

DRAFT (7-8-09)
Revised 8-13-09 & 8-26-09

ANNE MILGRAM, ATTORNEY
GENERAL OF NEW JERSEY, et al.

Plaintiffs,

v.

D. LOBI ENTERPRISES, et al,

Defendants.

SUPERIOR COURT OF NEW JERSEY
CHANCERY DIVISION
MONMOUTH COUNTY

DOCKET NO. C-296-06

Civil Action

CONSENT JUDGMENT BETWEEN
PLAINTIFFS AND DEFENDANT
SURFRIDER BEACH CLUB

WHEREAS, in 1993, the State of New Jersey and the Borough of Sea Bright entered into three-party agreements with Defendant D. Lobi Enterprises a/k/a Surfrider Beach Club and eight other beach clubs in the Borough of Sea Bright in connection with a joint federal, state and municipal shore protection project (the "1993 Agreements"); and

WHEREAS, in the 1993 Agreements, the State of New Jersey and Defendant Surfrider Beach Club and the other beach clubs agreed that the clubs would provide to the State of New Jersey the construction access easements necessary for the project and that public use of the beach in front of the Surfrider Beach Club and the other beach clubs would be limited to a 15-foot-wide limited use corridor; and

WHEREAS, on September 22, 2006, Plaintiffs filed suit against Defendant Surfrider Beach Club and others in the Superior Court of New Jersey, Chancery Division, Monmouth County; and

WHEREAS, Counts I and II of the Plaintiffs' Complaint allege that the terms of the 1993 Agreements limiting public access to a 15-foot wide limited use corridor are contrary to law and public policy, i.e., the Public Trust Doctrine as clarified by the New Jersey Supreme Court's

decision in Raleigh Ave. Beach Ass'n v. Atlantic Beach Club, Inc., 185 N.J. 40 (2005) and by other court decisions; and

WHEREAS, Counts I and II of the Plaintiffs' Complaint seek to reform the 1993 Agreements to obtain additional public access to the dry sand in front of Defendant Surfrider Beach Club and the other Defendant beach clubs; and

WHEREAS, Count III of the Plaintiffs' Complaint alleges that Defendant Surfrider Beach Club and certain other Defendant beach clubs are improperly occupying ungranted State-owned tidelands and limiting public access to these tidelands through their use for beach club operations; and

WHEREAS, Defendant Surfrider Beach Club has denied the material allegations of Plaintiffs' Complaint; and

WHEREAS, Plaintiffs and Defendant Surfrider Beach Club have engaged in an extensive mediation process conducted by Former Chief Justice James Zazzali (the Mediator); and

WHEREAS, in the interest of resolving all claims between them in this litigation, Plaintiffs and Defendant Surfrider Beach Club now agree to settle this matter in accordance with the following terms; and

WHEREAS, Plaintiffs have determined, based on an evaluation of all relevant facts and circumstances, including but not limited to the existence of the 1993 Agreements, that the settlement set forth herein is in the public interest and furthers the Public Trust Doctrine as set forth in the New Jersey Supreme Court's decision in Raleigh Ave. Beach Ass'n v. Atlantic Beach Club, Inc., 185 N.J. 40 (2005) and other legal opinions post-dating 1993 that the State believes have clarified public rights of access to and use of the shores of tidal waterways; and

WHEREAS, the Mediator has advised the court that, in his opinion, this Consent Judgment is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine and is in the public interest.

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS on this _____ day of _____, 2009, ORDERED AND ADJUDGED THAT:

1. PUBLIC USE AREA

a. The 15-foot limited use corridor provided for in the 1993 Agreement between the State of New Jersey, the Borough of Sea Bright, and Defendant Surfrider Beach Club will be replaced by a full public use area of 60% of the Beach (as hereinafter defined), up to a maximum of 150 feet, extending landward from the Annual Mean High Water Mark. As used herein, the Beach shall mean the area between the Erosion Line, as defined in blue on Exhibit A attached hereto (aerial map dated August 2009), and the Annual Mean High Water Mark. The 2009 Mean High Water Mark is shown in magenta on Exhibit A. For the remainder of the term of this Consent Judgment, the Annual Mean High Water Mark will be identified on June 15 annually. Defendant Surfrider Beach Club shall retain exclusive use and control over the beach area landward of the public use area of the Beach provided for herein.

