Clerk's Office in Cape May Court House. Applications can be requested in person or by calling 263-4461 - ext. 237 (Sea Isle City Municipal Clerk) or 465-1010 (County Clerk) after September 1, 2006.

You will receive your ballot on or after the 40th day prior to the election. Absentee ballots must be received by election officials before the close of the polls on Election Day. If mailing your ballot, be sure to place required postage (39 cents) and return in time to be received before the close of polls.

(CUT AND SAVE AS A REMINDER)

Call to Action on Sea Isle City Beaches . . . continued from page 1

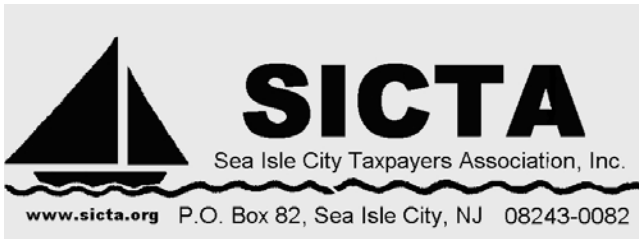
Don't hesitate to contact your Pennsylvania legislators.

E-mail is one of the easiest ways for our membership to communicate their sentiments on this important issue. For your convenience, we are noting the following e-mail addresses:

<http://lautenberg.senate.gov/contact/>
<http://menendez.senate.gov/contact/contact.cfm>
<http://www.house.gov/lobiondo/IMA/issue.htm>
<http://santorum.senate.gov/contactform.cfm>
[http://specter.senate.gov/index.cfm?](http://specter.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=ContactInfo.Home)

[FuseAction=ContactInfo.Home](http://www.fuseaction.com)

For additional information contact us at
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- Zack Lilienfeld (609) 487-7757
- Jim Malloy (609) 263-6208
- Pete & Sally McWilliams (856) 589-2081
- John & Marye Ruzila (973) 742-4724
- Greg Schoultz (609) 263-0094

2006 SICTA Meeting Dates

Public Safety Building Commissioner’s Meeting Room

ALL MEETINGS ARE ON SATURDAYS

October 14	10:00 am	General Membership
November 11	10:00 am	Board Meeting
December 9	10:00 am	Board Meeting

**** All members are invited to attend the Board Meetings**

PLEASE CHECK www.sicta.org FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS OR LAST MINUTE MEETING CHANGES

Join the SICTA:
Membership applications available on the website or by calling 609-263-3784



Please visit our NEW & IMPROVED Website!

- Make an application for Membership
- Get up-to-date Email Alerts
- Make a Donation
- Get all of the details about the articles in our Newsletter and see what SICTA is working hard to accomplish