

Beach and Bluff Committee Update

February 26, 2025

Current Committee Members – Patti Webb– (Chair), John Balliet– (Secretary), Sandy Prentice– (Board Liaison), Jeff Zabor– (Ex Officio), Jonathan Hauck, Jason Hetche, Taylor Robinson.

Our mission – Build the resiliency of the Linwood beach, dunes, and bluff ecosystem.

Our role – Conduct research; create and propose plans and action items to the Board for their consideration; act under the direction of the Board.

What you need to know –

- Undisturbed dunes and bluffs are more resilient than dunes and bluffs that are trod upon or those on which man-made structures and material are placed.
- Dunes and bluffs vegetated with native plants, grasses, and trees are more resilient than unvegetated dunes and bluffs.
- Gradually sloping bluffs are more resilient than severely sloping bluffs.
- Meandering or curving paths down bluffs and through dunes are more resilient than straight paths.
- An ungroomed beach is more resilient than a groomed beach.
- The root systems of desirable vegetation (ex. Beach grass) anchor the beach, dunes, and bluff. They serve to minimize the impacts of high water, wave action, and storm water runoff, thus making our beach, dunes, and bluff more resilient.
- Beach grass acts as nature's snow fence, capturing sand blown by the wind and increasing the height of the dunes.
- Healthy dunes are the first line of defense when storms hit the beach. They protect the bluffs, infrastructure, and real-estate. They can be rebuilt.

2024 season Board actions informed by the work of the Beach and Bluff Committee -

- Before the opening of the 2024 beach season, signs were placed along the dunes and bluff asking cottage owners, renters, and guests to keep themselves and their beach gear off our dunes and bluff. Pamphlets were handed out at the gate upon check in that included updated information on beach management and grooming for the 2024 summer season.
- Board required their approval for the installation of new plants or cutting, pruning, or removal of existing vegetation on Park Company property including the bluffs, dunes, and property north of the sidewalk along the lakefront.

- Board required approval for the creation of new pathways on the dunes or the bluff. Posts and ropes on the bluff, dunes and beach to define the pathways were repositioned for the 2024 season.
- Posts were positioned on the beach designating areas where watercraft could be placed while the owner was using the beach and the park.
- Emergency repairs were completed on the 3 storm pipe outlet areas and the bluff above and beach below them. Storm washout had occurred due to a few severe storm events, strong enough to blow a manhole, creating excessive water flow and erosion.
- Continued to work with ODNR on permitting paperwork and requirements for sand movement to supply future volumes of non-Linwood property sand to our beach when needed. Due to COVID and administration changes with the election, ODNR has a back log of permits in their system and they have not added personnel to assist with the work load along with addressing any potential regulation changes for the 2025 season. It is a very slow process. ODNR gave permission to Linwood to be able to move Linwood's sand on the beach and dunes under specific parameter's that were provided to the Board of Directors.

2025 season potential Board actions to be contemplated as informed by the work of the Beach and Bluff Committee -

- During the 2025 season, signs and/or pamphlets may be placed along the dunes and bluff asking cottage owners, renters, and guests to keep themselves and their beach gear off the dunes and bluff and/or handed out at the gate.
- Board approval required for the installation of new plants or cutting, pruning, or removal of existing vegetation on Park Company property including the bluffs, dunes, and property north of the sidewalk along the lakefront.
- Board approval required for the creation of new pathways on the dunes or the bluff. Posts and ropes may be repositioned prior to the 2025 season on the bluff, dunes and beach.
- Vegetation growing north of the posts and ropes along the dunes and bluff will be "managed" while "grooming" will occur south of the posts and ropes. (See below for definitions.)
- Like 2024, posts may be placed on the beach designating areas where watercraft can be placed while owners are using the beach and the park if the owner needs this option. These designated areas may be changed from last year for management needs.
- Continue to work on Permitting process with ODNR.

Managed v. Groomed –

- *Managed* refers to efforts designed to eliminate undesirable vegetation and promote the growth of desirable vegetation. With limited exceptions, desirable plants will be allowed to grow as they would “naturally” in the wild.
- *Groomed* refers to efforts designed to create a park-like setting where grass is cut short and often and where plants and trees are pruned and trimmed.

Thoughts and feedback should be provided to a member of the Linwood Park Board of Directors.