



THE KEYS BREEZE

Issue Number 4

April 1983

EMERGENCY DREDGING

As we all, especially the boaters, know, winter rains bring silt down the Arundell Barranca, and a significant bottom obstruction had built up over the past three years. Efforts of the Port District to get approval for disposal of the silt to be dredged from this spot were "in process," but had not been completed by January 1983. If the normal course of action to await approval of all agencies were to be followed, when approval would finally be received, the grunion and least tern nesting seasons would be upon us and dredging of the Keys entrance channel would not then be possible. It was a quandry.

Many Keys residents have been working from every possible angle to effect immediate and long-range solutions to this dilemma. The Keys Association, spearheaded by Joe Reynolds, Byron Lawler and John Gray, met on numerous occasions with City and Port District personnel, but silt disposition was still the major obstacle.

John Trahan donated time, energy, and his boat to take a very accurate sounding profile of the channel at low tide. It was discovered that the channel was so blocked after a series of recent rainstorms that it could well be impossible for the City Fireboat to use the channel on the way to a fire in the Keys. This information was disclosed at a special meeting of Jim Clark's Port District Advisory Committee. The City Manager, upon learning of the situation, took immediate action to notify the District of the emergency. Many Keys residents, among whom were Joel Martin and Bud Whitehead, wrote letters to the District expressing grave concern with the situation. A most receptive Port District General Manager, Richard Parsons, now had the ammunition he needed. He went to the Coastal Commission and got emergency approval for the dredging to commence immediately.

Will this solution work next time, or will we be back at the same old impasse? Tune in next year.

(Thanks, Jim Clark, for your contributions to this article.)

LEGAL MODIFICATIONS

By H. A. Mylander, Art Jury

PURPOSE

This item is released to give general information concerning the city requirements related to new construction and modifications of any structure on an owner's lot after the original residence has been built and approved.

HOW TO START

A building permit is required prior to the start of construction. Plans must be submitted for review by the Planning Division before the permit can be issued. These plans must contain a plot plan, drawn to a readable scale, showing the set backs (the area required between property lines and structures) and the location of the proposed construction. Submit plans to Building and Safety Division, City Hall, 501 Poli Street, Room 120; office is open 8 - 1 and 4 - 5 weekdays. A fee is charged for plan review, and it is the intent of this review that property values are maintained and views are not obstructed. A copy of these plans should be presented to the Keys Art Jury at the same time to assure conformity to the CC&Rs that pass with the land.

HOW TO OBTAIN APPROVAL

Since most homes in the Ventura Keys area were originally built to the maximum lot coverage and set backs, it may be necessary to obtain a modification from the Modification Committee (a sub-committee of the City Planning Commission). This modification procedure is to allow the city to "bend the rules" for a specific property and to enhance the property values. A fee is required for this approval to cover the cost of notifying the property owners within a 300-foot radius of the subject property. Generally a public hearing is required; however, minor improvements may obtain administrative approval.

ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTY

Failure to comply with the City Ordinance Code requirements may result in court action. Violations of the Ordinance Code are misdemeanors. Each day that the violation is committed, permitted or continued constitutes a prosecutable offense. The maximum penalty for each conviction of a misdemeanor is a \$500 fine and/or six (6) months imprisonment.

Illegal construction (both new and modifications) may be spotted by the City Inspector of the Building and Safety Division or by a complaint from a resident who is having his view impaired or fears a loss of property

value. Complaints may be filed with City Hall, Building and Safety Division, Room 120; City Hall, City Ordinance Enforcement Section, Room 120; any officer or board member of the Ventura Keys Association; any member of the Ventura Keys Art Jury. A half dozen or more complaints are under investigation at present. During the investigation the Code Enforcement Section will advise the violator to submit plans for review and approval; otherwise the matter will be referred to the City Attorney's Office with a recommendation that a criminal complaint be filed.

GENERAL MEETING

To afford everyone living in the Ventura Keys an opportunity to discuss this whole matter, a meeting room has been reserved at City Hall where we may do this with responsible people from City Hall and our own organization. Paul Berlant, Director of Community Development; Ann Prinz, Code Enforcement Section, Planning Division; representatives from the Art Jury; and officers of VKA will be present.

If you plan to make modifications legally and "by the book" and feel the above did not cover everything, or if you have a complaint that needs attention, please bring the matter to the meeting. Perhaps an exchange of ideas between interested parties in the proper atmosphere might avoid costly misunderstandings.

TIME: 7:30 P.M., 4 May 1983

PLACE: City Hall, First Floor, Conference Room "B"

A NOTE FROM PRESIDENT AND BEACHMASTER CHUCK WITHERS

The directors of your association hope to maximize the enjoyment of our parks by all of you members. In order to avoid expense on facilities which would not be heavily used, please let us know if your family would welcome (probably use):

- (1) A volleyball court at the Beachmont Park
- (2) Coin operated lights for the paddle tennis courts
- (3) Paddle tennis tournaments
- (4) A special sports day with paddle tennis, basketball, water races, and other events (as suggested by Danny Stiles in a letter to the newsletter several months ago)
- (5) Other improvements or ideas.

Respond by mail to Ventura Keys Association, P.O. Box 1086, Ventura, CA 93002 or drop a note in the Beachmaster's box near the paddle tennis court. Please indicate interest and age group (adult, high school, younger).

