

THE Seabrooker

VOL 24 • ISSUE 8 • AUGUST 2021

CELEBRATING INDEPENDENCE DAY ON SEABROOK ISLAND

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FROM TOWN HALL

Joe Cronin

Under the South Carolina Local Government Comprehensive Planning Enabling Act of 1994, municipal and county governments are required to have a local Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. These two bodies undertake several important – though often overlooked – functions for local governments. So who are these bodies and what do they do?

Planning Commission

The town's Planning Commission consists of five members, each of whom are appointed by Town Council for a term of two years. Each member must be a registered voter of the town and shall either reside or own property within the town limits. No member may hold any other public office in the town or county.

The Planning Commission is responsible for undertaking a continuing planning program for the physical, social and economic growth, development and redevelopment of land within the town.

To fulfill this role, one of the primary functions of the Planning Commission is to prepare, review and periodically update the town's official comprehensive plan. In order to implement the recommendations of the plan, the Commission is also charged with preparing and recommending to Town Council specific instruments and measures, including:

- Zoning ordinances, zoning district maps and appropriate revisions thereto;
- Regulations for the subdivision and development of land;
- An official map and appropriate revisions showing the exact location of existing or proposed public streets, highways, utility rights-of-way and public building sites;
- A landscaping ordinance providing required planting, tree preservation and other aesthetic considerations;
- A capital improvements program listing projects required to implement the adopted plans; and
- Policies and procedures to implement adopted elements of the comprehensive plan.

The Commission is responsible for overseeing the administration of subdivision and land development regulations upon adoption by Town Council, including, but not limited to, the review and approval of subdivision plats, as well as commercial and multi-family development plans. The Commission may also be tasked by Town Council with reviewing and providing recommendations on any other municipal matter, such as the review of encroachment permits and the periodic update of the town's Beach Management Plan.

An appeal of any decision by the Planning Commission must be made to the circuit court for Charleston County within thirty days after actual notice of the decision. A property owner whose land is the subject of a decision of the Planning Commission may appeal by filing a notice of appeal with the circuit court accompanied by a request for pre-litigation mediation in accordance with the SC Code of Laws.

Board of Zoning Appeals

The town's Board of Zoning Appeals is a "quasi-judicial" body. The Board is made up of five members, each of whom must be residents of the town. Board members are appointed by Town Council for a five-year term.

The Board has three specific powers, duties, and responsibilities:

- To hear and decide appeals for variances from the requirements of the zoning ordinance when strict application of the provisions of the ordinance would result in unnecessary hardship. State law outlines four criteria which must be met in order to qualify for a variance. In deciding whether to grant a variance, the Board must determine whether the request meets each of the four criteria;
- To permit uses by special exception when designated within the zoning ordinance; and
- To hear and decide appeals where it is alleged there is an error in an order, requirement, decision or determination made by an administrative official in the enforcement of the zoning ordinance.

Prior to acting on any variance, special exception or appeal, the Board must provide public notice of all hearings in a newspaper of general circulation, as well as due notice to all parties in interest. At the hearing, any party may appear in person, or be represented by an agent or attorney.

In exercising its powers, the Board may reverse or affirm, wholly or in part, or may modify the order, requirements, decision, or determination, and to that end, has all the powers of the officer from whom the appeal is taken and may issue or direct the issuance of a permit.

The Board, in the execution of its duties, may subpoena witnesses and, in case of contempt, may certify this fact to the circuit court having jurisdiction.

The Board must issue a decision on all appeals and requests within a reasonable time. All final decisions and orders of the board must be in writing and be permanently filed as a public record. All findings of fact and conclusions of law must be separately stated in final decisions or orders of the Board and must be delivered to parties of interest by certified mail.

Any person having substantial interest in a decision of the Board or an officer or agent of the town may appeal the Board's decision to the circuit court for Charleston County by filing with the Clerk of Court a written petition setting forth plainly, fully, and distinctly why the decision is contrary to law. The appeal must be filed within thirty days after the decision of the Board is mailed.

