

Beach Commission Minutes

From Meeting: March 8th, 2011

Attending: Bill Seiple, Rian Wilkinson, John Bagwill, John Ceglarski, Tim Shaw

Guest Speaker: Glen Gardiner and John Grosvenor from the Newport Collaborative, and Evan Smith from R.I. Convention & Visitors Bureau

1- Approved minutes from Feb 8th meeting with no changes

2- Newport Collaborative speakers Glen Gardiner and John Grosvenor

a. Briefly reviewed the 2006-2007 study for Town of Middletown- New Beach Building at Second Beach

b. Town of Narragansett 2010- proposals from Newport Collaborative

i. Basic- 6 Million dollars to include new office, changing rooms, concession, staff rooms etc. Since this was going to be an up-graded facility, it would probably draw additional patrons to the beach, but would not generate significantly, increased income.

ii. Proposals "2 and 3"- 9 -12 million dollars- Both proposals included, with some options, an up-scale facilities room (300 patrons), bridal suites, beach operations buildings, bath houses and a water play area. Since this up-scale facility is one of the few wedding venues in the area, it was felt that it could generate significant income.

iii. Outcome: The Narragansett Town Council, after originally supporting the up-scale ranges of the project, tabled the question and did not offer it to the voters-in the 2010 election. They may re –visit

it, but there are no active plans.

3- Evan Smith- R.I. Convention & Visitors Bureau

a. Mr. Smith reported there are over 1200 weddings in the Newport area. Newport County is one of the top “destination wedding” areas in the country. Although the mansions and other high- end venues get the publicity, there are hundreds of couples looking for a mid-range venue. He mentioned Gooseberry Beach, The Newport Rotunda, and The Glen as prime examples.

He also felt there would be a tremendous demand for any facility that would offer a beach- front location with an optimum capacity of 150-175 persons for corporate meetings, etc. He strongly urged that any facility should include provisions for clambakes, etc. on the beach. Class reunions, civic organizations, businesses, and athletic events would all find a top rate facility attractive. “If the town builds it, they will come”.

Concerns- the design has to be perfect, the first time. He suggested a colonial style motif that would appeal to the majority of voters. Also, the proposed building has to improve the beach and compliment it’s wonderful, natural setting.

Discussion- after the speakers, there was an open discussion concerning topics such funding, revenue generation, preserving the area, building design, present facility deficiencies, and how, next to proceed.

Meeting adjourned 6:16 pm