AREA COALITION

By Jim Clark

Late in 1982, when the sandbar was threatening to block access from the sea to the Harbor a group of Harbor merchants, concerned that such occurrence would block their means of earning a livelihood, presented a spirited and eloquent plea to the Port District for immediate action. The Port District staff and Commission - having recently undergone a substantial change in personnel - were quite receptive to the arguments; however, they were under prior mandates to proceed in a rather circumscribed and time-consuming manner. As the chairman of the Port District Advisory Committee, which had been holding hearings on the same subject for more than two years and advising the District to get on with the dredging post haste, I realized that it might not be apparent to all that the number of people concerned about this problem was quite large. Having, over the years, presented what I thought were compelling arguments and gotten insufficient action to prevent the problem, I approached the merchants, the VKA, the Pierpont Bay Association, and the Mobilehome Park residents with the thought that a united front of all in the area could generate enough clout and demonstrate widespread concern enough to focus top management attention on obtaining an immediate solution.

All groups so invited recognized the problem, cooperated, and a presentation was made at an emergency meeting of the Port District. Sufficient ammunition was made available to the District for it to support emergency action to get the wheels rolling and get the dredge up here to take care of the problem until the regularly scheduled dredging commenced this March.

In all fairness to the current District management, it must be said that there is a willingness to anticipate problems and come up with timely solutions. Viable solutions and a broad-based community support, though, are necessary to help the District push through the impediments imposed by current bureaucratic constraints.

Subsequent to the solution of this immediate problem, it was considered that there do exist now, and will in the future be, problems or conditions that may only affect one segment of the beach community directly, but whose solution would indirectly benefit all. Witness the beach erosion at Pierpont, traffic congestion in the Keys, public transportation to the whole area, Harbor and Keys channel maintenance, and other matters of general community concern. What one spokesman, or group, speaks with enough clout to any regulatory or legislative body to merit attention? Also, in the past various elements of the whole were working at cross purposes. Elected and appointed officials

did not know to whom to listen. It was time-consuming for them to have to listen to, and explain to, many differing organizations about a particular situation.

Therefore, since it had worked once, the Beach Enterprises & Area Coalition of Households (BEACH) was thought of as a way to formulate a united front on issues of concern. All prior neighborhood or interest organizations could maintain their integrity, but work through this group to present their case to outside governmental bodies. Enough of the electorate would be represented to carry substantial weight. Issues could be resolved internally within BEACH so that our various elected officials would know the genuine concern of a large segment of the electorate and respond to it. Time and effort should be saved on all sides.

An initial meeting was held on March 2 to begin formulation of the BEACH as a viable body. All groups previously mentioned, as well as a representative from the possibly to be reformed Portobello Maintenance District, were present. The general concept was discussed, referred to the individual organizations for comment and approval, and a follow-up meeting was scheduled in early April. We have yet much to do, but the prospects for success have never been greater. Hopefully, an organization large enough to significantly make its presence felt will be operable in time to influence the candidates in this fall's elections.

Editor's Note: Chuck Withers and Dennis Trenten represented the Ventura Keys Association at the March 2 meeting and reported their reactions at the March Board meeting. The Keys Board unanimously agreed with the concept of BEACH and will support its future efforts.

1983 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

That time of year is upon us - property owners will soon be receiving 1983 VKA dues notices. As we have mentioned in previous issues, this dues money is our only source of funding to perform the duties required by our CC&Rs, the major one being maintenance of our commonly owned beaches.

Many of you renters also consider the Keys home and may want to help maintain and improve your community by joining the association. If so, just send a check for \$15 to Ventura Keys Association, P.O. Box 1086, Ventura, CA 93002.

It would be helpful if everyone, especially absentee owners and those who prefer to pay their dues with business checks, would indicate their Keys property addresses on the checks. Thanks.

NOTES

- 2ND ANNUAL KEYS BARBECUE

Sunday, September 11 has been selected as the date for the 2nd Annual Keys Barbecue, so mark your calendars now. Last year it was held in August, but a number of people remarked that they would like to have come but were away on vacation. That excuse won't work this year because by September 11 people with school age children should be back from vacation, and those without children who like to vacation in the fall after the off-season rates take effect will not have left yet. See you at the barbecue!

- PORT DISTRICT LIAISON

Joe Reynolds, Byron Lawler, and John Gray, all past Board members and now alternates, are acting as liaison to the Port District on behalf of VKA. Joe reports that the Port District has been very cooperative and interested in the problem of dredging the Keys channel. Byron reports that the Port District is considering buying its own dredge or entering into a contract with an individual to do the harbor dredging on a regular basis. This dredge would then be available to clear the Keys entrance provided the silt disposal problem were resolved.

- MAILING LIST

We are continually attempting to update our mailing list and are hoping to get it automated soon. It is a particularly difficult task because we have so many owners who live elsewhere and either rent out their Keys property or use it as a vacation home. Please help us out by reporting any changes; if you don't, we will just keep on making the same mistakes.

- PORTOBELLO MAINTENANCE DISTRICT

Joe Reynolds reports that responses to the City survey of waterfront owners was generally positive, but many people requested more information. We will certainly keep you informed.

- BEACHMONT PARK IMPROVEMENTS

Chuck Withers has been working hard to improve the Beachmont Beach by fixing the paddle tennis court nets, installing a drinking fountain, and replacing the basketball backboard, among other things. Thanks, Chuck.

THE KEYS BREEZE is the bimonthly newsletter of the Ventura Keys Association. Direct news items, comments, and questions to Newsletter, Ventura Keys Association, Inc., Box 1086, Ventura, CA 93002. Editor: Sue Liserani (642-6867).