

BEST Accomplishments - 2007 to 2010

Responding to Events and Environmental Threats:

- Saved the Botanical Gardens from development of new Bermuda hospital on the grounds (in 2006 as an earlier organization 'Save The Gardens').
- Triggered the Government offer of a land swap that would save Southlands for use as public parkland.
- Collected 5,000 signatures on the Save Warwick Long Bay petition.
- Researched, drafted and published a position paper on the National Aquatic Centre (published in the Royal Gazette September 1, 2010).
- Researched, drafted and published a position paper on Sustainable Tourism that drew the attention of and kudos from Bermuda's environmental organizations (published in the Royal Gazette July 13, 2010).
- Provided support and oversight of a research project on The Role of Agriculture in Bermuda's Future. The resulting Report was publicly launched on November 17, 2010. Prior to the launch, researcher and author Aran McKittrick engaged relevant government agencies and stakeholders.
- Made over forty written submissions to the Bermuda Plan 2008- and made oral presentations on more than twenty of them to the Bermuda Plan Tribunal during the Fall of 2009. BEST's submissions included calling for:
 - Mandatory Environmental Impact Assessments
 - Protected zoning enforcement
 - Restrictions on discretionary Special Development Orders

It is worth noting that the Tribunal made a special mention of BEST's efforts:

"The majority of counter objections were received from environmental groups such as Bermuda Environmental & Sustainability Taskforce (BEST). BEST submitted the lion's share of these objections. Such objections were primarily lodged against those landowners who proposed amendments to agricultural land, albeit BEST also objected to the reduction and removal of woodland, open space and coastal areas. The Tribunal would like to applaud BEST for its hard work. Much time and effort by the group went into investigation and advertised objection. Such efforts certainly demonstrate the group's sincere commitment to safeguarding those environmentally sensitive areas around the Island for future generations of Bermudians. Excerpt from Introduction to the Report of the Draft Bermuda Plan 2008 Tribunal."

Influencing Policy:

- Researched, drafted and published a position paper on the illegal development at Dockyard (published in the Royal Gazette July 3&4, 2008).
- Initiated a campaign to prevent the building of a beach bar at Warwick Long Bay which culminated in a successful Supreme Court Judicial Review of the Environment Minister's decision to uphold an appeal by the developer; the Minister's decision was quashed.
- Established BEST as a community information resource consultant and advocate.
- Incorporated as a limited liability company and achieved Charity status.
- Launched the Coalition for Community Activism in Bermuda (CCAB), a coalition of grassroots advocate organizations on public policy (the environment, youth, the elderly, social justice, human rights).

Communications & Outreach:

- Initiated and led a Forum on Sustainable Tourism (Sept 2007).
- Held an EcoFest (Oct 2008).
- Raised public awareness through demonstrations such as Green Day, community walks, concerts and picnics.
- Initiated and conducted a Community Empowerment Workshop (March 2009) to build skills of advocacy in the community.
- Initiated formation of Eco-Clubs in the Island's schools.
- Initiated and hosted Earth Day Birthday celebrations (April 2009 & 2010).
- BEST established a community discussion on the issue of long-line fishing and initiated and collaborated on a position paper on the topic (published in the Royal Gazette November 23, 2009).