Bridgehampton and Sagaponack Beach Restoration Project
Frequently Asked Questions
October 24, 2023

- **Is the expectation that this is going to become a recurring exercise every ~10 years?**

It is anticipated that the beach will be renourished when it hits a triggering condition which based upon the project design is a 10-year cycle. The project longevity of 10 years is exceptional in the industry. Other projects in the vicinity including Fire Island, Westhampton, and Shinnecock Inlet are renourished on a more frequent basis, between three and five years.

- **Is this second phase to be funded as the first by bond financing and, if so, what is the correlation between the bond financing and the tax assessment – i.e., is the bond financing supplemental or does the tax assessment pay off the financing?**

The project will be funded by bond financing and the assessment will pay off the bond financing. Consideration will be given in the bidding process for construction in calendar year 2024 or 2025 to provide flexibility for a improved price based upon bond rates.

- **Is this being done in coordination with similar projects in other municipalities (such as the Montauk or East Hampton restoration)? If so, are all of these projects being funded together, or in isolation on the basis of separate special taxing districts? If not, why is not part of a broader East End project?**

The Bridgehampton and Sagaponack projects are not associated with the downtown Montauk or Fire Island projects. The Bridgehampton and Sagaponack shoreline is not eligible for direct federal or state financing based upon the federal benefit cost analysis conducted by the US Army Corps of engineers. That is the reason that a special beach erosion control tax district was developed. The private companies that are contracted to build the projects in Fire Island and downtown Montauk will be the same companies that are likely to bid on the Bridgehampton and Sagaponack projects. Therefore, we are cognizant of the potential for economies of scale when developing our bidding.

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- **When will the renourishment take place, and when undertaken, will that cause any interference with the use of the beach and, if so, when and for how long?**

The divergent will take place between October and April of any given year due to environmental windows. The entire project is anticipated to take three months. However, the project progresses at a speed of approximately 500 feet per day and thus the disturbance to any individual stretch of beach will be short lived.

- **Based on a retrospective of Phase I, were any mistakes made and what are the plans for avoidance this round? Specifically, was sand pumped in the last time lost and, if so, is anything being done differently this time to improve the longevity?**

Phase one was a tremendous success and the Bridgehampton and Sagaponack beaches were awarded the best restored beach by the American shore and beach preservation association in 2017 based upon the superior performance. Therefore, the project design will continue as before. However, we have adjusted the bidding process to allow for construction in either 2024 or the winter of 2025 based upon pricing (for example bond rates). We are also structuring the bid in a way that will enable us to choose the maximum amount of sand that can be purchased within our budget and design criteria.

- **Were possible alternative modes of financing to tax assessments explored (e.g., federal and state grants)?**

The completed project is considered a municipal facility. Therefore, it is covered by the Federal Emergency Management agency, FEMA, in the event of a federally declared emergency. There was a national emergency declared following the January 2023 coastal storms for which the town of Southampton applied for reimbursement. The Town's consultants, Coastal Science and Engineering of South Carolina and First Coastal of Westhampton have completed their initial surveys and will be calculating the amount of sand that could be potentially covered under the FEMA declaration.

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Why doesn't the project include dune restoration?

Dune restoration is accomplished via windblown sand from the wide sandy beach into the dune. In the last decade, both Sagaponack and Bridgehampton have experienced significant dune growth as a result of windblown sand. Our monitoring data indicates that the dunes have accumulated 365,000 cubic yards of sand in Sagaponack and 312,000 cubic yards of sand in Bridgehampton. Thus, beach nourishment is building dunes.

What if the project is wiped out by a major storm like Sandy?

The restored beach is a municipal facility in the eyes of FEMA. Therefore, if it is damaged in a coastal storm such as Sandy, the Town would be eligible for disaster assistance from both FEMA and New York State. This occurred in January 2023 and the town has filed for disaster assistance. The same would be true for future storms provided that the beach erosion control district maintains the beach according to the project design.

What is the permit approval process?

The project requires approval from federal, state and local agencies including the US Army Corps of Engineers, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, New York State Coastal Management, New York State Office of General Services, Southampton Town Trustees, and Southampton Town Coastal Erosion. The permit process was started this summer and public notices are either presently pending or actively underway. It is anticipated that the permits will be issued by January 2024.

What about sea level rise?

Adding sand to the beach will enable the beach to keep pace with sea level rise with a natural and flexible sandy beach and dune. Beach restoration using compatible beach sand is the preferred method of responding to sea level rise because it mimics the natural process. Beach restoration is a natural and nature based method widely employed throughout the sandy shorelines of the United States.