

Emerald Tidings / Island Review – May 21 Print Edition

Town Board Adopts New Ordinance to Protect Frontal Dunes

At its April 8 meeting, the Board of Commissioners approved a new ordinance to protect frontal dunes. The new ordinance prohibits the traversing of frontal dunes except at designated access points and for authorized activities (planting vegetation, constructing walkways, scientific research, etc.). The new ordinance is intended to preserve the functional, aesthetic, and environmental benefits of a strong, healthy frontal dune line.

The penalty for violating the new ordinance is \$100.00. The Town will be placing signs directing people to stay off of the frontal dunes, and these new signs will also indicate the \$100.00 penalty. The Town's signs will be installed at public access locations, however, private property owners can also purchase the same signs for placement on the frontal dunes on their property. Please contact the Town's Parks and Recreation Department at 354-6350 for more information about signs.

The beach dunes are our first line of defense against storms, provide valuable habitat, and also contribute to the pleasing beach experience on Emerald Isle's beautiful beaches. Please help us take care of them!

Public Access Walkways to Be Reconstructed on East End

The Town is currently reconstructing wooden walkways over the new dunes that were built during the beach nourishment project on the eastern end of Town. The new dune line has caused a total of 17 public access points to be difficult to cross. In order to provide for easy public access to the beach, and also to preserve the new dunes, the Town is reconstructing those public wooden walkways that were buried by the new dune line and constructing new walkways over the new dune line in other locations that did not previously have a wooden walkway.

Public access points between 8th Street and the Eastern Ocean Regional Access are included in the scope of this project. The budget for this project is \$51,000, with necessary funds allocated from the beach nourishment bond proceeds. The reconstructed / new walkways should be completed in May 2003 before the height of the summer tourism season.

Update – NC 58 Sidewalk Project

The NC 58 Sidewalk Project, which will construct a new 5 ft. / 6 ft. sidewalk from the new Sea Oats Village shopping center on Bogue Inlet Drive to NC 58, and then east to Live Oak Street, is scheduled for construction in May 2003.

The project involves the construction of approximately 1,500 linear ft. of new sidewalk on the east side of Bogue Inlet Drive and the north side of NC 58. The project was initially scheduled for construction in March / April, however, permitting delays with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) caused the project schedule to slip. Construction is scheduled to be complete before Memorial Day weekend.

This project is funded by a grant from NCDOT and Town funds received from previous year's Powell Bill (gas tax) distributions from the State.

Town Awarded Grant for New Bicycle Path

The Town has been awarded a Transportation Enhancement Grant from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for the construction of a 10-foot wide asphalt bicycle path along NC 58. NCDOT has awarded the Town \$104,160, which will be matched with \$26,040 from the Town for a total project budget of \$130,200.

The new bicycle path will run on the expansive right-of-way along the south side of NC 58 from Merchant's Park to the Coast Guard Road intersection. The new bicycle path will wind over the existing topography and through existing trees, and will provide an alternative, safe route for bicyclists, walkers, and runners to travel to businesses and neighborhoods along NC 58, or simply provide another safe alternative for a productive exercise session.

Grant funds will be available in October 2003, and the Town hopes to construct the new bicycle path during the winter / spring of 2004 so that the new bicycle path is usable for the 2004 summer season.

This bicycle path project, along with the NC 58 sidewalk under construction in May 2003, are the first two projects in a multi-phase plan to provide sidewalks and bicycle paths in various areas of Emerald Isle. The Town will continue to seek grant funding for other projects, and will tackle these projects as funds are available.

Reminder – New Solid Waste Program in Effect May 26

Effective May 26, the Town will require all housing units to utilize standard 65-gallon or 95-gallon trash containers. Solid waste "racks" are no longer permitted on the public right-of-way, and trash containers and racks (if you choose to keep your rack) must now be stored 30 feet back from the front property line or adjacent to the structure. Trash containers must be rolled to the street prior to collection, and rolled back to the house after collection.

All solid waste racks must be removed from the public right-of-way by June 15 or they will be removed by Town crews and discarded. Residents and property owners are encouraged to break down the racks prior to June 15 and place them at the street prior to the regular trash collection day, when they will be picked up with the regular trash. The Town has also established a special dumpster specifically for discarded solid waste racks. This dumpster is located behind Fire Station #1 at the Town Hall Complex. Residents and property owners are encouraged to dispose of their racks at this dumpster at any time if they so choose.

Please contact Town Hall at 354-3424 with additional questions about the new solid waste program.

Tips from the Planning and Inspections Department Spring Cleaning For Your Yard

There are many vegetative items you can trim or remove without a permit. Choking vines, noxious plants, undergrowth, trees with a trunk diameter less than 4" (measured at 3' above grade), tree branches, and bushes. Removal of canopy undergrowth will promote healthy growth of the more mature and secondary trees.

Trees with a trunk diameter of more than 4" will require a permit. Denuding large areas of vegetation will require a site visit and permit. There is no cost involved with the permit; just call the Planning and Inspections Department and schedule a site visit. Always mark the tree(s) in question for the inspector so there is no question which tree or trees are to be removed. Please note that tree trunks over 5" in diameter will not be picked up by the Town. Property owners must have the tree service who did the cutting remove the tree debris, or if you performed the cutting yourself, you will be responsible for disposing of the tree debris.