On behalf of the Mayor and Council, we would like to recognize and thank the following individuals for their service to the Town of Seabrook Island:

Planning Commission Members: Ken Otstot (Chair), Wayne Billian, Sharon Welch, Jim Newton and Stan Ullner

Board of Zoning Appeals Members: Walter Sewell (Chair), John Fox, Janet Gorski, Bob Leggett and Tom Pinckney

For more information about the town's Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, including copies of agendas and minutes and links to live streamed meetings, please visit our website at www.townofseabrookisland.org. ▲



Please send correspondence to: TheSeabrooker@yahoo.com

"Communication is the beginning of understanding."

The Seabrooker will report regularly on Island happenings, as well as newsworthy events that affect property owners and residents. As Seabrooker volunteers with a common objective, we are committed to securing the facts and reporting to you in a forthright, honest and unbiased manner.

Co-Founders: Red Ballentine, (1924-2006) Fred Bernstein (1924-2010) Co-Founders

Editor: Michael Morris, Publisher: Bernstein Lash Marketing, Advertising & Layout: Teri B. Lash

THIS MONTH'S SEABROOKER VOLUNTEERS (ARTICLES & PHOTOS)

Faye Allbritton, Barbara Burgess, Bob Leggett, Jerry Reves, MD, Mark Andrews, Joe Cronin, Dale Leibach, Ralph Secoy, Joe Beckert, JoAnne Fagan, Patti Leibach, Sam Spence

CONTACTING THE SEABROOKER Please send correspondence and inquiries regarding editorials to TheSeabrooker@yahoo.com or call 843.408.3707

The entry deadline for all items is the 15th of the month. Please limit Cap'n Sams letters to 400 words. Photos should be in high resolution (5" x7" at 200 dpi or more).

FOR ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITIES, PLEASE CONTACT Teri B. Lash • 843.747.7767 • TLash@BernsteinLash.com

CORNHOLE ALERT!!

Mark your calendars NOW

Saturday, October 2nd

Plan on joining us for SIV's

2nd Annual

CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT

Registration forms are located at the Lake House, Tennis Center, and the Golf Shop.

We are looking forward to a terrific day filled with fun and lots of CORNHOLE games.

Seabrook Island Village



Neighbors Helping Neighbors



Dear Cap'n Sam, Dear Fellow Members of SIC: Since the open meeting of the Board of Governors on June 24, the Board and management have taken important steps to improve safeguards against outsider access. The requirement of amenity cards for admission and service at the golf, tennis, and food and beverage venues are positive actions for which we thank the Board.

But many members have experienced continuing problems with outsider access to the Beach Club and pool area. Amenity cards are not being required of all entrants there and management is not staffing the entry gates. Also, there has been no progress in opening up the Island House with quality food and beverage. Help get our club back to a not-for-profit private club—following its bylaws—by writing directly to the BOG and to Club management if you have suggestions that could improve your membership satisfaction. Please email both. ▲

Mark Doane

Kismet, Kharma or Coincidence: 3 Bailey Named Dogs!



Shortly after the 4th of July festivities subsided, three families on Rolling Dune began to enjoy the peacefulness of the holiday week on North Beach. Heard throughout the week were various voices from three households with Bailey dog commands: "Bailey, not so loud", "Bailey, fetch", "Bailey, stop running away from me!" Before the end of the week the Hall family (2248 Rolling Dune), the Bailey family (ha, ha) (2250 Rolling Dune) and the Breen family (2252 Rolling Dune) realized we all had special guests. Three rambunctious dogs named Bailey. So, on Friday we all met at 5 p.m. for special pictures to capture the moment. It only took 3-5 attempts to get every participant looking the same direction!

Cynthia Nixon Bailey

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Alan Fleming Fall Senior Clay Competition; Registration Dates Set by United States Tennis Association

The 37th annual Alan Fleming Senior Clay Court Tennis Tournament is back! Registration has been set for the 37th annual Alan Fleming Senior Open Clay Court Tennis Tournament for players age 35 and up. The United States Tennis Association (USTA) sanctioned tournament will be held October 6-10 at the Seabrook Island Racquet Club. The tournament has gained a reputation and a following with ranked tennis players from around the country.

