

**New Shoreham Town Council Minutes
Meeting with Planning Consultant Phil Herr
Discussion of Town Property at Plat 6, Lots 146 and 147
Town Hall, Old Town Road, Block Island
Saturday, December 4, 2010
11:00 a.m.**

Present: First Warden Kimberley H. Gaffett, Second Warden Raymond J. Torrey, Town Councilors Kenneth C. Lacoste and Richard P. Martin. Absent was Councilor Baute. Also present was Planning Consultant Phil Herr, Town Manager Nancy O. Dodge, Planning Board Chair Margie Comings, Planning Board members Rob Gilpin and Mary Anderson and approximately 20 members of the public. Town Clerk Fiona Fitzpatrick was present to take minutes of the meeting.

The meeting was called to order at 11:05.

The meeting was called to discuss how to use two undeveloped properties on the east side of Water Street the town purchased in 2010. Plat 6 Lot 146 (1.29 acres) is the vacant land in front of the National Hotel and Lot 147 (.19 acres) is vacant land most recently used to rent kayaks. The parcels abut each other and are separated from Town-owned Esta's Park by Interstate's access road to the ferry freight lot. People cross the property to get to Crescent Beach from town. The most widely used shortcut is at the corner by the Surf Hotel where people cross a fence to scramble down an unauthorized path on a steep eroding bank.

Mr. Herr acted as facilitator and took the following suggestions for the use of the properties: Don't do the 1977 plan (a parking lot); Stay natural; simple, follow Esta's Park; Generous stairs at corner; Welcome spirit; Easily maintained; Different easy access; Low-lying shade; Inviting picnic tables; Money making attraction; Low lying pavilion rented to business(maybe not); Gentle slope off sidewalk; Path; Access two places; Boardwalk across property (maybe not); Do nothing; Stile over breakwater; Observation area (maybe not); Maintain the view; Land swap with Interstate; More benches. Engage a designer; give the designer instructions and examples. Education/information.

In the course of the discussion, some members of the group proposed one or more staircases down the steep grade for beach access. Others wanted to develop one of the existing "use" paths down the gentle slope of the southern portion of the property. A visually well defined path, with minimal signage and strategic obstructive vegetation at the corner may persuade people to develop a new routine. A viewing platform at the corner was proposed as a nice attraction that would block people from scrambling down the bank.

If a designer is hired, Mr. Herr suggested finding someone to donate a conceptual sketch. He said there is no reason to reinvent the wheel, photos and examples from other coastal communities will be useful. He also emphasized that the designer should be given clear instructions.

At 12:30 the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes approved December 15, 2010

Fiona Fitzpatrick,
Town Clerk