

TOWN CRIER

This is the 10th issue of what will be a periodic communication to the citizens of Cape Charles. John Burdiss is solely responsible for the content.

Topics addressed in this issue (February 13, 2008) are:

1. Town Harbor redevelopment master plan
2. Other matters on the agenda at the 2/12/08 meeting
3. Dave Burden will be here next week - constituents are invited
4. Northampton County - benefits and impediments to Cape Charles
5. Follow up on some topics addressed in previous issues

Council unanimously approves town harbor redevelopment plan

After considerable input from citizens, work by staff members (particularly Harbormaster Smitty Dize), consultation with the Virginia Port Authority (“VPA”), specific guidance by a consultant hired for this purpose, and analysis by council and the mayor, the proposed plan was approved. The plan is multi-phased and ultimately entails the prospective expenditure of over \$5 million. Phase 1 is estimated to cost about \$2.1 million, including: engineering, design & permitting; construction of a breakwater and 44 floating commercial slips; utilities; and restrooms. The area involved in this project is the “north dock” – which is just west of the boat ramps at the harbor. The entire project is intended to ultimately include, among other things, a renovation of the existing inner harbor area installing more compact, floating docks for recreational users. Also included in the prospective plans is the construction of a much needed, widely beneficial breakwater at the mouth of the town harbor.

The funding for this project will come from grants, town matching funds and possibly borrowing, if needed to allow timely town contributions to the project, to be repaid from the revenues from the slip rentals and other income. There are and have been about 50 persons on the waiting list for slips, so the demand appears to be substantial and the entire project is certainly in concert with the overall development scheme for the entire harbor area and the town’s comprehensive plan.

Other matters on the 2/12/08 agenda

Council unanimously approved:

- Authorizing the Mayor to execute a \$41k contract to complete Phase 1 of the gazebo construction in Central Park; with \$19k coming from the Citizens for Central Park group
- Authorizing the Mayor to sign a grant application for potential funding from the Virginia Port Authority to aid in the aforementioned town harbor redevelopment master plan
- A new schedule providing for increases in town harbor slip rental fees & wharfage rates
- Destruction of records to conform with the ongoing and long overdue process of organizing town records, winnowing out unneeded ones, with the occasional bonus of finding excellent historic documentation that is useful today

County Supervisor Dave Burden will be here · you are invited!

If you have never attended one of my constituents’ meetings, here’s a good reason to show up. Dave has graciously agreed to come & speak with us, answer questions & observe your interest in town matters, too. Mark your calendars & come on down! (See details – time & place below.)

Northampton County – benefits and impediments to Cape Charles

As addressed in the Town Crier, Special Edition (01/31/2008) and as corroborated by statistics shared with the public by the Town Manager, taxpayers in Cape Charles are paying an increasingly high portion of the total real estate taxes received by Northampton County.

Sometimes our citizens lose site of the many services provided by the County for the benefit of all citizens – schools, jail, court system, social services, to name a few. I will ask the Mayor to invite a County official to future town council meetings to elaborate on the costs & benefits involved in his/her department and mandates required so we can get a better understanding of why each area exists and how it functions. For example, we might hear from the Superintendent of Schools, the Sheriff, and so on. These presentations can & should become a regular part of our agenda (not necessarily at each town council meeting) but certainly on a frequency that would allow our citizens to become more informed & stay in the know. [In that vein, Supervisors please change your meeting back to Monday or another night; our citizens (including council members when needed) cannot attend our council meetings & your meetings now on the 2nd Tuesday, too.]

The County and the Town need to work cooperatively to avoid duplication of services and the attendant costs of such duplication to all citizens. Duplication or not, there needs to be coordination of spending on mutually beneficial programs & projects. Areas of public health & safety seem to be obvious choices for this focus. This would include the gamut of recreational/social activities for youth & seniors, to law enforcement and regional water & sewer.

In regard to regional water & sewer, the County must balance its desire to control (some would argue to impede) growth, against the financial & environmental benefits of a regional water and sewer system. Failure by the County to support this concept will only exacerbate the continuing burden placed on towns – especially Cape Charles. Without County participation & financial support, Cape Charles will be compelled to fund & operate a system which will have limited users, leaving other less developed towns & areas to rely upon wells and septic. Further, the double whammy is that with development logically only occurring where the system exists, Cape Charles' R/E values will continue to grow faster than areas/towns without such systems; which of course means taxpayers in Cape Charles will pay an ever increasing share of County taxes.

I have been informed that Councilmen Brown & Dudley don't intend to seek reelection; Evans is undecided. Thanks to each of these men for their service; I encourage each of you to make a difference as these men have done. To do so you must file your candidacy papers by March 5th, or at a minimum encourage those whom you think will make good council members to do so.

Apparently peace has been achieved between the Fire Co. and the Citizens for Central Park group; however, this year's Renovators' Ball will be held at the STIP building. I have also heard that the president of the Fire Co. indicates that the CCVFC will work with other groups on projects beneficial to the town; and the Fire Co. even mentioned the idea of having a picnic with the park group at Central Park. I am elated to hear that progress has been made; this cooperation and attitude will go a long way to engendering town and broader citizen support for the Fire Co.

Finally, I have been told that the CCPD has begun to routinely and uniformly ticket owners of boats and trailers parked in violation of an existing ordinance. I continue to encourage the CCPD to enforce all existing ordinances and laws in a consistent and even handed manner.

My office is at 117 Mason Ave., Suite E (next to Kelly's Pub) - 5:15 – 6:15 PM on Tuesday, February 19th. This is your opportunity to come, voice opinions, ask questions and learn more about what your Town government and your Council are doing to honor our duty to you by always striving to serve the best interests of the Town with each action we take. ***Please come; we will all benefit.*** Your responses and/or inquiries to anything in the Town Crier or about "Town" business are welcome at johnburdiss@baycrk.net