The tournament was postponed and then cancelled in 2020 due to Covid-19 and concerns about player and spectator safety during the pandemic.

In 2020, the USTA changed its tournament structures and the awarding of points. Those changes impacted the number of tournaments and combined state clay open championships at level one, the highest level, and the clay mixed doubles national level one that awards ITF points to players.

Debbie Pickens, tournament chair, said, "The Fall tournament has for years received accolades from players from as many as two dozen states, spanning from California to Washington State and Maine. It has built a reputation as one of the premier tournaments in the

Southeastern United States. With the designation of one of the most prestigious tournaments, it is important for competitive players who receive ranking points."

Players have previously ranked the Fleming as the "best tournament of the year."

The tournament has not only attracted skilled players, but it also attracts spectators from Seabrook Island, Kiawah and from South Carolina and beyond. The popular tournament serves as a showcase for the racquet club as well as all of Seabrook Island. This has made the tournament a big draw for players and spectators alike.

Laura Ferreira, director of racquet sports on Seabrook Island and tournament chair, said, "The national level designation was important and a big honor. It was an acknowledgement of all the efforts to make the Fleming one of the best competitive tournaments in the country."

"The Fleming and all the activities associated with it will be back in the Fall. It will be the tennis and the competition that has made the tournament a big draw for players and spectators alike," she added.

Register to Play

For the 2021 tournament there are two separate registrations. One is for the Level 5 open clay court state championships. The second is for clay mix doubles.

For the Level 5 competition, players can register at www.usta.com and registration opens on Aug 1 and runs until September 15. The tournament ID is 21-59630.

The second category, clay mix doubles is a separate registration and is now open and players can register at www.usta.com and the tournament ID is 21-12891.

While competitive players are awarded coveted USTA "points," the tournament serves another purpose of raising funds for area charities. Fleming organizers selected two local organizations to receive funds raised around the tournament.

They are Amor Healing Kitchen, a 5-01 (c) (3). AMOR works with high school students to provide nutritious meals to area residents facing serious health challenges. For students, it is an opportunity to help neighbors in need, but it also teaches them culinary, nutrition and leadership skills.



And for the third year in a row, the Fleming organizers selected Blessing Baskets which is a part of the Sea Islands Hunger Awareness Foundation (SIHAF), as the lead recipient of the fundraising efforts around the Fleming. Blessing Baskets feeds 300 families and more than 700 people on Johns and Wadmalaw Islands. It was founded in 2015 and is an all-volunteer effort to help its recipients, primarily children and the elderly.

SPONSORS SIGNING UP - AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE FLEMING TOURNAMENT

While players pay a registration fee, sponsors underwrite the tournament costs. They include the Town of

Seabrook Island and local businesses. Sponsors to date include: Aquesta Bank, Coke Consolidated, Freshfields Village, Hines Wealth Management, Limehouse Produce, NASCAR, Saly Dog Cafe, Seabrook Island Realty, Seabrook Island Club, Coastal Getaways and Taylor agency.

There are multiple levels of sponsorships. To become a sponsor contact the Fleming committee at flemingtournament@gmail.com or call 843-768-7543

The tournament traditionally kicks off the Fall season on Seabrook. The tournament is open to the public and admission is free.

For additional information go to www.alanflemingtournament.net

Dale and Patti Leibach

Bees at Our Community Garden



Joe Beckert and Bruce Stewart at the bee hive in bee suits



Bruce Stewart, Karen Babb and Joe Beckert with three frames of capped honey



Karen Babb cutting wax caps off frames before extraction



The extraction machine

Our Seabrook community garden has recently welcomed two new Langstroth bee hives to pollinate our community garden, produce some honey and improve our sustainable community. Members of the gardening community are working together with Joe Beckert, an apiarist and Seabrook environmental committee member, to support and manage the bees collaboratively. The garden community purchased their own hive as well. This is a learning experience for all so consider following us! If you don't want to have a lot of followers on Facebook, consider making 50,000 friends in a hive!

