

Rye Beach Committee
Meeting Minutes May 6, 2019

Meeting Open: 7:48 PM

Attendees: Beach Committee Members: Larry Rocha, Steve Hillman, Keper Connell, Lori Carbajal, Brad Fulkerson, Sally King Rye Conservation Commission

Speakers: Larry Ward Coastal Geologist -UNH, Alyson Eberhart, Wells Costello, Eben Lewis NH-DES (Project manages grass restoration project seacoast).

Video presented by speakers measuring sand loss due to beach erosion. Measurement system done by volunteers at low tide during spring low tide cycles.

Coastal landowner technical assist program provides flood maps and flood risk assessment and visit the site where plantings are to take place. There is no follow up on post-planting sites.

Video slide show provided photos of Rye, NH circa 1950 shows dune grass along property owners' seawalls.

Larry Ward stated the cement walls / structures vs rip-rap, cause more coastal erosion and that natural barriers such as grass plantings were far better at prevention.

Questions, Answers and Comments:

Keper Connell asked what the responsibility is in the grant and what the programs verification system is to assure end-users are properly planting within their property boundaries. In response there is no follow up.

Sally King thought the dune grass was positive but did not feel the homeowners intent is. Eben Lewis stated planting is not overseen by the state in terms of permitting.

Steve Hillman felt it is important for restoration and conservancy though their needs to be a process to assure landowners are not planting on the public beach. Lori Carbajal agreed the planting is positive however, shore front landowners have taken every inch of their property boundaries and put in fixed concrete structures such as patios and stonewalls which does add to the erosion and now they want to plant out in front of their properties well into the public space. She felt this was a

case of using conservancy to garner more space in front of their homes which drives visitors out. She stated that in review of deeds in the Jenness Beach area specifically F Street shore-side, property owners' deeds show restrictions in terms of any structures within 30 feet of the seaward or easterly boundary. Ms. Carbajal stated, many homeowners have gone out to at least their easterly boundary with concrete patios and edged with a seawall, and now they want to plant out beyond because they are being "conservation minded" when in reality their structures are the causing.

Larry Rocha asked how aggressive these plants are. Mr. Ward indicated they spread however sea grass can only go seaward to tide then they can't survive.

Brad Fulkerson stated the sea grass serves a positive role in conservation however, public access must be preserved especially with the minimal beach area at high tide on all of Rye's beaches.

Larry Rocha, Steve Hillman and Keper Connell felt there needs to be a protocol and level of cooperation to assure there is public preservation and space that has been used by beach goers is not lost.

Keper Connell asked Ms. Eberhart what will happen if grass does not survive.

Brad Fulkerson felt there should be a buffer line of 6' to 8' from walls that already exist as an example may be a help.

Larry Rocha and Steve Hillman agreed that plantings only along existing walls would be acceptable but not out as far as what has been planted in estimated 15' into public space.

Meeting Adjourned 9:10 PM