

# COASTAL OBSERVER

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The finalists meet the public. At left, Gregory Hall and William Wright, at rear in cap. At right, Glenda Sheffield and Bethany Giles, at rear in red.

## LAND USE

### Dark clouds of opposition gather over proposed solar farm

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

An investment firm has delayed its request for approval for Georgetown County's second large-scale solar farm in the face of opposition from residents and property owners in the Plantersville community.

Sunrise Renewables is seeking zoning approval to build two solar farms on 5,700 acres that it will lease from a timber company. One site will generate up to 213 megawatts of electricity. The other will generate up to 150 megawatts and have a battery storage facility.

Sunrise is owned by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, a global firm that invests in renewable energy projects. Among its projects is Vineyard Wind, an 800 megawatt project off the coast of Massachusetts that is the first large-scale offshore wind farm in the U.S.

The planning department started receiving complaints about the project, known as the Plantersville Renewable Energy Center, before it received the application for a "solar energy facility floating district," said Holly Richardson, the county planning director.

It was scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Commission today.

The scores of letters and emails opposing the project came from local residents, owners of plantation and former rice fields along the Pee Dee River and hunters and outdoor enthusiasts from around the Southeast.

"I think they've been made aware of some concerns," Richardson said of the applicants, who told her they plan to present their request in October.

There is a 200 megawatt solar farm under construction in the rural Lambertown community. It was approved by the

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## EDUCATION | The superintendent search

### Final four share goals with public

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Nearly 100 people stopped by the Georgetown County School District office on Tuesday to hear from the four educators who want to be the next superintendent.

Bethany Giles, Gregory Hall, Glenda Sheffield and William Wright were each given a chance to talk about their background and goals for the district, and then mingled with the crowd to answer questions, accept hugs and take pictures.

GILES, the district's current interim superintendent, grew up in Andrews.

"I'm driven and I'm motivated by the desire to assist, to lead, and to serve," Giles added. "I'm honored and I'm humbled to serve the district that has essentially raised me."

Giles has worked in Georgetown for 23 years as a teacher and assistant principal at Rosemary Middle School, athletic



The candidates gathered after the forum. They were kept apart beforehand and introduced in alphabetical order: Giles, left, Hall, Sheffield and Wright.

coach at Andrews High School, principal at Brown's Ferry Elementary School and Carvers Bay High School, executive director of secondary schools and athletics, and deputy superintendent of academics and student services.

She took over as interim superintendent on July 1, replacing Keith Price who stepped down to become the superintendent-elect of the Lexington 1 School District.

Although Giles said the district is not perfect, she "proudly stated" that it is improving, focusing on its goals and pursuing perfection.

"As I reflect on the responsibilities and opportunities ahead, I see this as a pivotal moment to continue advancing our initiatives of improving discipline, enhancing our learning environment and fostering student well-being," she added.

SHEFFIELD, who grew up in Plantersville, is the chief

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## PAWLEYS ISLAND

### ARB turns down beach house design

BY CHARLES SWENSON  
COASTAL OBSERVER

The design for a beach house that would replace a house from the 1940s in the Pawleys Island historic district was denied by the town's Architectural Review Board after members said it wasn't compatible with the 19th century home on the property.

And town officials questioned whether the spirit of a deal that allowed the property owners to replace the newer house in exchange for preserving the facade of the older house was being followed.

"Am I the only one concerned about the square footage and the changes?" board member Frank Robinson asked.

"No, you're not," said Ken Leach, who chairs the review board.

It was the first plan the board had denied since the guidelines were adopted in 2021.



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer



Port Arthur, above, was torn down with a variance from the town. The plan for a new house, left, was denied by the ARB.

Brian and Staci Inskeep received a variance earlier this year to remove the 1940s beach

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## ENVIRONMENT

### Living shoreline comes to life on bay

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI  
COASTAL OBSERVER

Three years after the planning for a living shoreline at the head of Winyah Bay started, installation has begun.

"It's a great area and it is massively eroding," said Liz Fly, director of resilience and ocean conservation for The Nature Conservancy, and the project's manager. "We have seen this shoreline continue to get eaten away."

The shoreline is at Morgan Park, which is next to East Bay Park and just outside the entrance to the Georgetown harbor. It's a sandy spit that has eroded from the current flowing into the bay from the Pee Dee and Black rivers.

Living shorelines use plants or other natural elements —



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Erosion at Morgan Park.

sometimes in combination with harder shoreline structures — to stabilize estuarine coasts, bays and tributaries.

The Morgan Park project consists of a wooden breakwater that will reduce wave energy and erosion, wooden wattle

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## INSIDE THIS ISSUE



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