

August 24, 2018

To:

The Hon. Lt. Col. David Burch, JP, MP, Minister of Works & Engineering

The Hon. Jamahl Simmons, JP, MP, Minister of Economic Development and Tourism

cc: The Hon. David E. Burt, JP, MP, Premier

Thank You for your positive response and support as we addressed The Bermuda Tourism Authority's presentation of The Beach Vision Plan for Shelly Bay Beach: a plan that disregarded many community opinions and voices; a plan that threatened to displace the many residents and visitors who regularly use Shelly Bay Beach.

In response to your request for us to present our alternate proposal for Shelly Bay Beach and Park, in detail, we forward the following:

### **A NEW PLAN FOR SHELLY BAY BEACH AND PARK**

Presented by: Mrs. Cheryl-Ann Griffin, Mrs. Esme Williams, Ms. LaVerne Furbert, Mr. Alan Smith: on behalf of The Residents of Hamilton Parish and those who frequent Shelly Bay Beach and Park.

WE, THE RESIDENTS OF HAMILTON PARISH AND FREQUENTERS OF SHELLY BAY BEACH PRESENT A PLAN FOR SHELLY BAY BEACH that we feel would be suitable for the entire Shelly Bay Beach and Park areas. We feel that this proposal would be more appropriate for Shelly Bay Beach as it functions in the community for residents and visitors and would enhance the experience of residents and visitors as they use Shelly Bay Beach and Park throughout the year.

1. We request of The Government that Shelly Bay Beach would become the handicapped accessible beach in Bermuda. We believe that the recovered free area once occupied by a building at Shelly Bay Beach, as it is situated, is the ideal area to be used to enhance the beach experience for residents and visitors who are physically and visually challenged; including the infirm elderly population; along with accompanying family and/or caretakers.

The area can be easily improved and beautified with palms or small hedgings as well as accessible seating\*\* and presented to the public as a handicapped accessible small park overlooking and adjoining the rest of Shelly Bay Beach. This area can also be used throughout the year as a 'Sanctuary by the Sea', for relaxation by the general population.

We base this request on the following:

- Bermuda does not have an intentional handicapped accessible beach where a person can not only enter the beach but also enter the sea.
- The waters of Shelly Bay Beach are shallow, safe and normally calm
- Ease of access - the area has an ideal driveway, right off North Shore Road, that with minimum construction can be made safely level to the new park area for the delivery and pickup of the infirm elderly, and the physically and visually impaired. Traffic modifications would be needed for the safe exit from the driveway into the main roadway.

- Ease of modification- the surface of the area can be easily modified from its present state to accommodate wheelchairs, walkers and canes i.e.an appropriate wheelchair pathway can be installed around areas of plantings and seating
- Ease of assistance -Identified appropriate fittings can be easily installed, leading from this area, in order to assist the infirm elderly, physically and visually challenged to, into and from the water; some examples of fittings are *(copyright)Blue Mobi-Mat for physically as well as visually impaired, Recpath, AccessMat, ProMove Slings and Hoists and Mobi-Chair Floating Beach Wheelchair, PUSH Mobility. Some examples of Beaches where these are installed –Wasaga Beach, Ontario, Accessible Beaches and Cooks Hill Surf Club Australia, several U.S. States including South Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, California, Florida.*

2. We request of The Government the installation of additional toilet facilities adjoining those existing at Shelly Bay Beach and Park.

These facilities would include at two additional toilets and sinks and one handicapped accessible toilet and sink as well as two to four outdoor foot showers. *The examples we include are as those that already exist at John Smith's Bay and Clearwater Beach.*

- Access to these facilities already exist with the present paved and cleared pathway and ramp.\*
3. We request The Government to consider placing a handicapped accessible 'personal changing room' only plus a storage area for floating wheelchairs, rails and slings\* (see addendum), in the new park area in the southwest corner now occupied by overgrown shrubbery and trash; as long as it can remain unobstructive to the clear view to Dockyard from NorthShore Road.

We include the employment of an individual for the proper cleaning and maintenance of said toilet and changing facilities and oversight of the storage area.

4. We request of The Government the regular raking of the surface area of the childrens' playground as well as the regular sweeping of the surrounding accessible pathway to ensure accessibility to and from the beach and toilets by persons with disabilities.\*
5. We request of Government the proper and regular maintenance of the children's playground equipment to include updated consideration of age and developmentally appropriate equipment.

In keeping with accessibility, we request that the children's playground would include installation of a wheelchair accessible swing....the posts already exist... and a wheelchair accessible merry-go-round.

*Examples include: The Ability Swing, The Liberty Swing, The Inclusive Playground*

6. We request of The Government the leasing of an appropriate area; situated in a worn grassy area on the north eastern end of the parking lot, where a food and beverage concessionaire can operate to service both beach and field patrons.  
The concessionaire may preferably operate out of a lunch wagon, a 'popup' or small wagon suitable for the surrounding environment.

We request that in high season preference might be given to a student-run enterprise for a second concession to sell light refreshments e.g. snowballs, water, snacks. This small concession could be located on the upper grassy area, next to the steps leading from the beach.

7. We request of The Government the reinstallation and proper maintenance of the exercise and fitness course, along with the restoration of the course and fitness instructions, situated in the northwest corner beside the parking lot. The wood of the fitness bars and supports has split and some struts have fallen into disrepair.

We also include the potential of the employment of a contracted fitness instructor that could lease the area to hold morning, evening or weekend fitness classes at the site.

The fitness area can also accommodate adults and juniors fitting a range of ability and accessibility levels.

8. We request The Government to cut back the trees towards the north and east side of the beach. The existing foliage is useless and untidy. It takes up valuable beach space. When the tide is high the trees prevent access across the beach. The rear of this area can be replaced with a few appropriate shade trees.
9. We request of The Government that the pit from the demolished building at Shelly Bay should be evaluated for safety by engineers. We are concerned that the existing pit may be compromised from years of abuse and inattention and since it was below sea level that the possibility of sinking or sewage leakage may become a future problem.
10. We request of The Government that Shelly Bay Beach and Park would be reevaluated for the scheduling of employees assigned to trash collection so that trash can be regularly collected and discarded. The number of bins assigned for said trash collection on the picnic areas in the high season and on the field for special activities and regular football and cricket games may also be reevaluated.

## **ADDENDUM**

To increase awareness of the inclusion of the disabled in all community activity we forward the following ideas for community involvement in the enhancement of Shelly Bay Beach.

- that a competition could be established in the design and technology departments of middle and high schools and the general population to design, develop and build a non-corrosive floating wheelchair appropriate for easy transfer and storage\*.
- that a competition could be established in the design and technology departments of middle and high schools and the general population to design and develop ideas for non-corrosive, easily removable, transferrable, slings/hoists and stored accessible rails and slings to guide the physically and visually impaired into and out of the sea\*.
- Those contributions could be solicited from charitable organizations for beach tables and benches for the new accessible park area.

