

December 16, 2011

I attended the beach funding update at Shuckers this morning. The meeting was opened by Patti Pacitti, then turned over to Jim David from the county. This is a summary of the pertinent facts.

1. The “opt-out” of Sand Dollar Shores has been accepted by the county’s committee. A formal ‘opt-out’ request is anticipated to be received by Dune Walk this Monday and is planned to be accepted. A similar request is not required by Ocean Bay Villas as they only have an easement to the beach and do not own oceanfront property.
2. The project has been redefined to exclude the north section (R-88.5 to R90.3). This reduces the impact to hard bottom communities, which require mitigation, from 2.73 acres to 0.6 acres. The project has been re-estimated at a cost of \$12.5M including initial beach restoration, mitigation reefs, monitoring, finance and administrative costs. A funding request has been submitted to the State based on cost sharing as a regional project with Martin County.
3. The county committee evaluated 4 different funding alternatives and will make a recommendation this Tuesday, 12/20/2011, to the Commissioners. Charles Grande’s proposal was rejected because it would require a countywide referendum. Their recommendation will be to do a special assessment of all property owners in the project area east of A1A based on the same formula of beach frontage, property depth, and number of units as originally proposed.
4. If the Commissioners accept the committee’s funding recommendation, here are the specifics of how it will proceed.
 - A ballot vote of all affected residents will be conducted. Ballots will be mailed in January to each taxpayer east of A1A in the project area showing what their individual assessment will be. Public meetings will be held and voting finalized by mid-February.
 - Approval of 51% by weighted ballot is required or the project will be dropped. The ballot will state that final approval is contingent on receiving the required state funding which is anticipated in the March timeframe. If funding is finalized, the project would begin in November 2012 as a joint regional project with Martin County.
 - The funding breakdown is \$5.3M (State) + \$2.9M (County) + \$4.3M (Local) = \$12.5M Total
 - The “average” cost per owner is \$1447 or \$228/year over 10 years
 - Specific costs per property will be available on Tuesday and emailed to me. Recall that the costs at Islandia were almost double the average cost.
5. FEMA guidelines were reviewed that say a beach must be routinely maintained at least every 5 years to qualify for federal assistance. The project area as defined was last re-nourished in 2006.

Best regards,

Dennis Phelan, Islandia I Board of Directors