

Member Q&A and Comments

Beach Club Rebuild

March 2023

Access to Drawings, Presentation, and Q&A

Beach Rebuild Presentation: Along with the Q&A from our Gold members, the main presentation will be emailed out to all Gold members after the March 13th meeting.

Architectural Drawings: The first draft was presented to the City of Bonita Springs and major modifications were requested. We will share the second draft once it has been received from our architect.

General Use

Question: Why didn't we demolish the old structure once we knew they couldn't be used again?

We knew that if we totally cleared the beach property of all buildings, the City of Bonita Springs would treat us like a construction site rather than an ongoing beach club. Bonita Bay traveled this route is dealing with stricter restrictions for temporary re-use of their beach club.

Question: What are the key differences in how the new Beach Club will operate versus the old Beach Club?

New Beach Club

- a. Once you have parked, you will check in at the Beach Club entrance and either walk under the Beach Club to access the beach or use the elevator/staircase to access the 2nd floor main pavilion.
- b. Restrooms will be located on the 2nd floor.
- c. Snacks and beverages may possibly not be permitted.

Question: We love the beach feeling you experience once you immediately step out of your vehicle. Can we retain that feeling even though the Beach Club itself will be elevated?

Yes – that is our goal. An unencumbered view from the parking lot out to the beach and Gulf of Mexico.

Question: Will chaise lounge and umbrella service remain the same after the project is complete.

Yes. There is a chance that we will have more beach front since the Beach Club will be built approximately 15' further away from the shoreline. The final outcome will depend on the State's requirements for the sand dune areas located between the Beach Club and the beach lounging area.

Question: Will our eight grills be permitted again?

Yes, since they were approved in our original development order.

Question: Will parking be expanded? Could the lower level be used for additional parking?

More than likely not. The City of Bonita Springs will only allow us to rebuild what was approved in 1999.

Question: Will a pedestrian access gate be added under the new design to access the club when closed?

Still too early to determine, but more than likely the gulf side parking lot will be gated to allow members to access the beach during any days closed.

Thank you for reopening our Beach Club in December. What is the status of the other beach clubs on Little Hickory Island?

West Bay: Fully closed for construction.

Bonita Bay: Just partially reopened two weeks ago. Bus only – no vehicles.

Meditera: Fully closed for refurbishment.

Question: How are the other private clubs rebuilding?

West Bay: Complete tear down and rebuilding to same sq ft. Demolished the old Beach Club before hurricane Ian arrived.

Bonita Bay: More than likely, similar to us.

Meditera: They appear to be doing a complete refurbishment to their existing 2nd floor Beach Club.

Snack Bar/Kitchen Questions

Question: Why can't we hire a food truck at our Beach Club?

After the state approved a bill which prohibits local governments from outright banning of food trucks, the City of Bonita Springs adjusted their 2012 food truck ordinance.

However, the state does allow governments to ban food trucks in certain locations. Since Little Hickory Island has unique zoning and overlay rules and is considered an unique part the city, the council banned food trucks on the entire island.

Question 1: Will you push the City for permission to have a full restaurant? I understand that Bonita Bay may be rebuilt with one. With that and full restaurants at Mediterra and West Bay, we will be falling behind in being competitive. We can always compromise to just a snack bar.

Question 2: Would it be possible to have a snack bar/grill that offered more options like hot dogs, hamburgers, pizza, wraps, sandwiches, and ice cream. Many members want more food options.

Yes, we are pushing for some type of food service. However, the City of Bonita Springs has stated that no new uses shall be permitted that are inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map and land use restrictions associated with the individual land use categories. Although our property is zoned commercial, per the Future Land Use Map, we are zoned residential. Accordingly, we can have what we originally requested, but cannot add on something new.

Question: Why can't we have a snack bar when West Bay and Meditera both feature kitchens?

For both clubs, included in their initial development order was a kitchen and interior dining space. Lee County approved both. Long Bay Partners, when applying for our DO, did not request anything related to foodservice.

Question: I understand the West Bay beach club is going through expansion and rebuild. Can you comment about how this might impact us, positively or not positively with the City's temperature on beach clubs/commercial property in the presentation, you mentioned the city did not "like our snack bar and seating area.

West Bay is being rebuilt to the same square footage they were originally approved for. They are also rebuilding their restaurant which was also originally approved when they submitted their development order years ago.

Beach Club Structure Questions

Question: How high will the second floor be?

Approximately 20' but need more input from our architect. The maximum height is 35'. The building is located between the two CCCL lines with an elevation requirement of VE-16, NAVD where the horizontal structural member supporting the building must be above that elevation. In addition, Florida DEP who has governance of construction between these two CCCL lines has the requirement for the lowest horizontal member to be at 20.5' NAVD. The ground below the old beach club is 6.5' NAVD.

Question: Will the new Beach Club be air conditioned?

No. The pavilion will be open air and under a roof structure. The restrooms may be air conditioned.

Question: What will be the person capacity of the new facility?

Our goal is 100% of what we had before – 156 seats. We will know the capacity once our architect has completed his drawings.

Question: Will we add additional showers for men and women?

Too early to tell. Any additional infrastructure add-ons will reduce the square footage for general seating.

Question: This may be off topic, however, what would the possibility be of having a small store, or some items like commons club gear, sunscreen, etc.... for sale at the beach club? Even sell the items through the (potential) snack bar?

Perhaps – especially for essentials.

Question: I appreciate that you are trying to maximize the shade. But that is not quite enough to make it comfortable when you are looking west into the sun in the early evening. Also during summer, the heat from sun is really brutal so I would like to have some form of shades installed on the west side of the pavilion.

We have considered this in the past and will reevaluate once the architect has completed his drawings.

Question: You may want to think about installing solar panels to help alleviate some costs.

