

BEST Accomplishments - 2013

Responding to Events and Environmental Threats:

- Ongoing review of all planning applications. For the year we reviewed 82 application files and objected to 39.
- Hamilton Waterfront: BEST called for an Environmental Impact Assessment to be done on the plans submitted for the waterfront, due to the large and industrial nature of the project. The project did not proceed when Government cancelled the lease issued by the Corporation of Hamilton and to the contractor and no further plans were proposed.
- Long-term projects were not neglected in 2013:
 - Heavy Trucks- Investigation into the impact of heavy trucks on Bermuda's roads.
 - Trees of north Hamilton- worked with the Corporation of Hamilton and protesters to save the trees on Elliott Street.
 - BEST met with the Minister for the Environment and the Permanent Secretary, discussing procedures, transparency and documentation.
- Wrote, published and updated many Position Papers:
 - The Gamble of Gaming- New paper written concerning the possibility of gambling being introduced to Bermuda. Published in The Royal Gazette, BerNews and The Bermuda Sun, whilst also being delivered to all MPs and Senators and other community stakeholders.
 - Heritage Wharf Paper- work began on a follow-up paper, highlighting the changing face of tourist accommodation.
 - Aquatic Centre Paper revisited in response to developments in the media.
 - The Blueprint for Sustainability (2012) finished its publication in the Royal Gazette.

Influencing Policy:

- Tuckers' Point: BEST remained very active on this issue this year. As a consequence of the Ombudsman declaring the Special Development Order awarded to Tucker's Point, illegal, all individual applications for the development were withdrawn. Later, they were all resubmitted in the form of 6 applications, of which only 4 contained Ecological Surveys. Furthermore, the SDO awarded allowed the subdivision of the development into 59 lots, all exempt from legal zonings (e.g. costal reserve, woodland). Finally, to address the issue of caves under the site, as brought up by BEST, the SDO proposed using boreholes to locate them.

BEST addressed the complex issues with the Tuckers' Point SDO in many ways. Principally, we reviewed the 6 umbrella applications and rejected the proposed alternate surveys (Ecological Surveys), arguing that an Environmental Impact Assessment was necessary to understand the environmental impacts most thoroughly. Though the Development Applications Board accepted the Environmental Surveys, BEST continued to work for an EIA to take place. Secondly, BEST objected to 8 of the subdivision applications approved or submitted to the DAB, based on the fact all 59 applications were being looked at on a singular, rather than a collective basis. Finally, BEST communicated the damage borehole equipment could cause to caves and their surrounding environment to Tuckers' Point, and they later changed this procedure to locate the caves. BEST supported this alternative technology being used.

- Grand Atlantic: Following BEST's heavy campaigning in 2012, few Grand Atlantic apartment units were sold.
- Morgan's Point: With the Environmental Coalition, BEST worked to advise the Morgan's Point ownership to invest in Eco Tourism when looking at the site's future. It was later communicated to BEST that Morgan's Point was attempting to use arable land, owned by the Church of England, for development of an access road to the resort. BEST spoke to the Bishop and appropriate Reverends to discuss the danger to Bermuda's agricultural future posed by this expansion of development. BEST continues to monitor the situation. Further communication revealed plans to store Asbestos from Morgan's Point near the Leamington Caves. BEST immediately contacted Works and Engineering to investigate, and was later informed that Public Works had taken steps to ensure that all asbestos material would be handled and stored properly.
- Planning Applications in the Marine Environment: BEST continued to monitor applications for coastal remediation and the conversion of marine coastline to docks and jetties. By approaching the Department of Planning, BEST raised awareness in the community concerning the problems associated with the reduction of marine coastline.
- Spice Hill Farm: Following the application from 2012, BEST continued to campaign against the construction of an orphanage/seniors home, through objection to the official application to the Department of Planning. This initial application was then turned down, however upon appeal permission was granted. BEST then took the Minister at the time to court, where the appeal and permission to develop were quashed.
- Ewing Street: After receiving complaints from residents concerning the removal and transplant of multiple trees on Ewing Street, BEST responded by joining forces with residents and protesting the proposed action. The protests were

well supported by the public and were successful, with Government abandoning the proposed works.

- WEDCO: When the West End Development Corporation was assigned to develop Dockyard and its associated environs, including a South Basin Marina, BEST was at first concerned about the methods used to create said 'landfill', as well as the long term uses and impacts. In 2013, BEST worked with WEDCO in a consulting manner, concerning the validity of their Environmental Impact Assessment. After seeing that it was not adequate in terms of its thoroughness and scope, these comments were communicated multiple times to WEDCO
- Park Hyatt: After the agreement between Park Hyatt and the Government had lapsed, BEST called for the contract to be terminated and for the Park Hyatt Act to be repealed. The act was later repealed, allowing other parties to bid for the development contract.

BEST was invited to review the Environmental Impact Assessments for:

- The Hamilton Princess Dock Development- later built to specification.
- Beach Club on the site of the former Sonesta Beach Hotel (now owned by the Hamilton Princess Hotel)- asked for input concerning scoping for the EIA, for an application to build a beach facility and club-house.
- Dockyard Docks/Heritage Wharf- objections ignored and construction continued, but pier later had to be heavily repaired due to rapid degradation and faulty construction
- Hamilton Docks Relocation- project later shelved.
- Deep Ocean Energy Systems (DOES)- attended a meeting concerning DOES to discuss this system's potential in Hamilton.
- City of Hamilton Plan- invited to make submissions regarding the plan, which were considered in the planning process.
- St George's Marina- invited to a meeting, where the plans proposed were reviewed, commented on and were well received.

Communications & Outreach:

BEST played a part in many multi-organization activism projects:

- Worked as an active member of the Bermuda Environmental Alliance, and was thanked by the Department of Education for our activity with BEA.
- Asked the Government for greater clarification concerning the treatment of Listed Buildings, as part of the campaign to save The Queen of the East building.
- Sent a letter of support for due process, concerning the Tucker's Town Cemetery.

- Worked closely with 'Friends of Southlands', campaigning for the use of Southlands as a Public Park, helping to fundraise, proliferate information to the community, communicate with Government and address queries and concerns.
- Provided feedback to the Sustainable Development Unit concerning the possible formation of a marine reserve in Bermuda's Exclusive Economic Zone.
- Stuart Hayward asked to sit on Sustainable Development Round Table, Department of Planning, the Environmental Authority or Environmental Authority by Minister Sylvan Richards and the Chamber of Commerce, by Chairman David Dodwell.
- Attended Earth Hour celebration at City Hall.
- Supported Greenrock's 'No Thanks to Plastic Bags' campaign.
- BEST was internationally represented when Stuart Hayward attended the anti-Monsanto march in Cork, Ireland.

BEST in the media

- Position Papers published by local news sources.
- Op-eds- Volunteer Megan Sutcliffe wrote 2 op-eds, published in the Royal Gazette, concerning the environment's place in politics, and the importance of consuming local produce.