



**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA  
LAND USE & NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL**

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

Committee met at 9:00AM., this date, at Town Hall, 2056 Middle Street, all requirements of the Freedom of Information Act having been met. Present were Committee members Councilmember Rita Langley (Chair), Mayor Pat O'Neil and Councilmember Chauncey Clark; Staff: Administrator Benke, Zoning Administrator Henderson, Asst. to Administrator Darrow and Building Official Robinson.

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Langley called the meeting to order, stated the press and public were duly notified pursuant to state law and all members were present; no media and ten (10) audience members present (including Council members Church and Reese).

2. **Meeting Agenda**

**MOTION TO AMEND: Mayor O'Neil moved to approve the meeting agenda with the following amendment: move the last item, "Transition Zone Management: Preliminary Discussion," to the first order of business; seconded by Council member Clark. AMENDED AGENDA MOTION UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

3. **Transition Zone Management: Preliminary Discussion**

**Staff Report: (Administrator Benke)**

**Overview of current status:**

- Council has discussed the management of the Protected Land (oceanfront conservation deed restricted land) for a number of years, approving a Transition Zone two years ago.
- Ongoing litigation regarding the Protected Land (Bluestein, et al v. TOSI) is currently in appeal phase, with the Plaintiff's Appellate Court date to be announced soon, hopefully in mid-March/April 2018. Town attorneys have requested Town Council defer taking any action/implementation in the Transition Zone until resolution at Appellate Court.

Council requested Staff provide preliminary information on Transition Zone management during this appellate period.

**External Agency Coordination:**

- Lowcountry Open Land Trust (LOLT) holds the restricted deed for the Protected Land. This agency approved management of the space, in principle, on March 20, 2017 (pursuant to paragraph 3 of the deed restrictions).
- SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) has authority for state jurisdictional lines. SCDHEC had no comment on any portion of the Town's Transition Zone management plan landward of the jurisdictional setback, but would require more specific information for any management of land/beach seaward of the jurisdictional

setback, likely denying complete eradication of roots for vegetation seaward of the setback line.

### **Planning Components:**

- First order of business - Survey Transition Zone (approximately 23 acres of land)
  - Mark Transition Zone bands
  - Identify baseline/setback
  - Noted Town did a mock-survey of the Transition Zone area between Station 17-18 (Sand Dunes Club), marking space with pegs/stakes.
  - Stakes/pegs can be blown away in a storm and/or moved. Staff recommends cutting begin within a few weeks of survey completion.
  - Council may wish to use the existing tree survey for tree size, but that is a Council decision
- Timeline/Scope/Methodology
  - Cutting would take approximately 2-2 ½ months to complete (cuttings would be ground/mulched). All cutting within the Transition Zone should be accomplished at one time, not piece-meal.
  - Clearing of debris (i.e. post-hurricane, off-shore materials, etc.) should be accomplished in tandem with cutting with the Transition Zone.
  - Town should consider including removal of popcorn trees at this time
  - Equipment to be used: remote controlled Gyrotrac operated by an I-Pad. This cutting equipment would be on tractor treads to navigate the sandy ground. The Town tested the use of this equipment on the Stith Park mound, finding it effectively ground/mulched bamboo. The equipment would meet SCDHEC requirements.
- Budget/Bid Process
  - Staff recommends Council should budget between \$200,000 - \$300,000 for this project.
  - Project cost requires competitive bidding through RFP process. Timeline for advertisement to selection would be approximately 4-6 weeks.

Council members noted some funds have been set aside for Transition Zone management but not a sufficient amount. They noted this would be referred to Council for discussion with the FY19 budget.

### **Public Questions/Comments:**

**Wayne Guckenberger (2105 Pettigrew, SI)**, expressed no support for herbicide treatment of the area (if included in the final management plan), noting he would pay any additional costs for treatment of land behind his property without herbicides.

**Manda Poletti (1771 Atlantic Avenue, SI)**, commented on the post-Hurricane Irma storm vegetative/non-vegetative debris in the Transition Zone, specifically in the Station 17 area. Additionally, the Station 17 area has attracted people as a “hang-out” place.

