



Bethany CORC analyzes potential traffic build-up

By Ryan Saxton
Staff Reporter

On Thursday, Nov. 15, the Bethany Beach Charter and Ordinance Review Committee (CORC) took a look at a few issues around town, including concerns over congestion around the eastern end of Garfield Parkway and obstructions along public rights-of-way.

The problem with traffic congestion came before the committee in response to the ongoing redevelopment of the former Blue Surf Motel, which will feature 13 condominiums, 12 to 15 shops and two restaurants by the summer of 2008.

"We have a good number of deliveries in that area already," said Bethany Town Manager Cliff Gravier. "There are a lot of problems with drivers who pull up, park and are reluctant to move on."

"This is more than just an inconvenience," said Lonnie Moore. "It's a serious thought for our children."

Cyclists and pedestrians who already worry about traffic may have even more concerns one the Blue Surf begins to pull more flow to and from the soon-to-be-constructed building. Gravier proposed that delivery trucks be restricted to accessing the west side of Garfield Parkway street end area at specific times. Further discussion of appropriate measures was handed off to the Bethany Beach Town Council for consideration.

CORC members also discussed right-of-way issues beyond Garfield Parkway, on a town-wide scale.

"We have a substantial number of problems and issues, some as simple as mailboxes, some as complicated as people planting vegetable gardens in the right-of-way," said Gravier. "People are taking the right-of-way back from the town and using it for their personal purposes."

"Before we can go out and take a look at right-of-way issues, we need to establish some new grounds," Gravier added. "This isn't a problem that's going to go away for us."

Years ago, the town drew up a proposal for the town code with regard to residential right-of-ways, though little restriction was made. Gravier proposed to the committee some modifications to help the town regulate safety and quality issues.

Summarizing the goals of the modification, he said, "Anyone living in a residential area, primarily east of Route 1, where parking is regulated by meter or parking permit, must still request written permission from the town to place a mailbox or garbage receptacle in the right-of-way. Those living east or west of Route 1 where parking is not regulated by permit or meter, then a mailbox or trash receptacle can be placed in the right-of-way, to certain standards."

"[By enacting this], it would do two things for us," Gravier explained. "It would delineate the fact that we have special needs in areas where we regulate parking by permit or meter, and it would grandfather all of the mailboxes and trash receptacles west of Route 1, that according to the code as it exists today, you have to have written permission for. Then, on a case-by-case basis, we can either grant permission of some sort, or tell people to take whatever the offending object is out of the right-of-way."

Individual right-of-ways generally run about 50 feet in length, from the front of one property line to the front of another, though that length can vary. The width of the rights-of-way from the edge of the roadway can also vary, causing confusion for property owners. Accurate readings can not be taken from the center of the roadways.

The intent of the new regulations, noted Gravier, is not to make everyone anywhere take out what they may have in their right-of-ways, but rather to justify in writing the requirements for such objects when they are allowed, and when

they must be removed.

Again, further consideration of updates to the town code was forwarded to Town Council.