

May 2, 2019

Dear Edisto Beachfront Neighbors,

Edisto Beach has a serious threat coming its way and this time it is not a hurricane.

You recently received a letter from the Council of the Town Of Edisto Beach, (TOEB), presenting a Federal Government beach re-nourishment program. **The intent of the referenced letter, explanation and photos is to lead one to believe this program could not possibly be anything but a positive, free federal government gift to protect and re-nourish Edisto Beach.**

Let's talk specifically about what we know and what we do not know.

What we factually know:

- 1) All beachfront property owners are being asked to grant an easement of arguably the most valuable swath of their property to the TOEB Government FOREVER.
- 2) Paramount to understanding what is at stake is the reality that this easement that you are being asked to grant is an irrevocable, perpetual easement. Any knowledgeable attorney will confirm for you that a perpetual easement agreement runs with your property FOREVER.
- 3) While the mechanism for said control is an easement granted from the property owner to TOEB, the rights granted in that easement will be effectively assigned to the Federal Government. **In fact, the specific language in the easement agreement you are being asked to sign came directly from the Federal Government and its lawyers.**
- 4) We are not able to provide you with the specific legal details regarding the obligations of the Federal Government after you grant them control of your property. In fact, this information is not available because TOEB has refused to release a copy of the contract by and between TOEB and the Federal Government to us. **This should be of grave concern, as we are being asked to grant rights to our**

property to the Federal Government without details as to what their obligations are to us.

- 5) What we do know about the Federal Government's obligation to us as property owners and TOEB, is their unequivocal position that **there are no guarantees as to any future funding.**

In summary, beachfront property owners are being asked to grant FOREVER a piece of their property upon which will be constructed a sand dune at the height of 14 or 15-feet-above-mean-sea-level with no guarantee that any future funding of the beach re-nourishment will ever be realized.

In deference to TOEB's position that there are only 3 other options, there are, potentially multiple other options as to how Edisto Beach can fund future re-nourishments of its beaches, which have not been pursued.

As always, it is what we do **not** know that should also be of great concern to us.

These are just a few of the unknowns/unanswered questions:

- 1) Can the TOEB provide an irrevocable guarantee to the beachfront property owner a private, perpetual and direct access across the proposed berm to the beach from their property? Will the TOEB, another SC state agency or the Federal Government be able to rescind the beachfront property owner's direct access to the beach from their property?
- 2) How will a 14 or 15-feet-above-sea-level dune obstruct the view of each beachfront property owner's direct sightline? The extent of this, of course, is dependent upon which code your specific home was built. Typically, older homes are lower and would have a more obstructed view. **This is a known: Make no mistake your view will be obstructed and substantially altered. Aren't "view and access" the reasons why the value of your property is premium and why beachfront property owners' property taxes are the highest?**

- 3) Who will be responsible for the design, specifications, permitting, construction and maintenance of the boardwalk, ladders, crossover platform and vegetation of said beach access?
- 4) Will vegetation of such heights be planted as to completely block the view? Who will plant and maintain the vegetation and dune fencing? With the dune height being 14 or 15 feet-above-sea-level, what will the height of the vegetation on top of the dune be? **As the vegetation matures, at some point in the future will the property owner be unable to see the beach and ocean at all?**
- 5) To the extent beachfront property values are decreased, as a result of diminished view, and/or lack of/ease of access, who will compensate the property owner? **HOW DOES THIS NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT OUR PROPERTY VALUES?**
- 6) With the addition of a new 14 or 15-feet-above-sea-level dune in the event of a storm of significant strength which breaches this dune and pushes even more sand under houses and into the street, who will bear the expense of that sand removal and restoration? Additionally, since there will be, potentially, 187 private boardwalks and 33 public boardwalks which traverse the dune, in the event of a storm which destroys these structures, who will be responsible for the astronomical amount of wood debris which will be washed onto the properties and streets?

These are only a few of the unanswered questions.

Obviously, we all love Edisto and want a healthy, and when required, re-nourished beach. There is no dispute regarding that. The question is how, and at what cost?

There are other ways to fund beach re-nourishment without giving up control of our beach and property. Since there is no promise of future funding, why is the leadership of Edisto moving so quickly and decisively, with little public discussion? This is, in fact, the biggest and most impactful decision Edisto Beach has ever made. THE FEDERAL PLAN IS IRREVERSIBLE.

The effects are not exclusive to beachfront property owners. Longtime renters have been inquiring of this project, expressing their deep concern and have said they would have no problem paying extra to avoid the drastic change to Edisto Beach. The potential economic impact of this program will create a domino effect beyond beachfront property owners, to businesses, tourism and the way of life for Edisto Beach.

PLEASE, DO NOT SIGN THIS EASEMENT AGREEMENT.

**Please educate yourself further by visiting our friends at:
www.nobeachwall.com .**

**Respectfully Submitted,
Edisto Beach Neighbors**