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47



BOARD ORDER

IN THE MATTER OF

RICHARD HILL
Phippsburg, Maine
DWELLINGS ON SAND DUNE
#L-013098-04-A-N

) Alteration of Coastal Wetlands Act
) SAND DUNES
)
) FINDINGS OF FACT AND ORDER

Pursuant to the provisions of Title 38, M.R.S.A., Section 474, the Board of Environmental Protection has considered the application of MR. RICHARD HILL with its supportive data, agency review comments, comments from the public and other related materials on file and finds the following facts:

1. The applicant proposes to construct 3 single family dwellings on posts on a parcel of land for which he holds an option on Hunnewell Beach in Phippsburg. Each unit will be constructed on three separate but contiguous lots.
2. This parcel of land is located on the back dune system directly behind the existing Hill cottage in a C-zone. The area consists of undeveloped pitch pine forest and intermittent wetlands with cranberry bogs.
3. The State Geologist, the geologist for Natural Resources Council of Maine and the Maine Audubon Society, all believe that one hundred years from now the sea level will have risen several feet and the Hunnewell Beach shoreline will be near or landward of the proposed site.
4. The applicant's geologist has a differing opinion about the pattern of erosion on Hunnewell Beach. He feels that the dwellings will remain in a C-zone for the next 100 years due to the pattern of erosional processes on Hunnewell Beach. He feels this is especially true when the accretionary cycles are factored into the erosional cycles.
5. The Conservation Commission of the Town of Phippsburg, the Phippsburg Planning Board, the Phippsburg Historical Society, and members of the community have written in opposition to this application. A request for public hearing has been made. Those writing in have expressed concerns about the preservation of the unique pitch pine forest, the concerns about future development due to the fact that the owner also owns approximately 20 acres of contiguous land in this area, and the threat to the already degrading water supply in that area.

BASED On the above Findings of Fact, the Board concludes that significant concerns exist regarding the proposed project's potential effect on the environment.

THEREFORE, the Board posts the application of RICHARD HILL to construct three dwellings on Hunnewell Beach to a PUBLIC HEARING.

DONE AND DATED AT AUGUSTA, MAINE, THIS 26TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1986.

BOARD OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

BY: _____

SAMUEL M. ZAITLIN, Chairman

DATE: January 27, 1986

Project Manager: Julee Mitchell

241

BOARD SUMMARY

DEP # L-013098-04-A-N

Project Location: Phippsburg

Applicant: Richard Hill

Type of Project: Dwellings on a Sand Dune

Description of Project:

Applicant proposes to construct 3 two-story dwellings on posts on a parcel of land at Hunnewell Beach. The proposed project is located on the back dune system in a C-Zone. Each unit will measure 40 feet by 23 feet with 8 foot wide deck. The project includes two septic systems, three water wells, and driveways with parking area. Each unit will be constructed on three separate but continuous lots.

Environmental Concerns:

There has been concern expressed about sea level rise affecting this area within 100 years and review comments from the applicants Geologist and the State Geologist conflict with regard to the extent of erosion over a 100 year period.

The Maine Audubon Society and a University of Maine Geologist predict substantial erosion due to sea level rise over a 100 year period.

Abutters are concerned about rare communities of plants in this area and the impact that three new wells will have on a water supply which is already degrading.

The applicant has an option to this parcel of land from a landowner who owns a large tract of land on Popham and Hunnewell Beach. This case could encourage further sale of portions of this land and possibly result in denser development on Popham Beach.

Comments:

Recommend: Delegate to Commissioner X No Delegation

STATE OF MAINE

Inter-Departmental Memorandum Date Jan. 22, 1986

To Jolee Mitchell

Dept. Environmental Protection

From Joseph T. Kelley *JTK*

Dept. Maine Geological Survey

Subject Hill Sand Dune Application

The applicant proposes to build three houses on posts in the back dune area of Hunnewell Beach. The sites are in a C zone forested with what appears to be a climax back dune community.

1) Nature of the Dunes: The proposed site is an ancient dune field. Recent oceanographic research suggests that this area was last geologically active several thousand years ago when the rate of sea level rise slowed greatly and Hunnewell Beach grew seaward. Because of this the plant life in the dunes represents an "older" more climax sort of community which is very rare in Maine today.

2) Shoreline Changes: The shoreline in this area has migrated landward for the past several thousand years. Mr. Timson asserts that it moved landward at a rate of 14.5 feet per year for many years in the recent past, but that since 1977 it has begun to grow seaward. I see no reason for the beach to grow seaward since there are no clear sources of sand to promote growth. The rate of sea level rise, which appears to have exercised great control at this beach over the past few thousand years, is as great now as it has been within historic times. I believe this shoreline will continue to move landward at the historic rate or faster over the next 100 years.

3) The Future: One hundred years from now sea level will have risen several feet and the Hunnewell Beach shoreline will be near or landward of the proposed sites. As the surf zone approaches the threat of storms will increase but the supply of wind blown sand will also increase.

In summary, this is a valuable natural area which will experience profound geologic changes within a 100 year time frame; but not in the near future.

/cs

cc: Walter A. Anderson