Excellent point – and will be considered.

Construction Phase Questions

Question: Will the beach be available during construction?

This is our goal – either with access through a protected alleyway on the edge of our property or through the public access to our south.

Question: Would you consider closing the Beach Club down if the construction could be accelerated?

Yes, but it's too early to contemplate right now.

Financial Questions

Question: The beach club has not been operating at 100% capacity since the storm. As members we paid our gold dues as if we would be at 100% capacity. Wouldn't there be costs that are not being spent today as a result that could be directed to reducing the special assessment?

We are in agreement. Although the Beach Club is budgeted to break-even, if the amenity operates at better than break-even, as we expect it will, the funds will be directed to retained earnings – which will reduce any assessment.

Question: If the Club utilizes capital and cash reserves for part of the financial package, how can you differentiate if those reserves came from only Gold members or from both Silver/Gold?

Our Finance Committee will assure us that any such funds can and will be traced back to only capital charges and retained earnings from Gold members. Fact is, the majority of all available funding is from Gold members – partly due to the fact that the cost of operations and capital reinvestment at the Beach Club are relatively modest. Especially compared to the capital investment needed to operate the Rookery restaurant.

Question: Why do we estimate it will cost \$3m to \$4m to rebuild the Beach Club when the 2018 valued the structures at \$380,000?

The cost to replace the wood structure of the Beach Club in 2018, before depreciation was \$505,975. The new structure will be built to more robust hurricane resistant building codes and will be constructed primarily with concrete and steel.

Question: Why don't we save money and just rebuild back what we had before?

Buildings/development damaged less than 50% of their replacement cost (measured at the time of damage) may be rebuilt to their original condition, subject only to current building and life safety codes; however, this threshold is reduced to 20% for buildings previously damaged by flooding of \$50,000 or more under the National Flood Insurance Program.

Question: Why does the entire burden of the finances fall only on Gold members? Other categories will gain "value" to their membership.

Yes, we agree that all residents in The Brooks experience an increase to their home's value because we are one of the few communities to feature a private Beach Club. However, per the Club's bylaws, only gold members are responsible for capital improvement.

Question: Will there be an assessment?

Yes. Our current goal is to fund the project with 50% of club funds and a 50% assessment. Club funds, besides insurance proceeds and our hurricane fund, may include new capital reserves, replacement capital reserves, retained earnings, and other funds. The Commons Club overall has healthy reserve accounts.

Question: Will an assessment be one time or spread over time?

To be determined. We are also looking at how incoming Gold members will contribute to the new Beach Club.

Insurance Questions

Question: Why didn't TCC leadership insure the Beach Club for its true cost of rebuilding?

Because of hurricane claims over the past ten years, the insurance industry has continued to limit coverage. This includes losing coverage for any open structures. Other insurers would not insure because of the low elevation of our building.

Question: Where do we stand with our wind insurance coverage?

Wind coverage was denied based on the following: The inspection of the property was conducted by an engineer from Grindley Williams Engineering on November 9, 2022. At the time of the site visit, pilings and debris were observed and no discernible features of the building remained.

The engineer determined, based on a peak surge of 11.6 feet above mean sea level and 7.96 feet above the ground for a building located .1 miles southeast of the subject property, that the rising flood water reached approximately 5.3 feet above ground level at this location. This building was significantly impacted by storm surge-related wave action which ultimately totally destroyed all but the pilings.

Wind damage could not be assessed directly given the destruction of the building. However, based on observations of the adjacent building 4, it is likely that the roof covering would have been significantly damaged by wind. That said, wind alone was not strong enough to structurally damage or destroy the building. Based on the timeline of wind speed and surge, damage from wind and surge occurred concurrently until the building was overcome by wave action, at which point, the building was washed away.

Question: Where do we stand with our storm surge insurance coverage?

We are still waiting for the findings and will inform our Gold members when received.

Question: Will our future Beach Club be fully insured since it will be constructed to the most updated building code?

We are in discussions with our insurance broker and will inform you in the future.

Question: Do we have Ordinance and Building codes coverage on our insurance to address updated building code requirements?

Yes, coverage up to \$30,000 for bringing the building up to code.

City of Bonita Springs/Land Use Questions

Question: What makes our Beach Club an inconsistent use?

Existing uses that are incompatible with the range, intensity and location of land uses identified on the City's Future Land Use Map shall be considered "inconsistent with the Plan" and allowed to continue but shall be reduced by attrition. No new uses shall be permitted that are inconsistent with the Future Land Use Map and land use restrictions associated with the individual land use categories.

Question: When did Bonita Springs incorporate?

City of Bonita Springs: Incorporated 1999. The City was incorporated in response to citizen desire for greater control over land development codes, among other issues. The City includes a portion of mainland Lee County and the adjacent islands.

In December of 2002 the City's comprehensive plan became effective. The City's Future Land Use Map designates our property as Medium Density Multi-Family Residential.

Question: Are we ever at risk of having a Beach Club?

Policy 1.4.1: Existing inconsistent uses shall be allowed to continue until voluntarily removed, but shall not be increased in size or intensity, and once voluntarily removed or abandoned shall not be reinstated.

Very General Questions

Question: How many acres is the Beach Club property?

1.3 acres - 56,700sq ft

Question: What is the assessed value, taxes and assessments? How will this change in the future?

Beach Club Assessed Value and Taxes

2022	\$4,606,473	\$57,790.35
2017	\$4,587,094	\$55,505.97
2015	\$3,279,040	\$44,743.56

Bayside 2022

\$1,000,693 \$11,634.75

Question: What is the size of the original Beach Club?

Concession Building 595 Sq.Ft.

Open Deck Area 4,076 Sq.Ft.

Covered Deck Area 1,699 Sq.Ft.