October 1, 2019

Via Email: dick@ci.cannon-beach.or.us

Mayor and City Council
City of Canon Beach
City Hall
PO Box 368
Cannon Beach, OR 97110

Re: Dune Management Plan

Dear Mayor and City Council:

Breakers Point appreciates the City Council’s extra effort to host several hearings in recent weeks. We are hopeful that the effort will bear fruit in the form of a clear understanding of all the issues involved. Most important, Breakers Point urges the City Council to focus on the science presented by its primary consultant, Jonathan Allan from DOGAMI.

Mr. Allan’s report carefully documents the changes to the dunes in Cannon Beach that have occurred since the last dune management plan was completed. The changes include the steady growth of the dunes north of Ecola Creek, at the rate of 15,000 cubic yards every year. The report also emphasized that there is a finite amount of sand in the littoral cell. If a dune is growing without limit, that means there is less sand available in other areas where it may be needed to enhance protection.

The Allan report also confirms that the claims made by some dune grading opponents are not accurate. It confirms there is no safety benefit to the city of having huge dunes north of Ecola Creek, which offer no protection to the city as a whole, and emphasizes that if dune grading returns the sand to the edge of the ocean, it will reduce the force of wave action against the beach.

It is important to bear in mind the current height of the dunes was caused by the planting of non-native European dune grass. Like other problematic invasive species, this grass grows relentlessly and collects blowing sand at an astonishing rate, which is how the dunes enlarge. The federal government is removing this invasive species from some of its properties on the Pacific Coast.

To counteract the unprecedented growth of the dunes north of Ecola Creek, Breakers Point asks the City Council to approve the proposed Dune Management Plan. This will allow dune grading to restore the dunes to a manageable size, closer to the natural condition, and subject of course to the FEMA plus 5 feet limitation to protect against flooding. The balance of the sand can be moved to where the ocean will recirculate it naturally around the littoral cell, and thereby replenish other areas where the sand supply is needed.
This is consistent with the dune grading that has been done regularly along the Presidential Streets in recent years, and that was previously done at Breakers Point. We note that the opposing testimony does not include actual evidence of harm caused by the grading that has been done over the last 20 years. The opponents’ fears are unfounded and not based on the science as explained in the Allan report.

Breakers Point urges the City Council to acknowledge that dune grading in Cannon Beach has helped to preserve both the beaches and pedestrian access to them. Beach access has been obstructed by the dunes north of Ecola Creek, especially at 5th Street, which is the primary public beach access on the north side of town. We hope the City can build on the successes of the last 20 years and allow continued grading to return the surplus sand to the littoral cell. This will preserve the beaches, protect the entire city against erosion from waves, and return the excess of sand into the littoral cell as nature intended.

Thank you for bringing the Dune Management Plan to a successful conclusion. It will benefit everyone who appreciates the incomparable beaches.

Sincerely,

JORDAN RAMIS PC

Timothy V. Ramis

cc: Breakers Point HOA
    Mike Morgan