

Frank Shockey

From: Carleton819@aol.com
Sent: Sunday, September 13, 2009 12:15 PM
To: dist3@leegov.com
Cc: Larry Kiker; Bob Raymond; Tom Babcock; Jo List; bwaichulis@pinkshell.com; AbacoBeach@aol.com; ndewhirst@oakbrookco.com; douglass@comcast.net; jjb25@comcast.net; Herb Acken; bobdebfitz@msn.com; Jack; Keith Laakkonen; Frank Shockey; BOUTELSJ@leegov.com; carl@islandsandpaper.com
Subject: from Carleton Ryffel to Ray Judah

Dear Ray:

We are in the midst of a major beach erosion situation that requires your immediate attention and action. As the County Commission Chair and our representative on the Board of County Commissioners, I am looking to you for help to solve this problem.

As you know, our property is located at 100 Estero Boulevard which has about 250' of beachfront, and is located between Bowditch Park and the Pink Shell at the north end of Ft. Myers Beach. The area of concern starts at the north end of Bowditch and extends southward some distance from the south end of the Pink Shell, probably a bit more than ½ mile. In that area, the vertical loss of sand is about 3-4' and the horizontal loss is about 150-175'. That means our normal shoreline which was out about that distance is now gone. Today our dry sand beach is about 25' and the dune we had is essentially gone. The Pink Shell had dunes and attendant vegetation that was irrigated. The irrigation pipes were imbedded in those dunes. Those pipes now swing in the breeze because the vegetation is gone and there is nothing to irrigate.

I don't normally present a problem without a solution and it will follow below; but first some information so that the readers of this will understand what is going on and where my thinking is coming from.

At the meeting with the public in July which you attended, held at the Pink Shell with representatives of the Town, Town staff, and state, county and federal agencies I posed the proposition (understanding that there are always cause and effects when you're dealing with beach dynamics) of whether the deposit of sand from the back bay dredging, which was placed offshore 300-500' on the Gulf side, south of the pier, about a mile and a half south of here, could be acting as a groin and thereby starve sand transport in the long shore current to properties lying north of it and cause erosion. They were apparently caught them off guard with that proposition because after much fumbling they admitted that it was correct.

With the county's investment in Bowditch Park, be aware that less and less people are visiting it because there are few places to sit that are above water. If you check the revenues from your parking meters I think you will find this is true. Let's be realistic, people go there for the beach not palm trees or to look at gopher tortoises.

We owners here at 100 Estero (30 property owners) have agreed to sign the nourishment agreement. From what I read and the feds saying they want 100% it's not going to happen unless they are bluffing which would not surprise me. Assuming that the necessary signatures are not obtained, we need to be proactive REAL SOON to look at a fall-back position. That fall-back position is the emplacement of the 200' rock groin that was to be built at the north tip of Bowditch Park as part of the nourishment project. That groin serves 2 purposes. First it impedes sand from going into the back-bay, which caused the need to dredge it in the first place and secondly, it allows the capture of sand from the northward flowing long shore current to collect south of it and start growing the beaches again from north to south.

We may have to do this in a separate permit assuming the nourishment project doesn't go through, but we can't afford to delay this. It should be done on an emergency basis with the help of our representatives in Tallahassee in Washington. Our economy depends on healthy beaches. How many tourists go to Pine Island where there are no beaches to speak of?

When it's all said and done, we may have to fund a groin independent of the nourishment project, between the County and the Town. The county needs to protect its investment in Bowditch and collect tourist development dollars, and the island to protect its primary tourist industry and property values. These are details I don't get into, but I know that something needs to be done.

I hereby request a response and will appreciate it if you would copy everyone on this email so that they can be equally informed of this critical issue. Thanks for the help.

Regards,
Carleton

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Frank Shockey

From: Carleton819@aol.com
Sent: Friday, September 18, 2009 4:34 PM
To: BOUTELSJ@leegov.com
Cc: dist3@leegov.com; Larry Kiker; Bob Raymond; Tom Babcock; Jo List; Jack; Frank Shockey; Keith Laakkonen; Herb Acken; bobdebfitz@msn.com; clucas53@comcast.net; dgsuitor@comcast.net; kudaking@comcast.net; robert_haller@msn.com; AbacoBeach@aol.com; ndewhirst@oakbrookco.com; jjb25@comcast.net; krich@sprynet.com; carl@islandsandpaper.com; rpetcher@breezenewspapers.com; bwaichulis@pinkshell.com; douglass@comcast.net
Subject: from Carleton Ryffel, your response for Ray Judah

Dear Steve:

Thank you for your response on behalf of Ray Judah concerning the severe erosion occurring at the north end of Ft. Myers Beach. While I agree with some of your assertions in the response, we will have to agree to disagree on some of the more substantive issues. For convenience sake, I have bulleted the key points you made and below each of them in **bold italics** is my response. The opinions expressed here are my own, but I would like to think that I do speak with some level of competency since my undergraduate degree was in Geology with a concentration in sedimentology, the study of sediments, their properties and deposition.

