

# Canal Dredging Planned This Winter At Holden Beach

**BY DOUG RUTTER**  
The five finger canals and two connectors in the Harbor Acres subdivision on Holden Beach will most likely be dredged this winter if the town can find a contractor to do the work.

Despite advertising the project and mailing bid specifications to six dredging contractors, Town Manager Gus Ulrich said last week only one company submitted a bid.

The town was required to advertise a second time, and Ulrich said he planned to open bids Thursday afternoon. Even if the town receives one bid this time around, it can legally award a contract.

Holden Beach Commissioners could hire a contractor as early as their Nov. 7 meeting. Ulrich reported at last Wednesday's meeting it would probably take between six weeks and 90 days to do the work.

The town plans to coordinate the project on behalf of property owners in the neighborhood who requested the dredging, which is needed to keep the canals navigable.

Lot owners will be assessed for the full cost of the dredging plus the town's cost for administering the project. Each person's assessment will be based on how much property they own along the canals.

Until a contract is awarded, Ulrich said he will not have an estimated cost per lot.

Ulrich said channels in the five finger canals will be dredged to a width of 30 feet and a depth of 5 feet below mean low water.

The connector canal that runs parallel to the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and the entrance canal that provides access to the waterway will be dredged 40 feet wide and six feet deep.

Ulrich said Holden Beach Enterprises has given permission for the dredge material to be placed on its property, and the Army Corps of Engineers will allow water to be placed in one of its spoil sites.

The bid specifications—the same ones used for the recent dredging in Holden Beach Harbor—say the contractor is not responsible for damage to boats, floating docks or piers in the canals.

"I'm sure they will be as careful as they can," said Ulrich. But he also advised that property owners

should remove boats and swing floating docks out of the way when the dredging starts.

Commissioner David Sandifer said five or six property owners reported damage to piers and floating docks when Heritage Harbor was dredged a couple years ago.

During last week's public hearing on the project, several homeowners said the main reason the canals need dredging is the erosion of lots that are not bulkheaded.

Town commissioners recently considered passing an ordinance that would have required bulkheads on all lots after a two-year grace period, but it was voted down.

Commissioner Jim Fournier said last week the ordinance will come up for consideration again.

**Cul-De-Sac Coming?**  
Town board members want Ulrich to ask the N.C. Department of Transportation to "stake off" a cul-de-sac at the end of Ocean Boulevard West.

Commissioners said last week they want to see what a cul-de-sac at the end of the public road would look like before deciding whether to ask the state to build it.

People who own homes near the end of OBW have complained about vehicles turning around on their property when they reach the guard house at the entrance of the private Holden Beach West subdivision.

Property owners in Holden Beach West also have complained about vehicles causing damage to their private road when they drive past the guard house and turn around.

**Rezoning Proposed**  
Commissioners held public hearings last week on the proposed rezoning of two tracts along Ocean Boulevard West.

There were no comments from the audience, but one letter writer objected to a planning board recommendation to rezone the oceanfront area formerly known as Mace's Trailer Park.

The tract includes oceanfront lots starting at 633 and ending at 655 OBW. Planners have suggested the zoning of the lots be changed from C-1 (commercial) to R-1 (residential).

In a letter to the town, property owner Ron D. Crowder opposed the proposed change.

He wrote that the property was

zoned commercial when he bought it and rezoning it would lower its value. Crowder added that it's not fair for the town to rezone property without the owner's permission if it will lower value or restrict its use.

Commissioner Sid Swarts pointed out that there's only one lot in the area under consideration that does not have a single-family house on it. There is a home on the Crowder lot.

There were no public comments on another planning board recommendation to change the zoning in the Davis Heniford subdivision, formerly Campground By The Sea, from R-2 to R-1.

Commissioners did not vote on either of the rezoning proposals.

### Deed Accepted

In other business last week, commissioners accepted the deed for a beach accessway between 118 and 120 Ocean Boulevard East. Leo and Rose Cole donated the property.

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