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Photos by Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

The port property is across the harbor from East Bay Park in Georgetown. Ideas for redeveloping the port would create links along the city's waterfront.

PORT OF GEORGETOWN

Making the connection

Clemson students present their ideas for redevelopment

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

In the dead of winter, with its paper mill closed for good and its steel mill sitting idle, there were signs of green shoots that could one day emerge along the Georgetown waterfront from the redevelopment of its former state port.

Four teams of Clemson University architecture students showed what could emerge in a presentation to local officials this week, the product of a semester spent in the studio and an \$80,000 federal grant Georgetown County received last year.

"It's exciting. It gives the project energy," Georgetown Mayor Carol Jayroe said as she looked over models and drawings created by the students.

The port was turned over to Georgetown County by the state in 2023. A ship hasn't docked there since 2016.

Along with the 45 acres on the harbor and a tract for dredge spoils along the Sampit River, the state provided \$2.5 million for repairs and cleanup at the site.

An environmental analysis commissioned by the county found some cleanup will be needed, but it won't qualify as a "brownfields" site, County Administrator Angela Christian



A model shows the view from Francis Marion Park across Goat Island toward the port property, where County Council Members Raymond Newton, left, and Clint Elliott talk about the proposals.

said. But the work will take time. The county plans to use the ideas generated by the Clemson students to draft a request for

proposals from firms to create a development plan for the site. "I wanted this to be the start of the conversation in the

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Former administrator on track for seat on DOT commission

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The former Georgetown County administrator is on track to get a seat on the state Department of Transportation Commission.

Sel Hemingway was one of two new commission members and two returning members at a confirmation hearing before the Senate Transportation Committee meeting this week.

With approval from the committee, Hemingway will require approval from state lawmakers in the eight-county 7th Congressional District.

Hemingway will replace Tony Cox, a retired vice president at Burroughs & Chapin Co. in Myrtle Beach and a former chairman of the Horry County Planning Commission. Cox served two four-year terms.

Local legislators agreed the appointment will be good for Georgetown County, whose last resident DOT commission member was Mike Wooten, an engineer from Murrells Inlet.

"Tony Cox did a wonder-



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Sel Hemingway served seven years as county administrator.

ful job. He was good for the area and good for Georgetown," state State Rep. Lee Hewitt said. "To follow up with a new commissioner that knows the area inside and out is the perfect choice, especially when you

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EDUCATION

Snow's disruption continues in search for make-up days

BY CHRIS SOKOLOSKI
COASTAL OBSERVER

It is back to the drawing board for the Georgetown County School District after the school board voted down a proposal to make up days missed during January's snowstorm.

Scott Batton, the district's executive director of human resources and a member of the district's calendar committee, proposed using March 21 and April 18, which are designated as staff development/teacher work days.

The district missed three days due to the snowstorm. State law allows the district to ask the state to waive one makeup day.

Board Member Robert Cox questioned the use of April 18 since it is Good Friday and a lot of families travel that weekend. "I would just ask that we

possibly reconsider that day," Cox said. "See if there is another day that would be more appropriate."

April 18 is also the Friday before the week of spring break.

Kristi Kibler, the district's director of communications, pointed out that April 18 was already listed as a possible weather makeup day on the calendar that was approved by the board.

Cox was a member of the board that approved the calendar in October 2023, as was Scott DuBose, who also voted against the makeup days proposal.

"I'm not sure anybody recognized that was Good Friday when it was put on the calendar," Cox said.

Superintendent Bethany Giles said taking a day away from a vacation week hasn't

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PAWLEYS ISLAND | Preserving the 'look'

Variance allows old house to straddle new beachfront lots

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The owner of a Pawleys Island house that dates to 1939 will have to preserve the structure for at least 10 years in exchange for a variance that will allow it to encroach on a newly-created oceanfront lot.

But it is the investment in renovations rather than the variance that will preserve the Gibbes Cottage, according to the real estate broker who handled the sale in 2020.

"If you look at the amount of money that's going to be invested in this property," said Lee Hewitt, owner of Garden City

The Gibbes Cottage sits on 1.75 acres on the ocean at Pawleys Island.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

Realty and a state House member, "nobody would invest that kind of money and tear it down in 10 years."

The variance approved this week by the Pawleys Island Board of Zoning Appeals was the latest effort by the town to try to preserve houses that give the island its "look."

The Gibbes Cottage sits on 1.75 acres of beachfront

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Freezin' for a reason: It only looked like a spring day on Litchfield Beach. **Second Front**



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