- The groin was only evaluated and permitted as a component of the larger beach project and construction has always been contemplated and evaluated as part of that. Our efforts thus far, have been focused on getting easements for and implementation of the overall project. If the BOCC wants us to pursue a modified non-federal project, we can do that. In my opinion we do not have the resources to work on both projects simultaneously.

I do agree that the terminal groin to be placed at the north tip of the island was part of the permit for the nourishment project. Based on what I have heard stated by DEP and/or Corps, the groin's purpose is to stop sand carried by the long shore current from entering the Matanzas Pass and as an additional benefit, allow natural sand accretion to occur from the groin southward.

I do understand at least your reluctance to pursue a separate permit for just a groin while easements are being pursued for the nourishment/groin project. Of course, the BOCC, as you stated, could approve to move forward now with a groin-only permit while the nourishment/groin easement work continues. Is there now a date when all parties are going to decide if the project is going to move forward?

As a corollary to why a groin needs to be installed whether it is a separate permit or within the nourishment project, is what I think the effects are of the back bay dredging as it relates to the erosion we are experiencing at the north end. When the channel dredging project's permitting was accelerated, it was assumed that the beach nourishment/groin project would follow soon after. Without the groin, natural processes are going to fill in the "hole" created by the dredging. This is a natural process of tides, long shore and inlet currents in seeking equilibrium of the bottom profile. The origin of the sand going around the tip of the island and into the channel will come from north end gulf front properties. It seems to me that given this scenario, the agency that permitted the dredging of the back bay should be doing the permitting of a groin-only to at least slow down this process because the groin that they assumed would occur, may well not. I suggest this because from what was stated by the Corps, (I believe) at the meeting on the island this summer, they will require at or close to a 100% sign up by property owners along the coast before that project can proceed. While I applaud your efforts and those of others to obtain the necessary easements, I understand that there are currently about 52% signed up and the clock is ticking.

Common sense tells me that it IS prudent to file a separate and accelerated permit for the groin NOW because if the at or near 100% sign up is truly required then I don't believe it will happen as sad as that is. With Ray's support, the County Commission and Town Council as well as our elected representatives in both Tallahassee and in Washington, I think that an expedited process and approval could be achieved. I would opine that if there had not been a nourishment project anticipated, that part of the back bay dredging permit would have included a groin at the same location as it would be as part of the nourishment project. Moreover and most certainly, the critical importance of our beaches and their huge spin-off effects on our county-wide economy cannot be understated nor overlooked.

- As far as a modified project is concerned, I just met with the DEP Beach Bureau Chief and confirmed we would need to seek new permits to construct the groin apart from the federal renourishment project. I also do not believe DEP would see the situation as an emergency under their rules. It is impossible for me to estimate at this point how long a permit would take, although I would hope it to be significantly shorter than the typical 2 year process for coastal permits.

We should seek the permit for the reasons mentioned above and regardless of DEP criteria for emergencies because this is a unique, special case. I must believe that DEP rules did not envision the fact that the back bay dredging would not have the benefit of the groin installation. To that end, we should ask our elected officials at the county, town, state and federal levels to intervene on our behalf and coordinate such an effort. I further believe that without the groin the back bay will fill in again much sooner than without it.

- There is certainly reason to be concerned about the erosion in this area, however, I do not agree with the assertion that the sand placement from the channel dredging is a causative factor. There are several reasons for this.

1. We have been told that the erosion trend started before the dredging.

It may have started prior to the dredging but it was minimal. The scouring has greatly increased and its rate. Our shoreline that we had is now about 150' offshore.

2. I do not believe you could see this kind of effect at this location without seeing intermediate effects spatially and temporally between the fill area and the erosion area.

From my observations on a daily basis, the beach loss has been occurring at an accelerating rate as more and more sand was placed offshore, which in my opinion began blocking the normal longshore current and its sand transport.

3. Although the sand bar built from the dredging certainly trips wave energy, those waves are still moving the sand from this bar as there is no hard structure to capture the sand and starve adjacent beaches. In my opinion, it is more likely that the erosion has to do with changes in the ebb tidal delta of the inlet and associated tidal currents. These are both factors that could be mitigated by construction of the groin and regular maintenance dredging of the channel.

The "hard structure" IS the sand deposited offshore from the dredging that is acting as a "negative groin" that is robbing our sand. This is exacerbated by the fact that there is no "positive groin" at the north end to stop the sand from re-entering the bay channel.

- I hope this provides an adequate response. The Natural Resources Division is prepared to implement any future change in BOCC direction on this matter and will in the meantime keep pursuing federal project easements.

Please understand that I appreciate Ray's response through you and the time you took to prepare it. We may disagree on the issues here but I have tried to be objective and offer

constructive possible solutions. I would suggest that the DEP and Corps conduct a field trip, that I would like to attend, in order for them to see the effects first hand of what is going on here. I also suggest that they be top echelon people who can make a decision. Finally, I request that Ray confer with the other members of the County Commission to bring this matter to their attention and that they assist with expedited permitting for the groin. A reply would be appreciated on what can be done to solve this problem.

Regards,

Carleton Ryffel, AICP

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