

TOWN OF PALM BEACH

Information for Town Council Meeting on: March 4, 2025

TO: Mayor and Town Council

VIA: Kirk W. Blouin, Town Manager

FROM: H. Paul Brazil, P.E., Director of Public Works

RE: Groin Rehabilitation at Blossom Way Holdings, LLC

DATE: February 18, 2025

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Town Staff recommends Town Council approve private groin rehabilitation projects be completed under the Town's Beach Management Agreement (BMA) with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) and their U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit SAJ-2015-03484 (SP-JLA), given the private upland property owner secures design, construction contractors, and necessary easements at their own expense.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Existing groins located along the Palm Beach Island shoreline were constructed throughout the 20th century, dating back to the 1930s. Due to the harsh marine environment where the structures are located, the condition of many of the groins has deteriorated considerably and compromised the functionality of the individual groins and the overall groin field. Ownership of these groins has been studied and is unclear due to the lack of records dating back to their origination and being located on a combination of private property and sovereign submerged lands owned by the State. The onus of maintaining the structures is therefore ambiguous and it also includes a large scope and financial undertaking.

In an effort to evaluate the integrity of the groin field, the Town has commissioned numerous studies to identify all of the groins on the island, assess their condition, and develop a phased approach to rehabilitate the structures. Part of this approach included the acquisition of State and Federal permits that authorized the removal and/or replacement of certain groins with concrete king pile and panel groins. Town-wide groin rehabilitation is now authorized by the FDEP in the BMA. The Town is also pursuing a time extension of the existing USACE permit for the rehabilitation and replacement of existing groins between Reaches 2 through 6.

Town Council has previously provided direction to work with upland private property owners through Public Works staff on a case-by-case basis to repair and replace groins. In this capacity, the Town would act as the environmental regulatory umbrella permit holder on the basis that private property owners obtain individual Sovereign Submerged Lands Leases from FDEP for groins fronting their property and hire firms/contractors to do the design and construction at their own cost. The Town is currently working with the Blossom Way property to replace four (4) groins with this approach.

Blossom Way Holdings LLC (Blossom Way) is proposing to remove and replace the four (4) derelict groins fronting their beachfront property (1247 and 1265 S Ocean Blvd.) and has sought Town support in this effort. Coastal Protection Engineering (CPE) is assisting Blossom Way through this process and acting as their engineer for design and construction of the project. The attached letter from the property owner's representative is formally requesting Town support for removal and replacement of four (4) groins using the Town's permits and associated approvals with the design procurement, construction, and post-construction activities to be performed at the expense of Blossom Way Holdings LLC.

FUNDING/FISCAL IMPACT

Additional cost to the Town is not anticipated for the proposed activities.

Attachments

cc: Jason Debrincat, P.E., Assistant Director
Patricia Strayer, P.E., Town Engineer
Julie Parham, P.E., Senior Project Engineer
Sara Gutekunst, Coastal Coordinator
Joanne O'Connor, Town Attorney, Jones Foster
Shore Protection Board