**Pete Butko (2160 Pettigrew, SI)**, requested Council consider alternative funding opportunities (i.e. resident shared expense) and additional revenue streams.

Committee members noted the budget and funding sources are still under discussion and Council will continue exploring all funding options.

**Julia Khoury (1728 P'On Avenue, SI)**, supports use of herbicides only for the eradication of Chinese Tallow (popcorn trees) due to necessity, but does not support herbicides otherwise, especially as it may threaten ground cover.

**Manda Poletti (1771 Atlantic Avenue, SI)**, noted there are companies that use very organic products to eradicate vegetation, commenting her landscaper specifically uses highly organic products at her request.

**Administrator Benke:**

- Clarified that use of herbicides would be at Council's direction and is one of many management options for the area. Additionally, if Council directed use of any herbicides, the type/use would be subject to approval under the Town's NPDS permit.
- Gyrotrac machine would be approximately four (4') feet wide and five (5') feet long on tractor treads, operated remotely via an I-pad by a qualified contractor. The machine would be able to navigate closely around the trees.

**Susan Middaugh (2420 Raven Drive, SI)**, commented that herbicide use may not be necessary, noting repetitive cutting/mowing may give the same effect. She expressed support for an evaluation period following initial cutting.

Mayor O'Neil expressed support for an initial/first cutting cycle followed by a one-year evaluation.

**NO FORMAL ACTION TAKEN: retained on committee agenda for future review.**

**4. Polystyrene/Styrofoam Containers on Island: Community Outreach/Public Awareness**

Continuation of topic discussed at last Committee meeting.

**Staff Report:**

Committee requested Staff gather data on debris type/quantity on the beach and research/develop a proposed community outreach/public awareness program.

**Administrator Benke**

- Reviewed data compiled July 1 – December 31, 2017 by SCDHEC/OCRM volunteer-driven "Adopt a Beach" Program (**Exhibit A**).
  - In six-month period approximately 29 pounds of total debris was collected
  - Cigarette butts were the main trash contributor, but weighing 0.4lbs.
  - Class 3 (polystyrene) debris - approximately 5 ½lb was collected in 6 months
- Noted some polystyrene debris was brought onto the Island by visitors, but an unknown quantity would have washed ashore with tides/storm surges.

**Asst. to Administrator Darrow:**

Presented Community Outreach/Public Awareness program concept (**Exhibit B**).

### **Council Comments:**

- Littering in general, not polystyrene, is the key to retaining the Town's clean beach
- Applauded the number of proactive residents witnessed regularly walking and cleaning the beach
- Noted the Town has a no-littering ordinance in effect
  - Questioned if the current littering ordinance needs review/revision
  - Questioned if a specific ordinance against polystyrene and single-use plastic bags would be necessary and enforceable
- Noted other communities, such as Town of Mt. Pleasant, are considering banning polystyrene containers and single-use plastic bags in businesses
- Committee members expressed mixed opinions on supporting an ordinance at this time to ban single-use plastic bags and polystyrene containers:
  - Support not having items on beach
  - Noted Sullivan's Island businesses, in general, are sensitive about not providing these products
  - Noted a new ordinance, or revision of the existing littering ordinance, would force beach visitors to pay attention to single-use bag and polystyrene littering or face penalties.
  - Consideration of an ordinance would demonstrate proactive support for the community

### **Administrator Benke:**

- Noted the Town's current littering ordinance specifies no bottles on the beach and littering, in general.
- Successful enforcement and prosecution would require a beach services officer witnessing someone littering.
- SC Assembly is currently considering relevant legislation, specifically S0068/H3529 (of Session 122 Assembly), that would, if ratified in current proposed form, restrict municipalities from banning "auxiliary containers." Rather, regulation of auxiliary containers would reside solely with the State Assembly.
  - It is his understanding that municipalities with laws against single-use bags/polystyrene (or other auxiliary containers) may be "grandfathered" by the SC Assembly.
  - Additionally, it is unclear if municipalities would be authorized to ban transport/use of various containers in public spaces (parks, beach, etc).
- Noted municipalities' regulatory authority would be subject to legal interpretation of any final, ratified SC Assembly law. He deferred any Council questions to legal staff.

