

STRATEGIC PLAN

REHOBOTH BEACH HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

THE PROCESS:

For the past several years, the organization has struggled to define our purpose. The Association was created to oppose a developer's plan to erect a high rise on the ocean front. With the reality of Ocean City, Md. to guide them, the organizers launched a long lasting and effective organization to "preserve the character of Rehoboth Beach." The need to preserve the character remains paramount. However, in the absence of crisis, what should the Association do to prepare for crisis? The Association needs to survive, prosper, and be ready to effectively oppose efforts to change the character of Rehoboth Beach. The Strategic Plan was developed to guide the Association.

THE MISSION STATEMENT:

The RBHA is operated to promote the common good and general welfare of the homeowners and residents of the City of Rehoboth Beach for their mutual enjoyment and benefit, preservation of quality of life, fostering its spirit of community and provide a forum for the full and free discussion of all matters of interest. The RBHA serves as an informational and educational forum for its membership, and the RBHA Board may advocate on behalf of its members. (Mission Statement is extracted from the RBHA By-Laws)

THE STRATEGIC PLAN:

- I. PROMOTE THE COMMON GOOD, GENERAL WELFARE, AND PRESERVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE MEMBERSHIP

BACKGROUND: The findings of the RBHA Questionnaire and membership input at the February 19, 2005 General Meeting indicates that the issue of greatest concern to the members was the preservation of the character of Rehoboth Beach. In the questionnaire, respondents expressed concern in a variety of areas: over-development, inadequate zoning, un-enforced building codes, etc. Defining *character* was a key element of the February meeting. Other concerns that flowed from the membership included the need for consistency from all facets of City government in matters such as precedence and down-zoning. There were suggestions that we explore what other community organizations and beach communities are doing.

Goal: To preserve the character of Rehoboth Beach

Strategies:

1. Define *Character*
 - a. Identify key individuals who have a vested interest in, who have shaped, or who have the potential to shape the character of the city. Engage in dialogues with long-term residents, past and present City officials, business owners, and others who have established visions of Rehoboth Beach.

- b. Use the Website and email system to further develop member definitions of character.
2. Find “models for success.” Partner with organizations that have similar objectives.
 - a. Rehoboth is not alone. Research what other beach communities are doing to resolve development problems
 - b. Collaborate with other like-minded organizations in our community to achieve mutual benefits.

II. FOSTER SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND: The goal of fostering the spirit of community has been an integral part of the RBHA since its inception. The organization has sponsored numerous community activities over the years. The “Meet the Candidates” forum has been popular and well-attended year after year. The 2004 city-employee “Thank you” was a great success.

Goal: To be identified as an important resource for homeowners

Strategies:

1. Offer the “Meet the Candidates” forum yearly
 - a. dedicate the evening solely to the program and minimize association business
 - b. advertise and promote the event
 - c. encourage memberships at the program
2. Promote the preservation of character of Rehoboth Beach
 - a. Plant and maintain a “garden” in the city
 - b. Erect a sign identifying RBHA and the purpose of the “garden”
 - c. Sponsor an event featuring a speaker to educate homeowners and residents on native and historical plantings
 - d. Sponsor a plant sale as a charitable fund raiser
 - e. Plant a tree appropriate to the area and preservation goals
 - f. Participate in the annual dune preservation and grass planting
3. Establish an annual “Quality of Life” award
 - a. Develop criteria for the award based on the following themes:
 - 1) Cottages and trees
 - 2) Mix of styles
 - 3) Scale of buildings
 - b. Honor an individual or entity that promotes the above themes or who has donated their own time and efforts to promoting the “Quality of Life” in Rehoboth Beach.

III. PROVIDE A FORUM FOR FULL AND FREE DISCUSSION

BACKGROUND: At the October 2004 General Membership Meeting, the board expressed its concern with the lack of attendance at membership meetings; lack of interest in the activities of the RBHA as evidenced by the small number of active

members and volunteers; the difficulty in recruiting people to run for the board; and other similar issues relating to the future viability of the organization. Several members responded that it is important for the city's residents to have a viable, visible organization in place to speak for the members and act as a source of information should a crisis or *hot button* issue arise in the future.

The issue is how to maintain or increase membership and interest in the RBHA while waiting for this unknown future crisis. If there is insufficient interest, membership will decline and the organization will become a shell incapable of acting when there is the need for it to do so.

Goal: To increase the number of members and stimulate the interest of the membership.

Strategies:

1. Membership Growth

- a. Mail packets containing a Newsletter, membership application, etc. to new residents.
- b. As a catch-up, mail packets to all residents who are not yet members.
- c. Organize voter registration drives.

2. Education and Advocacy

- a. Link our website with other websites.
- b. Work closely with Main Street
- c. Inform and encourage residents to participate in CDP issues as the issues are addressed by the city.

3. Communication----*Timely* communication in addition to the quarterly newsletter

- a. Website
- b. Email
- c. Phone trees
- d. Newspaper notices of RBHA meetings.