

THE RESIDENTS GROUP Pine Point



Proposal to the Town Council Adopted June 21, 2006 by the Residents Group

Pine Point Road Study 2006 Proposal

To the Honorable Members of the Scarborough Town Council:

We, the members of the Residents Group, Pine Point, respectfully request an audience with you for the purpose of proposing a Town study regarding the end of the Pine Point Rd. (officially called Depot Street). Our representatives have a presentation and proposal for your consideration which is summarized below.

In August of 2005 you met with our representatives in Council workshop and subsequently adopted our group's proposal for a special study committee to examine the issues surrounding the proposed land exchange at Depot Street. Invited to participate in that study were representatives from our group, owners of properties on both sides of Depot Street, abutters, Councilor O'Reilly, Mr. Owens and Town staff. From October 2005 to April of this year the committee discussed many issues and explored various designs for improvements to the public way. Mr. Owens coined the term "Ocean Gateway" which we used to describe a vision for what this area might become. The committee's work concluded last April when the owners of the motel withdrew their variance applications.

Midway through the committee's work, the vacant lot across the street from the motel went under contract and a residential subdivision received preliminary approval by the Planning Board just this month. Our group encouraged the developer to consider deeding some portion of the parcel for the Town's use - consistent with our goal of seeing the public way expanded. We've always felt that the abutters would benefit tremendously from public improvements at the shore, and the opportunity to do something outstanding depended, to some degree, of obtaining additional land. Mr. Hollis, in redesigning the subdivision, agreed and was able to use provisions in the ordinance which resulted in a proposed conveyance of **3,409 SF** of land to the Inhabitants of the Town of Scarborough. Furthermore, he proposed in his subdivision plan to construct, at his expense, a granite curbed, four-foot wide sidewalk from East Grand Avenue to this parcel should the Council approve it.

This is exciting news for the citizens of Scarborough. One of our group's goals throughout the past year was to contribute our ideas to a plan for this very valuable public area that would benefit both the private landowners and the citizens of Scarborough. Our group supported the conversion of the motel to condominiums, and embraced the concept of a proportional land exchange that would reasonably expand the public way for the benefit of the Town. Although the land exchange did not happen, this 3,409 SF parcel from the vacant lot is one major step toward achieving the goal of a safe, attractive, functional and accessible public area to Pine Point Beach. An "Ocean Gateway" vision that we hope you will embrace.

As you know, the barriers that have restricted access to Depot Street since 1989 were recently replaced with a different design which the Council approved on June 7th. While the new barrier is arguably more attractive than the orange barrels, we ask you to consider that aesthetics has been only one of our Group's concerns. Public access and recognition of this as a public street are of primary importance. We also want you to know that the new barrier does not conform to the plan you voted on.

We believe that the barriers could be replaced by a public way design that is:

- 1) Based on a careful study of the current traffic patterns there (the 1989 Council approval of the original barrier was recommended by the Bray Traffic Study)
- 2) Provides safe and equitable access by the public as well as motel guests accessing the parking area
- 3) Eliminates the long-held impression that Depot St. is private property behind a barrier which we feel discourages public use
- 4) Is an attractive design deserving of this highly visible public way to Pine Point Beach.
- 5) Provides free and accessible access for motorists with handicaps
- 6) Includes some green space, identified pedestrian and bicycle paths
- 7) Recognizes the seasonal changes in the use of this area

Since learning of the impending conveyance of 3,409 SF of land to the Town and proposed sidewalk construction by the developer, we believe that the timing is perfect to undertake this study and incorporate the new parcel. We propose the study include:

- 1) Examination of traffic patterns this summer (pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular, including parking procedures of the motel) so we do not have to wait another year to collect data.
- 2) Consideration of various road and green space designs based on these patterns guided by the goal of eliminating physical barriers to a public way (not unlike some of the work of the Special Committee).
- 3) Ideas for how the public can enjoy the use of the 3,409 parcel in the short term, and how that parcel can safely interface with Depot Street.
- 4) Consideration of longer-term concepts in anticipation of a potential land exchange with the motel, should it occur.

It is important, we feel, for the Town to be proactive in this. If we maintain status quo with the barrier, and do nothing with the 3,409 parcel until such time as a land exchange might occur, the citizens cannot fully enjoy the use of such valuable public property - the "gateway" to one our community's greatest resources. We are convinced that two excellent plans can emerge from this study; one that resolves the controversial barrier issue once and for all while incorporating a plan using the new property, and a 2nd plan with various design concepts that contemplates a future proportional land exchange with the hotel, should it occur. The first plan could be implemented for the summer of 2007, while the other would be ready for the future. We recommend that the study include composition of members similar to last year's study.

In closing, we would be grateful if the Council would permit us to present the idea of a study with support information we have collected and with additional arguments which we do not want to burden this letter with. We can provide more background should we be given the opportunity early this summer to address you through our representatives. If we are not able to meet prior to August 1st, we would suggest undertaking the traffic pattern study before the summer is over.

Thank you for your consideration.

Adopted by the Residents Group, Their Representatives

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