### **Public Comments:**

**Mary English (1306 Thompson Avenue, SI)**, walks the beach daily, commends her neighbors who clean regularly and does not observe a Styrofoam problem (observes beer can, plastic juice bags and bottle cap litter); noted boat debris washing or blowing on-shore is big litter culprit.

**Kimberly Brown (2118 Pettigrew, SI)**, reiterated her suggestion made at the last Committee meeting for Town to purchase more colorful, but still biodegradable, dog fecal refuse baggies (litter she observes the most).

**Rayeann Osborne (1801 Atlantic Avenue, SI)**, echoed comments about dog fecal bag litter; suggested reinstating garbage cans on the beach side of each beach path/station.

**Wayne Guckenberger (2105 Pettigrew, SI)**, supports brighter color dog fecal bags and even selling advertisement on it. Noted he would like to see the Island become a trash-in/out environment where trash receptacles were not needed.

**Pete Butko (2160 Pettigrew, SI)**, recommends aggressive enforcement of non-licensed dogs; promotes partnering with a recycling contractor to have recycling cans/collection beach-front and/or street-side of beach paths/stations.

**Manda Poletti (1771 Atlantic Avenue, SI)**, echoed comments from Mr. Butko, noting a recycling contractor hands out recycle bags at Clemson football games for collection. Noted otherwise those cans would end up in the regular trash containers.

**Sarah Church (1655 Atlantic Avenue, SI)**, commented that cigarette butts are the biggest litter problem in her opinion.

#### **Committee Comments:**

Committee members

- Expressed support for recycling, in general, but did note that beachgoers in the past have thrown regular trash into recycling bins at the beach paths. This would be challenge to successful recycling efforts.
- Support partnering with other Charleston area beaches to coordinate public relations/public service announcements, to enhance visibility of clean beach initiatives.

**NO FORMAL ACTION TAKEN: Retained on committee agenda for future review**

#### **5. 2018 Sullivan’s Island Comprehensive Plan: Update on Project**

##### **Staff Report (Zoning Administrator Henderson):**

Reported the Planning Commission has begun the 10-year review/re-write of the Town’s Comprehensive Plans, with Town Staff and BCD-COG consultant.

Public Notice/Participation:

- Project specific website ([http://bit.ly/2018\\_SI\\_COMP\\_PLAN](http://bit.ly/2018_SI_COMP_PLAN))
  - Surveys for residents (only) targeting specific topics/Plan elements
  - Working documents as Plan progresses
  - Timeline when public may expect Commission to review various elements
- Methodology: Commission will review Plan incrementally, considering the 9 elements individually.

- Process for Commissioners:
  - (1) Receive one-two elements as information only (public meeting)
  - (2) Review (at home) provide questions/edits to Staff between meetings
  - (3) Staff compiles Commissioner questions and conducts additional research, as needed
  - (4) Discuss/review/edit at following Steering Committee workshop (public meeting)
  - (5) Commissioners make formal recommendations for preliminary approval at regular meetings (public)
  - (6) Element set-aside and Commission moves to next element piece (via motion at public meeting)
  - (7) Commission reviews compiled draft Plan for another review and public hearing (public meeting held with minimum two-weeks newspaper notice)
  - (8) Commission makes recommendation to Council for adoption of draft 2018 Plan (by Resolution approval at public meeting)
  - (9) Council takes up draft Plan and reviews it either in various standing Council Committees or Council, as whole (public meeting)
  - (10) Council may choose to modify portions of the Plan and may choose to return the Plan to Planning Commission for more work, or approve as amended through ordinance process (public meetings)
  - (11) Council would approve Plan through multi-step ordinance process (public)
- Project Status:
 

January 10, 2018 Meeting:  
Commissioners gave preliminary approval to the Vision Statement/Guiding Principles

February 15, 2018 Meeting:  
Commissioners will consider Population and Community Facilities elements, with department heads in attendance for the Community Facilities element.

