

From the Beach Committee

~*Kate Penn, Beach Chair*

Proposed Budget for FY2011:

For FY2011, the Beach Committee has proposed several projects in addition to regular maintenance expenses. The Budget Committee denied one project, and added two projects that the Beach Committee does not recommend at this time. Please come to the General Meeting on November 12th to hear more.

1. Installing a well with spigot at large pavilion, for \$5,000, was proposed by the Beach Committee. Running water at the large pavilion will make it easier to clean tables and the concrete floor before and after events. Although the water will not be treated, it will improve sanitation for those handling food, help us keep these areas free of bird droppings, and provide a quick rinse for sandy feet. A full shower is cost prohibitive, and swimmers must remember always to wash with soap and water after swimming.
2. The community may be asked to vote on the inclusion of an automatic gate opener at the beach entrance, at a cost of \$10,000. The Beach Committee advises against this feature, as it would not improve security and is an unnecessary expense at this time, when so much else is needed. When a person closes the gate, he or she can scan the parking lot and park to ensure it is empty. However, an automatic gate would close at the designated time, and those still inside would be free to leave whenever they want. The sort of security problems we experience at the beach are not stopped by the gate, but can be prevented by a continued presence of residents and security guards. We have had very few incidents since increasing security over the past couple years. With a regular team of volunteers opening and closing the gate, access is seldom a problem.
3. The community may be asked to vote on correcting the standing water problem at the pavilion, estimated at \$8,000. This problem is more than just an inconvenient wetness. Consider how high the bacteria levels are in the water after a rain storm, and then picture all that bacteria festering on our lawn, where we walk from the parking lot to the pavilion, play areas, and beach.
4. The community may be asked to vote to replace the large swing set. While this is an important improvement, the Beach Committee advises against any improvements in this part of the park until after the standing water problem is resolved. The excavation could disturb or even damage new equipment and surfacing and could even void a warranty.

The Beach Committee members have debated and discussed the merits of these projects and our ability to complete them in a timely fashion over the next year. Please consider our recommendations when you vote at the November General Meeting. You can direct any questions or comments to Kate Penn at beach@hillsmereshores.net. Details of the Beach Committee's proposed budget will be posted on the Hillsmere Shores Discussion forum; a link to that forum is provided at www.hillsmereshores.net.

Maintenance and Improvements:

The parking lot improvements and new fence have been completed; I hope you enjoy the new look. We delayed planting to ensure the excessive amount of water that was collecting in the gardens was properly managed. These are intended to be rain gardens, not storm water ponds, and further tweaking of the design was required so they will function as intended. After several severe rain storms, the design team was able to observe the garden sites and adjust the grade so that excess water flows through the site, rather than collecting at the gardens. As the plants mature, these two new gardens will function the same way as the one installed by the path several years ago.

(Continued on next page)

(Beach Committee continued)

All the plants are native Maryland species, and are both tolerant of wet soils and resistant to drought. They will provide an attractive filter for the rain water that washes down Hillsmere Drive before it enters the South River.

Shoreline Study:

Environmental Systems Analysis, Inc. (ESA) has completed the first phase of their contract, recording activity along the shoreline and off shore, as well as compiling historical data. ESA will be meeting with Beach Committee members to discuss observational data, and is also eager to hear from Hillsmere residents who have photos or historical information on storm activities that have affected our shoreline. If you have any information for our consultants that would assist with this data collection, please contact Kate Penn at beach@hillsmereshores.net or call with your contact information at 410-263-4456.