

BHA Board Candidate for 2023

Paul Carey



Profession and education: M.B.A. University of Maryland, College Park. B.A. in Economics and Finance, The Catholic University of America.

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What is your history with Bald Head Island that has brought you to ownership and now a candidate for BHA? We have owned a home on Bald Head Island since 2001. In that time I have served as a board member of the Bald Head Island Stage Two Association, where I served as president during the transition from developer controlled to homeowner control. Then we focused on the core tasks of the Association and were able to reduce homeowners' annual dues. I also was elected and served for six years as a board member of the Bald Head Island Club, serving as treasurer for five years and as president for one year. In that period we hired new senior management of the club and managed through Covid. Also, we successfully negotiated the purchase of the Shoals Club and Swans Quarters from the Mitchell family.

What professional skills and life experiences do you feel would be most valued as a member of the BHA Board? I have been fortunate to experience success in my professional career. From a business perspective, I have been a senior executive of a NYSE listed company. I have served as CEO of a technology company and as an active owner of a few other companies. I know how to get things done.

As a BHI property owner, what aspect of Island life is most important to you as a key to BHI's future and, if elected, how would you help craft that future? Bald Head Island is in a transition since the passing of George Mitchell. The island now has 700 unbuilt homesites, so the growth in population will continue for the foreseeable future. The BHA needs to be an effective representative of the property owners working with the Village and the commercial businesses to ensure the expected growth will be accommodated by island infrastructure including transportation. The Association must get back to basics of managing the architectural control process more effectively and to become an effective advocate for the property owners in the area of transportation.

Platform/Philosophy/Positions — Address these real-world questions:

Property owners seem to want BHA to represent them in more than just land use issues. What new dimensions to their role should the BHA Board be considering and discussing? Why is this important? The BHA doesn't need to do more things. It needs to perform its current responsibilities better. The responsibilities of effective architecture control of BHA properties and advocating for homeowners on island-wide issues (principally transportation) should be the focus of the Association.

The trend toward a "resort-like" Island poses issues for the property owners who favor a culture of stewardship and conservancy. A fissure seems to be developing. What are some of the mechanisms BHA might encourage to ensure we strengthen our "community"? I don't believe a fissure as you describe is happening. Every property owner who is a member of the BHA purchased their property understanding that the plan was to build and develop 2000 homes on the island with associated commercial development to support those homes. The BHA should be a good steward and manage the expected development of the future homesites appropriately within the written architectural guidelines. The Village is currently reviewing commercial zoning on the Island and has been very proactive in getting homeowners' input. The BHA should encourage that input to the Village from owners.

Change is inevitable and island growth will continue. The BHA should be active with other island organizations in managing that growth. Pining for the past is not a solution for making the island better as it continues to grow.

Should BHA have any influence over commercial development on the Island? If so, in what areas? The BHA is challenged in meeting current responsibilities today. It does not need to expand those responsibilities to commercial property that is governed by Village zoning and the commercial property owners' association. The current Village government has been very active in getting property owners' input on zoning, and the BHA should encourage property owners to communicate with the Village directly.

How could the BHA Board and the Village Council better work in tandem to ensure an alignment of goals for the Island and the means to implement? I would encourage a more formal organization of island leadership to discuss the future of the island. The Village, the BHA, The Bald Head Island Club, the Conservancy, the commercial property owners' association, and smaller island HOAs should have regular public meetings to discuss island issues.

I think the island's leadership failed in the ongoing transportation debate (including the BHA and the Village). There is a lot of blame to be spread around as to the causes, but the apparent lack of communication among island leadership during that process hurt the island. The public rebuke of the Village by the BHA in a letter from in November 2021 was an irresponsible act of an organization that purports to represent property owners. The island deserves leadership that looks to solve issues not to lay public blame. Writing a four-page public letter and copying state government officials is not leadership and has set the island back in solving the transportation problem.

We can do better.