March 14, 2018 Meeting  
Review Cultural Resources and Housing Elements

Committee commended Staff on the project website, noting it was user-friendly and informative.

Mayor O’Neil advised public that the Finance Committee, a committee of the whole Council, would meet at 8:30AM on Friday, February 9, 2018, at Town Hall, to discuss funding options for the Wastewater Treatment System Retrofit project. He encouraged interested residents to attend.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:10AM (Councilmember Clark motioned; Mayor O’Neil seconded; unanimously passed)

Respectfully submitted,  
Rita Langley, Chair  
Land Use & Natural Resources Committee

Approved at the February 20, 2018 Regular Council Meeting

## S.C. DHEC Ocean and Coastal Resource Management

# Beach Litter Report

Sullivans Island, SC

July 1 – December 31, 2017



S.C. DHEC's Adopt-A-Beach partners have been active on Sullivans Island over the last six months. This Beach Litter Report summarizes marine debris removal and volunteer efforts on Sullivans during this time period. The data reflected in this report was submitted using DHEC's MyCoast application. Visit [mycoast.org/sc](http://mycoast.org/sc) for more information.

## Items and Estimated Weight:

Items	0	20	40	60	80	100	120	Total	Weight (lbs)
 Cigarettes								99	0.4
 Food Wrappers								51	2.1
 Plastic Bottles								39	1.3
 Glass Bottles								29	9.6
 Plastic and Foam Pieces								27	0.1
 Food Containers								24	1.9
 Metal Cans								21	0.6
 Bottle Caps								19	0.2
 Pet Waste								19	8.4
 Plastic Bags								11	0.1
 Utensils, Cups, Plates								10	1.1
 Beach Toys								8	1.1
 Straws, Stirrers								6	0
 Clothing and Shoes								2	1.8
 Hooks, Lines, Lures								2	0.4
 Personal Hygiene								2	0.1
<b>Total</b>								<b>369</b>	<b>29.2</b>

### Volunteer Effort:

Volunteer(s)	Total Volunteer Hours	Total Beach Cleanups
Individuals	12.75	2
Lowcountry Parrotheads	32.5	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>45.25</b>	<b>3</b>

### Collection Areas and Debris Concentration:



Visit the SC Adopt-A-Beach Program online at <https://mycoast.org/sc/beach-cleanup>  
 For more information, contact Liz Hartje at [hartjeen@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:hartjeen@dhec.sc.gov) • 843-953-9237

# **CLEAN BEACH INITIATIVE**

**TOWN OF SULLIVAN'S ISLAND**

# A BUILDING BLOCK APPROACH

- Increase public awareness as an option in lieu of ordinances, or, to compliment an ordinance
- Public awareness efforts should be two-fold:
  - Reach visitors before coming to SI with targeted ads and PSA's
  - Raise anti-litter awareness once visitors are on-island
- A few public awareness strategies:
  - Create a Clean Beach Ad campaign for
    - SI online communication platforms
    - Other local/regional/national agencies and/or platforms
  - Implement an Adopt a Beach clean up program
  - Evaluate current signage: prominent litter awareness signage at beach access points
  - Promote awareness of current trash receptacles and cigarette butt containers

# BEACH AWARENESS ADVERTISEMENT CAMPAIGN (TOWN PLATFORMS)

## I. CREATE A BEACH AWARENESS PAGE ON THE TOWN'S NEW WEBSITE:

- Map of the Beach with danger points
- List of access pathways
- Beach regulations
- Keep it clean tips
- Beach Sweep/Adopt a Beach information

## II. PROMOTE "KEEP IT CLEAN" ON TOWN'S OTHER MEDIA PLATFORMS

- Twitter account (regular monthly highlights/blasts)
- Town Facebook page (regularly highlight activity/photos)
- Include in Town's monthly E-Newsletters

# BEACH AWARENESS ADVERTISEMENT CAMPAIGN (OTHER PLATFORMS)

## I. TARGET “KEEP IT CLEAN” PSA’S/ADS TO FREE MEDIA OUTLETS

- Broadcast on Comcast 60 Government Channel
- Profile articles in newspapers (online & print)
- Drive readers to Town platforms for more information

