

**Holgate Taxpayers Association
Dune Vegetation Committee (DVC) Meeting July 10, 2016
Minutes**

Holgate Taxpayers Association (HTA) Committee members present were: Dan Macone, Tom Beaty, Yanni Kaloudis, Bob White and Frank Benintendo

Britta Wenzel, Executive Director of Save Barnegat Bay (SBB), was also in attendance. Save Barnegat Bay will be partnering with the HTA on this project and is a member of the project's committee.

Dan Macone opened the meeting by handing out the agenda and thanking everyone for attending and giving their time to make the project a success. Dan handed out the contact information sheet for everyone to make sure that all their personal contact information was correct.

The two main objectives of the meeting were to:

1. Develop a plan on how to best utilize the HTA dune vegetation funds for beach entrances (accesses) for the planting of native vegetation to enhance the protective root system of the dunes. A budget plan for approval will be presented to the HTA Trustees at its next trustee meeting tentatively scheduled for Saturday, July 30th.
2. Write a newspaper article describing the program for submission to the Sandpaper.

Discussion between Committee members started with what would be the best way to spend the budget to accomplish the planting of 24 beach entrances that are in Holgate. It was decided to see if we could get the Township to handle the three public parking lot beach accesses at the south end of Holgate. Dan will bring this proposal to the Township at his meeting with the Commissioners. That would leave 21 for the DVC to handle.

The Committee then moved on to making a list of the types of plants with the guidance from Britta Wenzel that would be the best native plants for the planting that would get us the greatest success. The plants that were selected are as follows:

Bayberry
Beach Plum
Golden Rod (the non-allergic type)
Ragousa Rose
Yuca

In addition to these five native plants, the use of other flowering native plants would be considered based on their availability. It was noted that there were only a hand full of nurseries that could supply these plants. Therefore, consideration as to availability will need to be considered at the time of purchase. The amount of money spent for each beach entrance still needs to be determined. A formula based on the amount of plants, the area that needs to be planted and how many plants will be provided free of charge

for the Dune Steward's property will determine the proposed budget for each beach access. It was stated that there would not be an equal amount of money spent across the 21 (24) beach entrances as there are basically three different types of beach accesses. More to follow on this.

Now the discussion moved to how we would attract Dune Stewards, who are very important to the success of this program. We need to find oceanfront home owners that live adjacent to the beach accesses to be available in the months of October and then again in the Spring (early April) to water the new plants. If the homeowner could not be available to water the plants, they would need to be agreeable to leave the water on so that a volunteer (not even an ocean front homeowner) could get to the water spigot and water the plants. Britta commented that at a minimum the plants would need to be watered every other day for the first week. There was a lot of discussion on how to get homeowners to volunteer and one way would be to buy additional plants and plant them on their property in return for their services and water. In order to get this out to the residents of Holgate an article would be written and sent to the Sandpaper explaining the program once the plan was finalized. In addition, we would use the Face Book "Holgate Update" page as well to see if we can get volunteers for Dune Stewards. It was the feeling of the committee that this was going to be the hardest part of making this program a success. The article that needs to be written still needs to have an author. We will take up finding an author for the article at our next meeting. It was also suggested that the article and the Face Book posting could lead to additional donations to help grow the budget for this program and maybe make this a continuing program of the HTA; just like we have an annual dune grass planting program.

There was a lengthy discussion on how the dune grass would be planted on the new replenished dune by the Army Corp. of Engineers (ACE) and the Committee and Britta Wenzel were in complete agreement that the "corn row" approach and using only one dune grass specie was wrong. Being that Britta was having a meeting with the ACE this month, she would ask the question if the planting pattern of the dune could be changed to a more favorable pattern. In addition, while she was there she would ask the ACE if they could contribute some other native plants to our program for free. If the ACE were not willing to give us additional free plants, SBB would be able to help us buy our plants at wholesale prices and even see if they can secure some free plants as well. In addition, they could help us obtain volunteers for when we were going to be doing the planting in October and in April.