The bees were purchased on April 10th and May 15th by Joe and the community gardeners from Flowertown Bee Farm and Supplies. The bees were picked up in a bee nucleus, known as a nuc, which is a plastic box containing 5 wooden frames holding one queen, about 10,000 bees, honey, pollen, and larval bees or brood. This is essentially a small hive which is then moved frame by frame into the permanent hive which can hold 10 frames. Four empty frames were added to the hive to allow the bees to expand the colony and one plastic insert to hold sugar water to feed the bees temporarily. Ann Zielinski, Karen Babb, Bruce Stewart and others were there to welcome the hives to their new home on Seabrook Island.

Since we obtained our bees, we have had a few learning experiences so far. On day one, the queen bee in Joe's hive was named Queen Charlotte. It was easy to find her as she was painted with a white dot by Flowertown bee company. The queen bee's abdomen is longer than a worker bee's so she can be tricky

to spot normally. The white paint on the queen helps identification and also denotes that the queen was hatched in the year ending in 1 or 6. Since queen bees live no more than 5 years, Charlotte was hatched in 2021. The common mnemonic used by beekeepers to remember the year a queen is hatched is, "Will you raise good bees". Internationally, the color white denotes years ending in 1 or 6, yellow 2 or 7, red for 3 or 8, green for 4 or 9 and blue for 5 or 0. We have not conclusively identified the community bee hive's queen as of yet. She was not painted with any color, although we did see capped brood and signs of colony growth during our June 9th inspection. We actually saw a bee coming out of a cell, hatching while we watched. Our next inspection will again be to identify the community queen and see how the hive is growing.

One of the lessons occurred the next morning in Joe's hive, when a nearby nest of bull ants had found the sugar water in the hive and had invaded it to get the sugar water. Hundreds of ants were being stung by the bees inside the hive and it was a battle for our new colony. I was able to remove the sugar water and wash off the ants so that the next morning all that I found were hundreds of dead ants in our hive bottom board. I also removed the rotten wood nearby that the ants were using as a nest. We learned that the plastic sugar water frame inserts can cause more trouble than support. Although it was quite a difficult landing, Queen Charlotte survived the invasion and the colony was settled.

On May 15th, we inspected Joe's hive, no ants were found, and they had

drawn new wax comb on two of the empty frames. One of the frames was filled with honey! We are using plastic frames as a foundation for the bees to draw comb on so it was good to see that they were able to build wax comb onto the plastic foundation. It is typically recommended that another brood box be added on top of the original brood box to allow the bees to expand once the hive is 70 percent full. This is to prevent the bees from swarming to a new location due to lack of space. I added another brood box on top of the existing box, effectively doubling space. Unfortunately, we also noticed a few black hive beetles in the hive. Black hive beetles are common and can be a difficult pest for bees. Black hive beetles arrived from sub-Saharan Africa and can destroy the hive by eating their way through the wax, honey and larva. I inserted 4 black hive beetle traps which contain mineral oil that the beetles drown in upon entering the trap. Since black hive beetles can rapidly reproduce, during our ongoing inspections, we will check to see if the traps are working.

It takes a lot of energy from bees to draw out wax comb and a lot of flight hours to find nectar to make honey. Much of the first year's nectar is consumed by bees to produce the wax needed to store their honey. A worker bee typically lives about a month and may collect up to 1/12 of a teaspoon of honey in her lifetime. To collect a pound of honey, about 2 million flowers need to be pollinated. When making the wax comb, bees festoon as they work together to draw out wax comb on the frames. While festooning, they hang onto each other's legs, stretched

out much like a web transferring wax from bee to bee. They use their jaws to work the wax into the comb structure we know. Typically, the first year of hive ownership allows the bees to build the wax comb to store honey. Honey is needed by the bees to make it through the winter months when there is no nectar or pollen for food. Our hope is that by next year the bees will have built out enough comb and stored up enough honey for the bees to make it to spring. Perhaps there will be some left over to harvest. Bees typically need about 40 pounds of stored honey food for the winter. Assuming that a medium frame holds 4 pounds of honey when full, we expect we will leave 10 frames of honey for the bees so they will survive till next year. Any additional honey will be harvested by Joe and the community gardeners. The honey is for our personal use only at this time.

