Update From the acting Town Manager

 12/11/2012

The Ruddertowne construction project has been receiving a good bit of attention lately, and based on public input I’ve received from the Town, I wanted to circulate an update to keep the public informed as to what is occurring with the project.

* I have carefully reviewed the MAR and any related documents to include the *old zoning code* as well as the *Comprehensive Development Plan.*
* I worked with the Town’s attorney, the Mayor and commissioners to define the parties’ obligations.
* I recommended and the council approved the retaining of an engineering firm to provide oversight of the project. The Town approved a budget of $10k for the project that will be taken from the $480k building permit monies that the Town received from DBE.
* One of the many reasons the engineering firm was retained is that not only is this project massive, it was also fraught with litigation; there are contractual obligations that must be adhered to by the parties as well.
* After the engineering firm becomes familiarized with the project I will be setting up monthly meetings to keep the process on track. I will be preparing a monthly report that will be circulated. I will invite the Mayor and or a commissioner to attend any and all meetings with the engineer.
* I set up a regular meeting schedule with the partners from DBE so we have a way to communicate without everything going through the lawyers. Keep in mind I am not authorized to change or alter the MAR.
* During our Town Council meeting, many questions were asked about the fact that DBE has applied to construct a pier, marina and expand the beach area. The Mayor and I met with DBE to get a much better understanding of what they are trying to do.

Here are a few items that will be occurring in the coming weeks

1. I will be meeting with our engineering team on Monday Dec 17th to discuss the project and to sign the contract. We will not be billed for this meeting. Jim Dedes will join me, Jim has been directly involved, has the trust of the commissioners, and was formally a member of the Town’s Planning and Zoning board. The Mayor has also been invited to attend the meeting.
2. The Town Council is requesting DNREC and other appropriate state agencies to conduct a Public Hearing to formally present their plans for the pier, marina and an expanded beach area that they are requesting. We have asked and DNREC has agreed to hold the meeting on the Ruddertowne site so it is convenient to our citizens while at the same time allows the Town to better visualize the contemplated area. I will post on the Town’s website the date of the date of Public Hearing once it has been scheduled. Attending the Hearing will be an excellent time to let your voice be heard. In the event you are not able to attend forward your thoughts to the Mayor and commissioners
3. This week I will be setting up a link on our website that I will use to disseminate information. I will immediately put on the operative documents to include The MAR, The old zoning code and the Comprehensive Development Plan on the link. As critical issues, meetings and updates occur I will populate the website.

Lastly, I am aware that those in our community who were opposed to this project may feel bitter and or betrayed by the process. In spite of this,

I am aware of my fiduciary responsibilities. I am aware there is an ongoing lawsuit and the Town has contractual obligations per the MAR. My personal feelings about the project and its impact on the Town have no bearing on how I fulfill my obligations as acting Town Manager.

I receive, am copied and or forwarded many questions, concerns and demands. Many are helpful and I try to incorporate them into my priorities.

 I try to respond to all; however this may not be possible or practical due to the many demands placed on my position. I will make sure the Mayor is forwarded on correspondences sent to my office; significant information will be disseminated by the Mayor to all commissioners.

I look forward to helping the Town fulfill the letter and spirit of our contractual obligations per the MAR in a way that protects and benefits the Town’s interest.

Thank you very much

Marc Appelbaum

Acting Town Manager Dewey Beach