It was decided that there are three different types of beach entrances: 1. No vegetation, 2. Semi-vegetated and 3. Fully vegetated. Yanni will take pictures of the three different sites and send them to Britta. Britta is going to ask a Landscape Architect, Brice Bennet, to draw three different master planting diagrams to be used as a guide for the DVC to plant the beach accesses. These diagrams will show what plants should be planted, how many of each, and where each plant should be placed. Further, the diagram will show where to start the planting, distance from the road heading East, and how far up the western down side of the new dune. The planting will not extend to the top of the flat part of the dune or will it go to the eastern slope of the dune.

It was decided not to spend the complete existing budget all at one time. The plan would start to plant three to four beach accesses (the number still to be determined) in the fall with those plants that should be planted in the fall following the master planting diagrams. Then in the spring, plant those plants that need to be planted in the spring in those first three to four beach entrances. At that same time, start to plant an additional three to four beach accesses and continue this again in the fall until all the beach accesses are completed. The number of beach accesses can be increased to have all 24 entrances finished over a two-year period. The reason for the slow start up is to make sure that the master planting diagram does work and if adjustments are needed to improve the plan, they can be made on an ongoing situation so we do waste any money by losing plants.

We talked about reaching out to other people in the Holgate community that have a strong background in landscaping to assist to offer the DVC their expertise, time and knowledge. We will be reaching out to the Garden Club of LBI for their guidance as well.

There was a very long and very important discussion on how to prevent people from crossing the dune and how to get ocean front homeowners to help to educate their rentals and post signs. It was stated that maybe we could get the local real estate agencies to have a one pager attached to the rental agreement that the rentals must read and sign to help make them aware of the importance of staying off the dunes. This educational sheet could be left in every home along with dropping them off at the Chamber of Commerce to be handed out.

The committee discussed the oceanfront homeowners crossing the dune. The Township has in place a plan on how an oceanfront homeowner can cross the dune to get to the beach. The home owner must register with the town by taking out a permit (a one-time fee of \$75) and get the packet that describes the use of roll up walk ways and the times of the year they can be used. They can be used from April 1st to November 1st. The other times they must be lifted, rolled and placed in storage off of the dune. In addition, the homeowner cannot cut through the dune fence and that the Public Works Department (PWD) must do that for them. The question that was raised by Frank Benintendo was that if the township was going to require the homeowner to run dune fencing west to east alongside of the roll up walkways path. This is very important to keep people from getting off the walkways and running all over the dunes in between the walkways. This dune fencing will also act as an additional way to grow and stabilize the dune. This is going to be brought up during Dan's meeting with the town later this month. Frank feels very strongly that this should be part of the Township requirement in order to get the use of the roll up walk way permit. He feels that every oceanfront homeowner has the responsibility to be a dune steward to protect the dune which in turn protects all of the properties west of the dune. This is a small price to pay for being able to cross over the dune to get to the beach.

At the end of our meeting Dan brought up a new topic in which he addressed the idea of having street posts made to help people know where they are by placing the name of

the street of that beach access. These would be lit for night visibility and there will be information on the post to educate the public of the importance of staying off the dune.

The last topic discussed was dealing with the Turpentine Beetle and how to combat them to save the Black Japanese Pines on LBI which is under attack by the Turpentine Beetle. Nothing was finalized on this discussion.

Action Items

Dan Macone to meet with the town to discuss the following.

1. Speak with Angela Andersen to act as a conduit between the HTA and the Township so we can get the greatest amount of assistance and help to become partners in getting our beach accesses planted.
2. Ask the PWD to receive and store the plants until the DVC can plant them.
3. Ask the PWD on where we can and cannot plant in order to avoid planting in areas that could be later damaged by PWD work in maintaining the beach accesses cross overs.
4. See if the Township, or even the County, could supply the DVC with free top soil. This was suggested by Britta.
5. Look into what would be the best fertilizer to use. It was suggested to look into the Miracle Grow products that have both fertilizer and moisture added properties.
6. Talk to the PWD to see if they could construct the street access signs and apply the solar lights that the HTA would buy and supply. The idea here is not only for the PWD to make them but to pay for them as well.
7. Discuss with the town about the requirements for oceanfront homeowners to gain access to cross over the dune to get to the beach. Also to discuss the requirement to have dune fencing installed west to east along side of the roll up walkway path.

Yanni

1. Take pictures of the three beach entrances and send them to Britta Wenzel so the Landscaping Architect can draw up the master planting diagrams.