## II. PARTNER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN WITH OTHER AGENCIES

Local/Regional/National – some examples:

- Charleston Visitor’s Bureau (seek link on their site)
- Local businesses in Charleston area (specifically SI, IOP, Mt. Pleasant, Charleston)
- Local schools
  - K-12 and colleges (including alumni groups)
- Non-profit (NPO) examples
  - Boy/Girl Scouts,
  - SC Sea Grant Consortium
  - Conservation minded NPO’s like Surfrider Foundation

# **INFORMATION USEFUL FOR BEACH AWARENESS CAMPAIGN**

1. TIPS TO “KEEP IT CLEAN”
2. ADOPT A BEACH PROGRAM

# KEEP IT CLEAN: 10 TIPS!

- Stay away from [plastic bags](#)! Instead of using plastic bags to bring your snacks, use reusable bags and containers.
- Bring a trash bag with you to make sure you throw everything away; that way trash won't be buried in the sand throughout the day or left when you leave.
- If you are walking along the beach and see trash or cans/bottles, safely pick them up and throw them away.
- Make a game with your friends and family on who can gather the most cans. Whoever wins, gets to keep the money when you cash them in!
- Switch over to reusable water bottles, instead of single-use plastic bottles (this can make a huge difference each day).
- Instead of making this weekend focused around eating and drinking, make it about socializing and physical activity. Play some Frisbee!
- If you are allowed to have bonfires at the beach, refrain from burning your trash, especially plastics. Also, make sure the fire is fully out before you leave.
- If you have [pets, pick up after them](#), so nobody will experience stepping in something other than sand.
- Don't smoke! [Cigarette butts are the leading pollutant](#) on our beaches and there are many negative effects that come from the cigarettes in our water. If you have the urge to smoke, be sure to dispose of the entire cigarette butt appropriately.
- Encourage others you know to use these tips and to do their part in keeping our beaches clean

# ADOPT A BEACH PROGRAM

## OPTION: PROMOTE REGULAR BEACH SWEEPS

Town already receives 2-3 regular beach sweep special requests/year from school/college alumni groups (various times of year)

Annual SC statewide Beach/River Sweep participating site (early September)

## OPTION: PROMOTE DHEC's EXISTING ADOPT-A-BEACH PROGRAM

The Adopt-A-Beach program is part of the DHEC Marine Debris Initiative and is a great way for businesses, civic clubs, school groups and neighborhood associations to make a significant contribution to the preservation of our coastal environment.

- DHEC's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) has a new application for the Adopt-A-Beach Program at [MyCoast South Carolina](#).
- The new system provides a streamlined process for program registration, beach adoption, and marine debris data reporting.
- To get started, visit the [MyCoast South Carolina Adopt-A-Beach homepage](#) to register with MyCoast, establish a beach cleanup group, and select a beach to adopt. In the new system, you will choose an entire beach to adopt rather than targeting a specific stretch of beach. If you have
- DHEC contact Liz Hartje at [hartjeen@dhec.sc.gov](mailto:hartjeen@dhec.sc.gov).

# CURRENT BEACH PATH SIGNAGE

Town has comprehensive signage on the beach paths

Additional signage can be found ocean-front near Station access points



# CONSIDER PROMINENT BEACH LITTER SIGNS

- At the beach end of the access paths and/or
- Facing towards the beach



# BEACH AWARENESS EVENTS/OTHER

PROMOTE “KEEP IT CLEAN” BEACH AWARENESS AT EVENTS OTHER THAN SWEEPS

Examples:

- Booth at 1-2 Farmers Market Events
- Partner with local schools/colleges and their conservation clubs
- National Events:
  - National Beach Day ( Aug 30th)
  - Earth Day for Beaches (July 1-7<sup>th</sup>)

SEEK BLUE WAVE BEACH DESIGNATION WITH CLEAN BEACHES COUNCIL

<http://www.cleanbeaches.com/>

Clean Beaches Council promotes designation through national media at no additional Town cost.