b. In the event of any future beach fill or other expansion of the dry sand beach outshore of the 2009 Mean High Water Mark, the public use area will include the area outshore of the 2009 Mean High Water Mark, as well as 60% of the area between the Erosion Line and the 2009 Mean High Water Mark up to a maximum of 150 feet extending landward from the 2009 Mean High Water Mark.

c. Nothing in this Consent Judgment limits the right of the members of the Surfrider Beach Club and their guests to access the foreshore, the ocean, and the public use area and to

otherwise enjoy in said areas any and all rights and privileges they currently have as beach club members.

d. The public use area may be marked by stakes or by modest signage, but it is not to be delineated by ropes, fences, or the like.

e. Notwithstanding any provision contained herein to the contrary, the Plaintiffs or Defendant may suspend the public-access provisions in Paragraphs 1(a)-(b) of this agreement when the mean high water line for a majority of the beach (defined as greater than 50% of the Defendant's oceanfront footage measured from north to south) has reached the Erosion Line (the blue line on Exhibit A) and remains so for a period of thirty (30) consecutive days. This suspension may continue until the then-current mean high water line for the majority of the beach, as defined above, is entirely seaward of the Erosion Line and remains so for a period of at least thirty (30) days.. If either the Plaintiffs or Defendant Surfrider Beach Club elects to exercise its suspension rights under this provision, public access to the beaches at Defendant Surfrider Beach Club's property during this suspension will revert to the 15-foot limited use corridor of the 1993 Agreements.

2. CONSTRUCTION EASEMENTS

a. The construction easements granted to the State in the 1993 Agreements will remain in effect for the duration of this Consent Judgment.

3. DURATION OF CONSENT JUDGMENT

a. This Consent Judgment shall remain in full force and effect until September 15, 2039.

4. ADDITIONAL PUBLIC ACCESS AMENITIES

a. Defendant Surfrider Beach Club will contribute \$30,000 for the construction of public-access amenities. This contribution shall be paid in two (2) installments of \$15,000 each with the first installment being due ten (10) business days of the date that this Consent Judgment is approved by, and Surfrider Beach Club obtains the conditional lease agreement from, the Tidelands Resource Council as required under paragraph 5 of this Consent Judgment. The second installment shall be paid on the six-month anniversary of such date. This money will be designated to a Sea Bright Public Access Fund, to be managed by the State, which will be used to finance public-access improvements in the Borough. The improvements to be constructed will be identified by the State, in coordination with the Borough and in consultation with Amici Curiae American Littoral Society, Citizens Right to Access Beaches, and representatives of the Sea Bright beach clubs, which will not exceed two in number.

b. The Borough of Sea Bright will be responsible for long-term operation and maintenance of these improvements.

5. TIDELANDS

a. Judgment is hereby entered quieting title in the State of New Jersey in all un-granted, avulsively-filled State-owned tidelands seaward of the Surfrider Beach Club property pursuant to the terms set forth in Appendix A. Nothing herein shall affect the validity of existing State tidelands grants held by Defendant Surfrider Beach Club. Exhibit D hereto depicts the areas of State-owned tidelands and the areas of existing State tidelands grants held by Defendant Surfrider Beach Club.

b. Plaintiffs will recommend to the Tidelands Resource Council that Defendant Surfrider Beach Club resolve all State tidelands claims for past usage and future usage for the duration of this agreement through a payment of \$1,369.

c. The State retains its rights under N.J.S.A. 12:3-1 et. seq. to impose all reasonable and appropriate conditions for Defendant's use of the ungranted State tidelands at the expiration of this Consent Judgment.

d. This Consent Judgment is contingent upon final approval by the Tidelands Resource Council, subject to review and approval by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection and the Attorney General. Plaintiffs will recommend to the Council that it enter into a conditional lease agreement with Defendant Surfrider Beach Club in accordance with this Consent Judgment.

