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LAND USE

Neighbors file appeal of staff ruling on townhomes

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A proposed townhouse development on Petigru Drive will cause drainage and traffic problems and conflict with the county's future land use plan, opponents say.

But that's only part of the reason they have asked the Georgetown County Planning Commission to overturn the staff decision to grant conceptual approval to the project.

"I'm essentially appealing a decision I don't think they have the authority to make," said Cindy Person, chief counsel for Keep It Green Advocacy.

She represents neighbors and citizens groups who object to the 46 townhouses and three single-family lots proposed for the 8-acre tract in the Parkersville community at Pawleys Island.

The project, known as Sweetgrass West, is the first submitted since County Council revised its procedure to allow the planning staff to determine if it complies with the county's rules and regulations. Previously, multi-family projects with more than 10 units were reviewed by the Planning Commission, which held a public hearing. They then went to County Council for final approval.

The process was changed after a series of projects drew public outcry but were approved because they complied with the county zoning ordinance and development regulations. Three of those projects are the subject of lawsuits.

For Sweetgrass West, the county sent notices to property owners within 600 feet and put a sign on the road that a multi-family project was under review.

The planning staff addressed the public comments in a report to the Planning Commission, noting that the project will need to meet a higher standard for stormwater management because it is in a "special protection area"; that wetlands proposed for filling will be done with a federal permit that requires mitigation; and that the

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Photos by Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Guerry Green hands out ice cream before the Pawleys Island Fourth of July Parade. Below, two participants got Bomb Pops as they passed his house.

PAWLEYS ISLAND

Town rules take their licks during July Fourth parade

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The Pawleys Island Fourth of July Parade was headed north along Myrtle Avenue.

The crowd was headed south, drawn not by the lights, sirens and stirrings of patriotic tunes, but by the music-box tinkling of the ice cream truck.

"That's just something I remember as a kid, hearing the ice cream truck and trying to scrape up a quarter," Guerry Green said.

Only they didn't have to come up with any money to get ice cream from the truck parked across from his house. It was free.

Otherwise it would have violated the town's prohibition on commercial activity.

In the long tradition of island parades, Green, a Town Council member, staged a protest over the town's regulations.

"Make Ice Cream & Dogs Great Again on Pawley's Island," read the banner.

The ice cream truck belonged to Michael Grant, whose day job is building manager at Waccamaw Elementary School.

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BEACHES

An 80-foot right of way, but no room for parking

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

A group of Pawleys Island area residents this week appealed to the town to do something about property owners encroaching in the state road right of way on the island's north end.

"There's been so many people moving here that there's just not enough parking for the common people," said Ron Rader, who told Town Council that he started coming to the island as a child in the early 1960s.

After he found that his usual parking spots on Atlantic Avenue occupied by fences, trash cans and other things, he went to the county courthouse to look through the property records. Rader handed out a plat to the council members showing an 80-foot right of way on the road.

"If you drive down there, you'll see how many people have encroached on that right of way," he said. "Before, it was OK; there weren't that many people. We didn't pay that much attention to it."

The town has paid attention to the right of way. In 2011, officials considered using a portion of the 80 feet as a pedestrian path, which would have eliminated parking places.

Guy Osborne, the police

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Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

The right of way on Atlantic Avenue is 80 feet wide.

CHURCHES | Pawleys Island Community

Growing family of worshipers drives \$6.7 million expansion

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

Pawleys Island Community Church is bursting at the seams and recently unveiled a \$6.75 million expansion plan.

"Our church is very grateful it's growing and we've added a lot of new people in the last year-and-a-half," the Rev. Don Williams, the church pastor, said. "We just really have run out of space."

Planning for the expansion project, which is called "Make Room," started about three years ago.

"You want to make sure you're doing the right thing," Williams said.

Not only is the project de-

signed to accommodate more people, but also new ministries, Williams added.

"I'm very excited to see what it can do for all the ministries that we have and to see the buildings fill up," he said.

Tom Curtis, an architect with Grace, Hebert, Curtis Architects in Dallas, designed the project. Curtis did a lot of work for Tideland Health and attended services at the community church while in the area.

The first part of the project will include expanding the foyer of the church's worship center. Williams said people jokingly call the narrow foyer a "cattle shoot," because it gets crowded quickly when people are leaving the first service at



Pawleys Island Community Church

An open pavilion in part of the first phase of the project.

the same time people are arriving for the second service.

The project will widen the area near the doors by a few

feet.

The expansion of the foyer could start as soon as September and includes the addition

of a coffee bar.

"We just want to have some space for people to hang out," Williams said. "It's going to be a nice place for people to be able to gather and build a community."

The church does not plan to close the worship center during construction, although there could be some "inconvenience," as people are asked to use an alternate entrance, Williams said.

The project will continue with construction of a 6,100-square-foot pavilion in the field next to the building that houses the church's offices. The structure will include a cement floor and garage doors

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