Remarkably, our July 12th visit to the hive was our first opportunity to

harvest honey. We found that the top brood box was about 75 percent full of honey so we took five full frames which were filled and capped with wax. Capped honey means it has the right percentage of water, about 18.5%, and it's ready for harvest. We selected 5 of the 10 frames, brushed the bees off and took the frames home to extract the honey. After removing the wax caps on the comb with a knife, extracting the honey in a centrifugal extractor, and bottling we collected about 20 pounds of honey! We left about 40 pounds in the hive. It is amazing that we can be friends with Bees who are so important as pollinators to our plants. Bees and other pollinators do the work pollinating plants, rewarding us with food and honey. Much thanks to Ann Zielinski, Karen Babb, Bruce Stewart and others for hands on care of our hives and to our photographer Jay Murphy. We all had honey to take home with some left over to share with volunteers. ▲

Joe Beckert



TOWN OF SEABROOK ISLAND

THE FOLLOWING MINUTES WERE SUBMITTED AFTER THE JULY ISSUE HAD GONE TO PRESS.

May 25, 2021, at 2:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The May 25, 2021, Town Council meeting was conducted as a video conference using Zoom and was simultaneously made available to the public via YouTube live stream and by conference call, all in keeping with practices adopted to address the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

The minutes of the Town Council meeting of April 27, 2021, the Public Hearing of April 27, 2021, and the Ways & Means Committee meeting of May 11, 2021, were unanimously approved as written.

Financials: Mayor Gregg reported that the total fund balance for the period ending April 30, 2021, was \$5,901,882 about \$681,119 more than the fund balance as of April 30, 2020.

Citizens/Guests Presentations, Comments: The Town Clerk reported on a comment that was received in advance of the meeting:

Jean Dunn, 2956 Seabrook Island Road, thanked the Town for the article in the May 2021 Seabrooker about the Beach Patrol. One item that caught Ms. Dunn's attention was - "They almost always give warnings first, because most people are unaware of the offenses."

Reports of Ad Hoc Committees: None

Reports of Standing Committees, Commissions, Boards:

Public Relations/Communications - Pat Fox Councilwoman Fox reported that seven Seabrook Island radio operators participated in a successful radio test on May 16 at 8:00 p.m.

installation of new generators • Notice of May Public Hearing and Town Council meeting Councilwoman Fox also reported that the final tri-county conference call, number 66, with the Charleston County Emergency Management Department was held on May 19 to discuss COVID-19.

Special Projects/Beach Administration - Barry Goldstein - Absent Beach Administration/Community and Government Relations - Jeri Finke Councilwoman Finke reported that the Town had received a complaint that someone on the beach was asked to stay away from the birds.

Disaster Recovery Council - Mayor Gregg stated that Councilman Goldstein has confirmed that the Town's Disaster Recovery Council has scheduled a hurricane exercise for July 23.

Expiration of Emergency Ordinance 2021-02 - At an Emergency Meeting of Town Council held May 13, Town Council considered and approved Emergency Ordinance 2021-03 by which all requirements for wearing of face coverings within the Town were eliminated in favor of encouragement for wearing of face coverings in certain circumstances.

Protocols for July Fireworks Display - Mayor Gregg reported that, on May 15, the Seabrook Island Club announced a revised face covering policy, which is in line with updated CDC guidelines, that provides that fully vaccinated individuals may resume their usual activities without wearing a mask.

Charleston County Greenbelt Program Allocation - Mayor Gregg stated that he had reached out to local organizations to enlist participation of persons in identification of projects that could be eligible for designation of the Town's Charleston County Greenbelt Program allocation (\$136,173).