e. In the event this Consent Judgment has not been approved by the Tidelands Resource Council, and reviewed and approved by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection and the Attorney General, within 180 days of the entry hereof, this Consent Judgment shall be vacated, the complaint, and answer with defenses and counterclaim reinstated, and the matter shall be scheduled for trial.

f. All of the terms and conditions of this Consent Judgment including, without limitation, those that pertain to public access shall not take effect until this Consent Judgment is approved by, and Surfrider Beach Club obtains the conditional lease agreement from, the Tidelands Resource Council as required under this paragraph 5.

6. FUTURE REGULATORY APPROVALS

a. Plaintiff State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, will not impose any public access requirements as a term or condition of any permits or approvals it issues to Defendant Surfrider Beach Club for normal beach maintenance, pool maintenance, typical beach club operation activities, seasonal structures, and repair or reconstruction of any

beach club structure within the existing footprint, excepting only the requirement that Defendant Surfrider Beach Club comply with this Consent Judgment.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

a. Beach Badges and Fees: Except for members of Defendant Surfrider Beach Club and their guests, municipal beach badges will be required in public-use areas in front of Defendant Surfrider Beach Club if the club elects to provide lifeguards and beach cleaning services. It will be the Borough's responsibility to make municipal beach badges available.

b. Regulation of the Public-Use Area: Activities in the public-use area will be governed by the rules that apply to municipal beaches in the Borough of Sea Bright.

c. Signage: Department-approved signage must be installed and maintained in front of existing public-access points and any new public-access points.

d. Modification of Agreement: No modification of this agreement will be effective without the written approval of the Plaintiffs and Defendant Surfrider Beach Club.

8. REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY THE COURT

a. The Court has reviewed this Consent Judgment and finds and declares that this Consent Judgment furthers the Public Trust Doctrine and is in the public interest.

Hon. Thomas W. Cavanagh, Jr., P.J. Ch.

The undersigned hereby consent to the form and entry of this Consent Judgment.

ANNE MILGRAM, ATTORNEY GENERAL,
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Date: _____

By: _____

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, DEPARTMENT
OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Date: _____

By: _____

D. LOBI ENTERPRISES

Date: _____

By: _____

BOROUGH OF SEA BRIGHT

Date: _____

By: _____

APPENDIX A

Pursuant to Paragraph 5(a) of this Consent Judgment, judgment is hereby entered quieting title in the State of New Jersey in all un-granted, avulsively-filled State-owned tidelands seaward of the Surfriider Beach Club property.

More specifically, judgment is hereby quieted in the State of New Jersey in all lands within the subject property outshore of the line entitled "1993/1995 Mean High Water Line" in Exhibit D to this Consent Judgment. The lands quieted in the State of New Jersey shall not include any areas subject to State tidelands grants. These lands are hereby quieted in the State of New Jersey free of any claim of the Surfriider Beach Club, except as stated herein.

Title is hereby quieted in the Surfriider Beach Club in all lands within the subject property inshore of the 1993/1995 Mean High Water Line, and to all lands within the applicable State tidelands grants, free of any claim of title of the State of New Jersey, except as stated herein.

The title of the State of New Jersey and the title of the Surfriider Beach Club are subject to natural erosion and accretion in those portions of the subject property that are ungranted. Once the current mean high water line erodes to the location of the 1993/1995 Mean High Water Line, in an ungranted area, then the common law rules concerning title by natural accretion, natural erosion and natural avulsion shall apply, to that extent.

Either party may move to amend this Judgment to identify the area quieted in the State and in the Surfriider Beach Club by metes and bounds upon 60 days notice to the other party.

A copy of the cited maps shall be maintained in the office of the Bureau of Tidelands Management in the Division of Land Use Regulation, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, P.O. Box 439, Trenton, New Jersey 08625 in File Number _____. This Judgment shall be recorded in the Bureau's records in Liber _____ starting at page _____.