



Everything Jersey

Shoreline protection to remain in Maurice River

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By Jean Jones
jeanjones@fast.net

MAURICE RIVER TWP. — If the government makes another engineering mistake, according to Capt. George Kumor, there should be a performance bond required to protect residents from the consequences.

Kumor has protested past plans to remove structures at Thompsons Beach that he says are protecting the town of Heislerville from becoming beachfront. It appears now that bulkheads in front of two properties and a sea wall will be left in place, instead of removed to make the beach more inviting to horseshoe crabs.

The last of the rubble left from the demolition of homes there will be removed and the end of the road which leads from Heislerville to Thompsons Beach will be made passable for foot traffic and emergency vehicles. The road has been closed since an observation platform was built at the upland edge of the tidal area created by PSEG as part of its wetlands restoration project.

Kumor suggests that the township remove the rubble instead of seeing it contracted out. "We took the houses down and it would have cost \$1 million to contract it out," he said. Mayor Kathy Ireland said it would cost more now to have the township undertake this project.

Kumor cites two former projects, the attempt to protect Basket Flats, on the Maurice River, and the building of a boat ramp at East Point, as instances of failed projects resulting from state engineering. Basket Flats was a large area at the mouth of the river where some oystermen offloaded their harvest many years ago, leaving behind damaged oak baskets. It now can be identified only by a few bits of spartina alterniflora, an intertidal grass, extending above the water where the higher portion of the flats was located.

The two barges sunk in the river to prevent it from eroding have deteriorated and are washing away. Far from protecting the flats, they allowed the river to make an end run around the landward end and become even wider.

The boat ramp at times is covered with sand and at other times undermined.

"They didn't listen to local wisdom," Kumor said. "We don't want them to make the same mistakes again. We're not willing to live with their mistakes any more."