Public comments pertaining to announced opening of water sports business at Bohicket Marina - Mayor Gregg stated that comments have been received from residents and others expressing concerns with the indication that a water sports business will engage in parasail activities and rental of personal watercraft (jet skis).

business. The Town Administrator stated that the Town had not received an application for a business license yet, but it appears to be a permitted use at the Bohicket Marina location. Mayor Gregg invited Council to comment. Councilwoman Finke stated that she thought Council should do some research and discuss further before deciding.

Town Administrator/Zoning Administrator - Joe Cronin • Beach Patrol Update - The Town Administrator reported that, during their first month, Beach Patrol has issued a total of 66 warnings, which compares to 73 issued in 2020.

Short-Term Rental Permit Update - The Town Administrator reported that 470 applications for Short-Term Rental Permits have been received and processed. Of those, about 6 have been withdrawn or cancelled.

PGA Championship Update - The PGA Championship took place on the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island the week of May 17. No major issues or incidents took place at the temporary driveway, which was constructed across from the entrance to Bohicket Marina, that led to temporary parking lots.

Community Shredding Event Update - The Town's shred event took place on Friday, May 21, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Town Administrator Cronin added that 65 vehicles went through during the event. The next shred event is scheduled for October 29.

Utility Commission: Chair Annie Smith-Jones reported that the Utility Commission met on May 19, 2021. The Net Income for the month of April was \$153,985.

Ordinances for First Reading: • Ordinance 2021-06: Approving the Financing of the Improvement, Extension and Enlargement of the Water and Sewer System of the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina, through the Borrowing by the Town of not Exceeding \$3,500,000, Including Capitalized Interest, if any, from the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Loan Fund, by Agreement with the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority, Pursuant to Title 48, Chapter 5, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as Amended; Providing for an Agreement to Make and to Accept a Loan, the Execution and Delivery of a Loan Agreement between the Town and the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority; and other Matters Relating Thereto.

Ordinances for Second Reading: • Ordinance 2021-02: An ordinance amending the Zoning Map of the Town of Seabrook Island so as to change the zoning designation for Charleston County Tax Map Number 147-02-00-045, containing approximately 0.58 +/- acres located at 2344 Andell Way, from the SR Single-Family Residential Dis-

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tract to the AGC Agricultural-Conservation District. Councilwoman Finke made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-02 on second reading as presented. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Ordinance 2021-03: An ordinance amending the Zoning Map of the Town of Seabrook Island so as to change the zoning designation for Charleston County Tax Map Number 149-06-00-030, containing approximately 0.29 +/- acres located at 2905 Seabrook Island Road, from the SR Single-Family Residential District to the AGC Agricultural-Conservation District. Councilwoman Finke made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-03 on second reading as presented. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Ordinance 2021-04: An ordinance amending the Development Standards Ordinance for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina, Article 21, Fees; Section 21.20, Fee Schedule; so as to amend the fee schedule for Short-Term Rental Permits. Councilwoman Finke moved to approve Ordinance 2021-04 on second reading as presented. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Ordinance 2021-05: An ordinance amending the Development Standards Ordinance for the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina, Article 7, Lot and Building Requirements; Section 7.90, Height Limitations; so as to amend the maximum height requirements for structures within the town. Councilwoman Finke made a motion to approve Ordinance 2021-05 on second reading as presented. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous.

Ordinance 2021-06: Approving the Financing of the Improvement, Extension and Enlargement of the Water and Sewer System of the Town of Seabrook Island, South Carolina, through the Borrowing by the Town of not Exceeding \$3,500,000, Including Capitalized Interest, if any, from the State Water Pollution Control Revolving Loan Fund, by Agreement with the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority, Pursuant to Title 48, Chapter 5, Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, as Amended; Providing for an Agreement to Make and to Accept a Loan, the Execution and Delivery of a Loan Agreement between the Town and the South Carolina Water Quality Revolving Fund Authority; and other Matters Relating Thereto.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. ▲

nance is substantially the same as the corresponding ordinance approved in connection with the 2012 financing undertaken for improvement of the wastewater sludge treatment plant. The ordinance, the Series 2021 SRF Note and the associate Loan Agreement, have been prepared and/or reviewed by the Town's Bond Counsel, Michael Seezen. The vote for approval of Ordinance 2021-06 on first reading was unanimous.

