

Chair Sullivan read an email from the Director of the Student Lab at U.N.H., who says the grass is not unhealthy:

*Beachgrass is a known sand and beach builder that also functions to store sand and provide habitat for other dune plants and animals. Beachgrass can be planted and will survive only above the highest tide line. Storm waves and storm surges coincided with high tides will flood the beachgrass and erode the sand away from the shore, but if some of the dune areas and beachgrass remain after the storm, it can rebuild on its own, so there's no need to worry that the grass can take over the beach. Rye has been blessed with a mix of beaches and rocky outcrops. As many landowners and beachgoers do not want to share the beach with each other or any natural components. Beaches are a resource held in the public trust and we now know that the beach face where sunbathers sit is tightly connected to both the landward dune area and the seaward surf zone. All these areas must be considered when finding the balance between the sometimes-conflicting interest and resilience in beach system, in order for Rye to have healthy beaches their grandchildren can enjoy.*

There was some discussion about whether the beachgrass is limiting accessible beach area. It was agreed that these areas should be reviewed every year to be sure the grass is not taking over the beach and limiting access. There was also discussion about the people who are planting the grass, and using other barriers, to intentionally block public access on the beach in front of their homes. The Committee discussed the NH Court's decision concerning ownership of beachfront properties.