

General Elder discussed at length the problem of silting in the channels in the sound leading into the canal, using charts and diagrams, indicating that the entire channel system was not a problem. Instead, he said, there are numerous points along the channel that were filling in and which in due time would present continuing and growing navigation and health problems. He said the original channel was dredged 60 feet wide and seven feet deep. However, due to wind and tidal currents--and possibly traffic of boats through the channel --was causing the silting to reduce the channel's availability by more than 10 per cent in many locations.

The committee recommended the project be undertaken with financing on an 80-20 basis with 80 percent of the cost being carried by a grant from the State of North Carolina and 20 percent by a tax levy on Pine Knoll Shores property of one percent per year over a four or five year period. The committee also pointed out that the silting may worsen over the next several years, and since there is a three to four year lead time necessary for obtaining such a grant, it would be prudent to proceed as soon as possible with the financing.

It was pointed out further, through comments from the audience, that the 80 percent not have to be repaid, since it would be a grant, but that before the legislature would consider such a grant the 20 percent town share would have to be assured.

Considerable discussion was held concerning the disposal of the spoil from the dredging, and the committee recommended it be laid on the shore because of complications arising from any other disposal means.

With respect to the question concerning a health hazard that might arise if the project was not undertaken, it was pointed out that should the silting effectively reduce the tidal flushing of the canal through the town, this would have a tendency to raise the fresh water table level throughout the town, possibly resulting in pollution of this water table. This was a major consideration when the canal was first dug, and which was originally a drainage canal, it was stated.

The committee also pointed out, in response to questions, that if the dredging project should proceed it would impact favorably on property values in the town, but that before the project actually got underway they recommended that the channels continue to be monitored over a few years to determine the full extent of the silting.

The meeting lasted almost an hour and a half, at the conclusion of which Mayor Haller said that after considering all the questions raised and the answers to them, the Board of Commissioners would make such decision as seemed appropriate.