

Plum Island's moving pile of sand

To the editor:

Everyone has been asking, "When is the sand at the center going to be put on the beach?" The correct answer is: "It isn't going to happen." As I type the pile once again is moving.

The big question for the DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) is, why not? Thirty-five years ago, Plum Island was in the exact crisis it is now, corrosion in the same place as 1972-73. Homes tilted toward the sea, the Surfside Clam Bar (Jeannie's) was being smashed to smithereens. The difference from then and now is man is taking Jeannie's down by 8-foot sections and we are not allowed to bulldoze the beach. As Kevin Hunt wrote, bulldozers at a very low tide pushed sand toward the homes. From that area the ocean refilled with sand. Very simple solution! What environmental impact can anyone show me this caused 35 years ago? The beach was rebuilt at a low cost.

No, no, says the DEP! You cannot bulldoze barrier island. On the other hand the DEP forced all islanders to hook up to water and sewer. Talk about hypocrites! The DEP enforces that the main road leading to Plum Island (runs through a Great Marsh) be ripped up, every road, driveway, yard be torn to shreds, roads paved on the same barrier island we cannot bulldoze. Hypocrites! What difference does it make if the island is ripped up within its interior or exterior? Why is Salisbury allowed to rebuild their beach? In case the DEP has not noticed, Plum Island and Salisbury are next to each other on the same ocean, within the same state.

For those of you who feel within your hearts that nothing should be done, it is not to cost you a penny. Better think again. Newbury's taxes are paying the highway department, who are moving the pile. Don't forget the fuel!

Bigger money problems ahead! If the island is left to breach, the water and sewer will be shut off. All homes will be condemned. The value of taxable property on the Newbury end — \$399 million. Tax revenue — \$3.4-plus million. Imagine Newbury without 3.4-plus million. How about the betterment fees? Hey, if my house is condemned don't think for a minute I'll finish paying for something I never wanted. The town has bonded the payment. Plum Island/Old Town/Byfield make up the town. A domino effect starts. No money for the schools. Salisbury/Rowley would feel it. All share in the school budget. Not a pretty picture.

Questions to ponder. Let the island breach and lose the tax base for the town with its domino effect? Or bulldoze the beach with the threat of being fined? Homes, island saved — tax base remains. What would be more expensive: to be fined? Or lose the tax base? Seems like a no-brainer to me. A lot is teetering on if anything is done for the island.

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