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Corps takes comments on plan to move Pawleys Inlet

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The Army Corps of Engineers is taking comments from the public and other agencies on a request to move Pawleys Inlet and repair erosion damage along the beach at Prince George.

Permit application from PG Inlet Partners follows the settlement earlier this year of lawsuits filed by Prince George property owners against the town of Pawleys Island, its

contractors and the state that claimed the town's 2020 renourishment project caused the inlet to migrate over half a mile to the south.

The settlement provided \$4 million for the work, which included the purchase by PG Inlet Partners of 16 acres south of public parking lot for \$1.3 million. The partnership granted an easement to the town for access to the inlet.

PG Inlet Partners want to dredge a new inlet across the south end of Pawleys Island

A stake marks the northern limit of the proposed inlet management zone.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

about 1,000 feet south of the parking lot, according to the permit application. The new inlet will be 350 feet wide and about 8 feet deep.

Up to 300,000 cubic yards of sand will be excavated from the spit to form the new inlet and from shoals around the

SEE "PERMIT," PAGE 3



TRADITIONS | Pawleys Island Crawfish Festival

The taste of success, flavored with nostalgia

BY MADISON SHARROCK
COASTAL OBSERVER

Lindy Myers of Pawleys Island still remembers the blues sounds of the Mulletts, the crisp and slightly malty taste of Fosters beer and the smell of Cajun seasoning from the S.C. Crawfish Festival and Aquaculture Fair in 1994.

"I don't remember any kids being there," she said. "A lot of drinking, and eating, and a lot of drinking."

Last weekend's inaugural S.C. Crawfish and Music Festival lived up to the 15-year legacy the previous festival had from 1980 to 1995, she said.

Myers was among a crowd of at least 3,000 people. Seven local chefs came up with crawfish dishes in a chef competition for the audience to sample and vote for the best. Adam Kirby, chef and co-owner of Bistro 217, was crowned Crawfish King of the Day.

Many things stayed the same other than the crowd and the Fosters that took the backseat to Michelob Ultra.

"It's different. There aren't as many locals that I have noticed because this area's had a lot of newcomers," Myers said. "I could walk through and know 20, 25, 30 people, and now I've seen three."

She stood under the VIP tent, a new feature of the festival at JB's Celebration Park, and was sporting the festival T-shirt that she bought in 1994.

"Mine won't fit me anymore," SEE "CRAWFISH," PAGE 4



Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer

A crawfish sashays through J.B.'s Celebration Park for the weekend festival that revived a Pawleys Island tradition.

PAWLEYS ISLAND

Town takes closer look at business license plan

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

The beach, the drainage, the creek and the money remain at the top of the list six years after Pawleys Island Town Council picked its top priorities for maintaining the character and culture of the barrier island community.

But with three new members elected last year, the council sharpened its focus at a planning retreat last week, adding historic preservation to its priorities and taking a closer look at a business license.

The original strategic plan followed the completion of a beach renourishment project. Despite some sand lost to Hurricane Ian in 2022 "the beach held up well," Mayor Brian Henry said.

Keeping it that way and obtaining easements from three south end property owners to allow federal funding for future renourishment remains the top priority. But Sarah Zimmerman, who has served 28 years on the council, said it can't be the only one.

"Without the revenue, we can't do the beach," she said. "Without the beach, we don't have the revenue."

Pawleys Island doesn't have a municipal property tax. The current state law doesn't allow the town to impose one, said Charlie Barrineau, field representative with the S.C. Municipal Association.

Out of 271 municipalities in SEE "PAWLEYS," PAGE 3

GEORGETOWN | Redeveloping the waterfront

County to buy old Customs House for \$5.2M

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

Georgetown County Council agreed this week to buy the historic Customs House in Georgetown for \$5.2 million to use as administrative offices.

The 4-3 vote followed a closed-door executive session. Council Chairman Clint Elliott, who supported the purchase, said the vote could have gone either way.

"It was a surprise to us," he said of the result.

The county had already received two extensions on a contract to buy the building, which SEE "COUNTY," PAGE 2

The building went on the market last year for \$5.85 million.

Charles Swenson/Coastal Observer



LAND USE

Change to development plan brings new lawsuit from neighbors

BY CHARLES SWENSON
COASTAL OBSERVER

An amendment to a zoning change that is the subject of a lawsuit is also being challenged in court by neighbors opposed to the development of a residential subdivision on Pawleys Creek.

The suit filed this week in Circuit Court against Georgetown County and Magic Oaks LLC follows County Council's approval in January of a change to the "flexible design district" zoning for the Magic Oaks development that removed a public kayak launch and altered the

location of a community building.

After the amendment, attorneys for Magic Oaks, whose principal is Tripp Nealy, sought to have a 2024 suit challenging the initial zoning change dismissed along with an appeal pending before the state Court of Appeals.

Without the kayak ramp, which opponents said was approved in violation of state law and county ordinance, "there no longer exists any controversy," Magic Oaks argued in a court filing.

It said that the neighbors' SEE "SUIT," PAGE 2

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Arts: WHS Acting Troupe brings "Mamma Mia the Musical" to the stage. **PAGE 7**



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