

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – October 22 Print Edition

Hurricane Isabel Causes Little Damage and Disruption to Emerald Isle

The Town of Emerald Isle was extremely fortunate to escape the wrath of Hurricane Isabel with only minor damage to structures and slight inconveniences for our residents and property owners. The Town found itself on the less powerful western side of the hurricane, and experienced only tropical storm force winds during the storm.

Approximately 150 structures suffered “minor” damage, mostly in the form of lost shingles or vinyl siding. There was no significant beach erosion, and some areas of the beach actually gained sand. Threatened homes at the Point fared relatively well, thanks to the continued protection provided by sandbags holding back the encroaching Bogue Inlet navigation channel. Tree damage was moderate, and the Town’s Public Works Department was able to remove most of the tree debris within a few weeks after the storm.

The Town’s costs to prepare for and respond to Hurricane Isabel were relatively minor, and the Town expects to receive reimbursement from FEMA and the State of NC for the approximately \$60,000 worth of expense and damage associated with Hurricane Isabel.

Hurricane Re-Entry Passes

An approaching hurricane always results in many requests for Hurricane Re-Entry Passes. Hurricane Isabel was no exception, and there were many long lines in the days preceding the storm’s arrival. In order to help our residents and property owners save time, and to provide for a more orderly evacuation and re-entry, the Town implemented a new policy for re-entry passes in 1999.

All property owners of record in 1999 were issued one PERMANENT re-entry pass. All re-entry passes are PERMANENT passes to be used over and over for different storms, and are issued by PROPERTY and not by owner. It is important that the property owner store the re-entry pass in a safe place along with other important documents so it can be easily retrieved when needed for the next storm. This pass is designed to be transferable when property is conveyed to a new owner, and it is important for the seller of a property to convey the re-entry pass to the buyer at the real estate closing.

Additional or replacement re-entry passes are available at Town Hall at any time during normal business hours. Re-entry passes are also available by mail, and property owners are encouraged to call Town Hall (252-354-3424) first for instructions on the mail option. Please don’t wait until the next hurricane is approaching! The Town encourages residents and property owners to secure a re-entry pass now in order to avoid delay and uncertainty when the next hurricane is approaching. Please note that Town policy requires a \$25 fee for additional or replacement re-entry passes. (The initial pass was issued free of charge. The Town has very detailed records on the issuance of these passes going back to 1999.) New construction is entitled to one fee re-entry pass.

Building Inspector Jim Taylor Assists Town of Nags Head with Recovery

Because the Town was fortunate to avoid significant damage, Building Inspector Jim Taylor was dispatched to the Town of Nags Head to provide immediate post-storm assistance. The Town of Nags Head requested coastal building inspectors through the NC Emergency Management coordination center, and the Town of Emerald Isle was happy to be able to assist them in their time of need.

Jim worked in Nags Head from Saturday, September 20 to Thursday, September 25, assisting with damage and reconstruction assessments. Jim can attest to just how fortunate Emerald Isle was to avoid the brunt of Hurricane Isabel after working in and among the destruction in Nags Head. The Town of Emerald Isle extends a special thanks to

Jim for his willingness to lend a valuable hand to one of our sister communities. Let's hope we don't need the favor returned anytime soon!

Fire Chief Bill Walker Helps Carteret County Down East

Fire Chief Bill Walker, who also doubles as the Town's emergency management expert, assisted the Carteret County Emergency Management office by helping to coordinate disaster relief in the Down East communities after the storm. Chief Walker worked from Thursday, September 25 to Sunday, September 28 to help make sure needed supplies were obtained for the various communities Down East. The Town was happy to lend Chief Walker to the County to help with the recovery efforts, and thanks him for his willingness to assist those Down East.

Update – Bogue Inlet Channel Relocation / Western Beach Nourishment

The Town's consulting firm, Coastal Planning & Engineering (CPE), distributed the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement to the members of the Project Development Team in late September. The Project Development Team consists of Town representatives, federal and state permitting agency representatives, property owners, and other stakeholders, and has been meeting for more than a year to provide input on the project. The Preliminary Draft EIS was issued first to the Project Development Team in order to hopefully facilitate a smoother review process in later stages of the EIS process.

The release of the Preliminary Draft EIS is a key accomplishment for the Bogue Inlet Channel Relocation Project, and is a precursor to the initiation of the formal federal EIS process, which will begin in November with the issuance of the official Draft EIS. Federally mandated timetables for agency and public input will begin at that time, and the process will eventually work through to the Final EIS and a Record of Decision from the US Army Corps of Engineers. Assuming a favorable Record of Decision, the Town is on schedule to have all federal and state permits for the project by late August 2004.

Project construction is scheduled to occur between November 2004 and March 2005, and would involve the relocation of the Bogue Inlet navigation channel approximately 3,000 linear feet west of its current location. The spoil material from the new channel would be used to nourish approximately 4.0 miles of the oceanfront beaches between Spinnaker's Reach subdivision and the 6800 block (near Pinta Drive), and to construct a sand dike to divert flows into the new channel.

Update – Bogue Banks Water Corporation's New Elevated Water Storage Tank

The Town has worked closely with Bogue Banks Water Corporation and Moffatt & Nichol Engineers (Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project consultants) to gain approval from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund to place Bogue Banks' new elevated water storage tank on the southeastern fringe of the Emerald Isle Woods Park site.

The proposed location of the new tank is on a 1.1 acre area on the north side of Coast Guard Road approximately 300 feet east of Sea Dunes Drive, and approximately 250 feet west of the Osprey Ridge subdivision. The new tank would be located approximately 100 feet off of Coast Guard Road. This site has been carefully chosen to avoid any negative impacts on the Coast Guard Road Storm Water Project and the Emerald Isle Woods project, and to minimize impacts on adjacent residential properties.

The new tank will be approximately 140 feet tall, and will look identical to the two existing elevated water tanks in Emerald Isle. (Both of the existing tanks are also approximately 140 feet tall.) The new water tank will certainly be visible on the Emerald Isle skyline, however, the proposed tank location has been chosen specifically to maintain a natural vegetated buffer around the entire base of the tank. After construction, the minimum buffer between the base of the tank and Coast Guard Road will be at least 25 feet, and attempts will be made to increase that buffer area. The minimum buffer on the east (Osprey Ridge) side of the tank will be at least 150 feet, and attempts will also be made to

increase that area.

The proposed location at Emerald Isle Woods requires approval from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund because the Emerald Isle Woods parcel was purchased partially with grant funding from the Trust Fund. The Town has identified 3 replacement parcels that can be acquired and preserved in exchange for permission to use the Emerald Isle Woods site for the new elevated water storage tank, and has submitted a formal request to the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund Board of Trustees for consideration at their October 20 meeting. If the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund approves the Town's request, the request will then go to the NC Council of State for final approval in early November. The Town has worked hard to address the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund's concerns, and we are hopeful that this request will be approved, thus paving the way for the location of the new tank at Emerald Isle Woods.

If the Town's request is denied, Bogue Banks Water Corporation will pursue its original plan to construct a new elevated water storage tank in Ocean Oaks subdivision unless another suitable alternative is identified.