

EMAIL NEWS UPDATE



South Bethany Meet and Greet Networking Event

On Friday, February 15, 2013, South Bethany's Communications and Public Relations Committee (C&PRC) hosted South Bethany's first "Meet and Greet Networking Event." Chaired by Councilman Mark Damato, the C&PRC extended invitations to multiple local Real Estate agencies and agents to join other professionals, meet the Town of South Bethany Mayor and Town Council Members, and learn of our recent capital improvements and plans for the future. ***The C&PRC planned the event to update realtors on how South Bethany has been beautifying and enhancing its natural resources, building its capital reserves, and positioning itself to welcome new renters and prospective home buyers!*** In addition, the Committee sought feedback from realtors on their perceptions of South Bethany and suggestions for changes.

Approximately 30 realtors, representing eight agencies attended the successful event, as well as David Martin and Lindsay Maurer from the Bethany-Fenwick Chamber of Commerce and Drew Slater, Kent and Sussex County Coordinator for Congressman Carney. While enjoying food and refreshments – especially the shrimp platters donated by South Bethany Seafood, Mayor Kathy Jankowski and Council Members, Sue Callaway, Mark Damato, Jim Gross and Pat Voveris mingled with the guests and shared information about South Bethany. Visual displays provided updates about South Bethany committee and police department accomplishments and introduced the new South Bethany marketing materials that include two brochures and a South Bethany map. Mayor Jankowski welcomed everyone and Chairman Damato led a lively PowerPoint presentation about South Bethany (visit the C&PR Committee section of www.southbethany.org to view materials). The presentation concluded with an opportunity to solicit viewpoints from the guests regarding South Bethany. The following points are highlights of realtor comments:

- Several agents commented that it is frequently assumed that South Bethany is part of Bethany Beach.
- Several agents noted that they had never been back to the Town Hall nor the west side of South Bethany.
- Several agents remarked that beautification efforts have improved South Bethany's reputation.

- Leslie Kopp commented that since the creation of dunes has alleviated the flooding under oceanfront homes and on Ocean Drive, the “stay away from South Bethany as it floods,” reputation is also receding.
- An agent pointed out that rentals have improved along Ocean Drive because of the beach and dune replenishment efforts.
- A question was posed by an agent – Will we see some changed building restrictions in South Bethany because of revised FEMA regulations? *Mayor Jankowski noted that it appears that FEMA will raise the base elevation level but that has not been determined yet. Councilman Jim Gross added that building restrictions would be reviewed in the near future.*
- An agent noted that the availability of a handicapped wheel chair on the beach is a plus.
- Don Beck stated that he would be leading efforts to update the next SBPOA telephone directory.
- An agent noted that renters like having the beach equipment rental option – but have found they are not consistently there when needed. *Mayor Jankowski responded that the town would seek clarification from the vendor.*
- Don Beck advocated for an updated redesign of the Town of South Bethany website. *Councilman Damato noted that C&PR is currently working on the website and researching options and costs.*
- Don Beck urged the Town to continue to explore the Tidal Pump option. *Councilman Jim Gross commented that the Tidal Pump project is being further studied by the Water Quality Committee with the major issue considered is funding.*
- All agents expressed interest in being on the Town’s Email News Update list and on the Zephyr mailing list.
- Realtors expressed interest in receiving copies of all marketing materials and flyers focused on property improvement, water quality, and safety.
- Agents requested a copy of the feedback questions to distribute at their offices.

The C&PR Committee wishes to thank all the Town employees who helped organize event materials and assist with multiple logistics and set-up. It was a team effort between Town Council and Town employees that led to the successful outcome of the first “Meet and Greet Networking Event.”