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Jekyll Island north end oceanfront property to undergo revitalization

By Pamela Permar Shierling

"It has taken over three years to renew and revitalize that property," said Jones Hooks, Executive Director of the Jekyll Island Authority, "but staff is recommending that we move forward with Carolina Holdings, Inc. (CHI) and draft a lease."

Hooks was referencing the site of the former Jekyll Oceanfront Clarion Resort which has been bank owned for a number of years.

"After receiving a number of proposals," Hooks said, "we finally received proposals from two groups which were pre-approved by the bank, and Carolina Holdings came to the top."

Gary Wadsten, Managing Partner for CHI, along with local architect Larry Bryson, outlined the plans for the new development, which will be called The Cottages at Jekyll Island and The Oceanfront Apartments at Jekyll Island.

"Two different land utilizations are combined to create the business plan for this oceanfront development site," Wadsten said.

"The Cottages at Jekyll Island will not look or feel quite like anything else there today," he said. They will be spacious with upscale finishes (granite, hardwood, tile, etc).

The architecture will blend in with and compliment Jekyll Island. The cottages, designed by Bryson, will have ample outdoor living space. Many will have a single car garage. The final design is still under review.

There will be 98 cottage-style town homes, 1,600 to 1,800 sq. ft., on 10 acres which will be sold to individuals. A new homeowners association will be formed. Covenants will ensure building and grounds maintenance, common area enjoyment, refurbishment, green space and JIA compliance.

Wadsten will act as president of the

homeowners association. The JIA may appoint a member.

Cottage owners are required to use Parker-Kaufman Realtors as property managers and rental agents.

The Cottages will have an Amenity Center and a casual outdoor dining establishment open to the public.

Oceanfront Apartments at Jekyll will be built on the remaining four acres and consist of about 70, one and two bedroom garden apartments only allowing long term rental.

The style will, of course, be compatible with Jekyll.

"The density," Wadsten said, "will be less than what is there now."

The good news for the JIA is that the entire Clarion resort will be demolished.

"We are even going to demolish the pool," Wadsten said. "We will only keep the hole in the ground for the new pool."

CHI plans four years to develop and sell out the property. The first eight cottages are scheduled to be finished by December 2015 with more cottages scheduled for completion by December 2016 and December 2017. The apartments are scheduled for completion by May 2016.

The development players include: Developer – Carolina Holdings Group (Gary Wadsten); Architect – Larry Bryson, P.C. (Larry Bryson); Civil Engineer – Roberts Engineering (Johnathan Roberts); Environmental Engineer – TBD; Arborist – Arborguard (David Dechant); Demolition Contractor – TBD; General Contractor – TBD; Corporate Counsel – The Guyton Law Firm (Robert 'Shep' Guyton); Local Counsel – Ligon, Lindbergh & Lanier, PC (William Ligon); Sales/Marketing – Parker-Kaufman Realtors (Jay Kaufman); Property & Rental

Management – Parker-Kaufman Realtors (Jay Kaufman).

Carolina Holdings Inc is located in Greenville, S.C. and has been in business for 27 years. The bulk of their development is retail. □

County to keep inflation revenue

By Matthew J. Permar

By the time this edition of *The Islander* hits the street on Monday, the Glynn County Commission will be about to wrap up the last of their three public hearings that are legally required when they decide to keep an increase in property tax revenue.

The first of the three public hearings was held at the start of their regular meeting on Thursday, July 17. The other two are scheduled for 10:00 am and 5:00 pm on Tuesday, July 29. The commission is also expected to approve the millage rate at the 5:00 pm meeting.

If the value of the tax digest increases due to inflation or to new or improved properties and the local government decides to keep the increase instead of rolling the millage rate back, State law requires city and county commissions to notify their constituents.

The increase must be advertised and three public hearings must be held.

County property tax revenue is going up this year due to inflation based on a number of property revaluations that resulted in increased property values.

Most property owners will not see an increase, but the impact will vary on each individual assessment and tax bill.

If your property value is the same as last year, your tax bill will not go up.

If your property was reassessed at a higher value, your tax bill will go up, unless you are protected by the Scarlett-Williams Bill, in which case it won't go up.

The Fiscal Year 2014/15 budget was adopted using 5.673 mills as the millage rate.

The county administration and

commission knew there was a potential for having to rollback the millage rate or advertise a property tax increase.

The rollback rate is 5.617. If the millage rate was rolled back the Commissioners would need to take an additional \$234,724 from the fund balance to balance the FY14/15 budget.

In her presentation to the commissioners, County Finance Director Tonya Miller said, "If the economy continues to improve, it is likely that counties will continue to either rollback their millage rates or advertise property tax increases annually." □

Village Inn owners chosen for former 'Fins'

By Pamela Permar Shierling

The Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) has chosen Michelle and George Stewart to manage the former Fins Restaurant after plans for a student managed restaurant operated by the College of Coastal Georgia fell through.

Jones Hooks, Executive Director of the Jekyll Island Authority, told the JIA board that their RFPs (request for proposal) had drawn nine potential proposers. "Four followed through with the mandatory visit," Hooks said.

"We short listed two of those and after meeting with them we are recommending Michelle and George Stewart's proposal."

Hooks described the new restaurant as "alternative Baja Mexican."

Stewart agreed saying, "This will not be traditional Mexican food," he said. "We will, of course, feature fresh seafood and have a lighter fare. And as our patrons of Slider's know, we have an 'under water' menu. If something isn't on the menu, they can always ask for it."

The Stewart's manage Slider's Restaurant on Amelia Island and the Village Inn and Pub on St. Simons Island.

The Jekyll restaurant is expected to open early 2015. □

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