



February 2025

BEST – YEAR IN REVIEW - 2024

Our commitment throughout the year was to keep a core slate of projects moving forward while producing articles and opinion pieces for the media and participating in training opportunities that allowed us to test that our guiding principles, values, and four action areas remain applicable. Collaboration with established and/or interested partners on all BEST projects also continued as a priority. We were again granted a 3-year renewal of our BEST charitable status, which recognizes the public benefit that BEST provides to the community.

More specifically, BEST projects in 2024 included:

- ✓ **The Planning Applications Review Team** continued to meet each week to review applications that propose development that will impact areas of land within protective zonings. We identified 191 applications (out of 358) and reviewed the specific details, resulting in the submission of 29 objections and 10 letters of concern. Members of the public made a number of reports to BEST about illegal development or prohibited industrial-type activities on land with protective zonings. We investigated the reports and made official complaints to the Enforcement section of Planning on their behalf. Unfortunately, little to no remediation has resulted from those complaints and our concern was the subject of several articles written for the media to bring attention to the lack of effectiveness of Planning's enforcement.
- ✓ **Fairmont SDO.** We continued to monitor the situation relating to the outstanding Statutory Instrument for the Fairmont Southampton Special Development Order which, we understand, will now need to be amended from what was approved in October 2023. The degree to which amendments would need to be publicly scrutinized remains unclear.
- ✓ **Conservation Awareness Campaign.** We rolled out a one-year, multimedia Conservation Awareness Campaign, focused on the value and importance of sustainability and highlighting the protections built into the Bermuda Plan for more thoughtful and intentional planning for the future. That Plan is Bermuda's only 'vision' document on how and where we should approach development and conservation across our very small collection of islands.
- ✓ **Beyond Plastic Bermuda (BPB).** In collaboration with KBB, and supported by a number of community Champions, the BPB Team continued to educate the public on the serious threats posed by plastic pollution. Disappointingly, the promised legislation banning an initial list of single-use plastic items has still not been put in place.

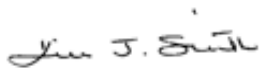
- ✓ **Lunch & Learn.** Presentations, in collaboration with the Bermuda College, to build awareness of local environmental issues, continued into a 7th year with interesting and varied topics including sustainable architecture, ocean biofilms and talks given by Bermudian youth activists.
- ✓ **Creating and disseminating a national policy for mitigation and adaptation to the threats of climate change.** The UK Government sponsored an update of the Smith Warner Report on Bermuda's vulnerabilities to the anticipated impacts of climate change, but a national policy and action plan have still not been produced.
- ✓ **Public Consultation.** BEST participated in opportunities to provide input for the amendments to the Clean Air Act, the Water Resources Act, the Pesticide Safety Act 2009 and the Integrated Resource Plan on Energy for Bermuda. We also provided support to an initiative on Sustainable Water Management in Bermuda, which is expected to provide the government with justification for establishing a national policy and a better-connected infrastructure for the management of water supplies on the island.

There is no doubt that environmental-type issues are on the rise. Problems and weaknesses are also being identified in outdated, less effective policies, procedures and practices. BEST remains committed to working on solutions and, through increased collaboration, we will continue to work together with others to expand our thinking and to improve and deepen our work to find connections and causes to those challenges.

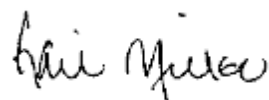
With your support, we believe we can do more. If you would like to meet in person or if you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at 292-3782 or email us at office@best.org.bm.

Additional information, including annual financial statements and donation information, can be found on our website: <https://best.org.bm>

With our BEST regards



Kim J. Smith
Executive Director



Gail E.M. Miller
Board Chair - BEST