Miscellaneous Business: None Citizens Comments: Mayor Gregg asked if any citizens that were attending the meeting remotely wished to make a comment. No one chose to comment.

Executive Session: Councilwoman Finke made a motion to enter Executive Session at approximately 3:40 p.m. to discuss personnel matters (Town Clerk/Treasurer). Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. At approximately 4:03 p.m., Councilwoman Finke made a motion to come out of Executive Session and resume the regular Council meeting. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. Mayor Gregg moved for appointment of Kristi Hyde LaMontagna, contingent upon satisfactory completion of a background check, drug test and credit check, as the Town Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Seabrook Island. Councilwoman Finke seconded the motion and the vote to approve on the contingent appointment as the Town Clerk/Treasurer was unanimous.

Public Comments - Mayor Gregg again asked if anyone would like to make a public comment. Mike McShane, resident of 1501 Raven's Point Road, Johns Island, stated that he is former chairman of SC DNR and current chairman of the South Carolina Conservation Bank. Mr. McShane remarked that he appreciated the interest the Town and the Mayor and Council have displayed in working with its neighbors on Johns Island and thanked the Mayor for Council's participation, especially on the Johns Island Task Force. He added that SC DNR should be able to give Council information and guidance on watersports and asked that careful consideration be applied before giving a municipal license for such activities. Mr. McShane stated that, during the time he had worked with SC DNR, several incidents took place involving rental watersports equipment. He added that he had a case during his tenure where he addressed the General Assembly and explained that a person cannot get a driver's license in South Carolina without having demonstrated competency but that is not the case with recreational boating and there have been unintended consequences at times, particularly with the jet ski. Councilwoman Finke stated that she would like to contact Mr. McShane and inquired as to availability of contact information for him. Mr. McShane replied that the Mayor has that information and the Mayor confirmed that he did.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. ▲

AUGUST FRESHFIELDS VILLAGE EVENTS Farmer's Market Concierge Real Estate Services SHAG NIGHT ON THE DOCK ACOUSTIC NIGHT ON THE DOCK STARLIGHT CINEMA SERIES

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INDEPENDENCE DAY!



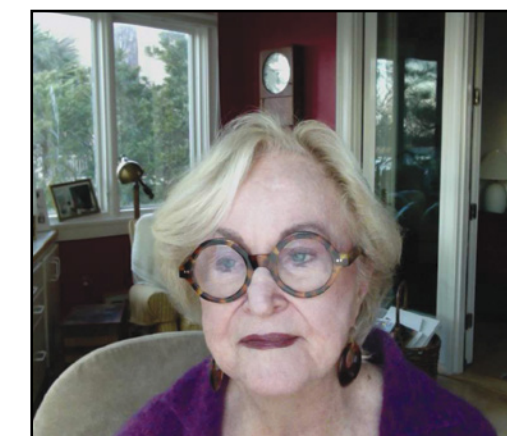
NEW TOWN CLERK/TREASURER FOR THE TOWN OF SEABROOK



The June 8, 2021, Town Council special called meeting was conducted as a video conference using Zoom and was simultaneously made available to the public via YouTube live stream, all in keeping with practices adopted to address the ongoing coronavirus pandemic. Mayor Gregg, Councilmembers Finke and Fox, Town Administrator Cronin and Town Clerk Allbritton participated in the meeting. Mayor Gregg called the meeting to order. Mayor Gregg explained that there was one item of business on the agenda for the meeting and that was a personnel matter. Mayor Gregg moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the personnel matter, Town Clerk/Treasurer. Councilwoman Finke seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. Mayor Gregg made a motion to end the Executive Session and return

to the special called Town Council meeting. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. Councilwoman Finke made a motion to appoint Katharine Watkins as the Town Clerk/Treasurer for the Town of Seabrook Island. Councilwoman Fox seconded the motion and the vote to approve was unanimous. Mayor Gregg congratulated Ms. Watkins, who attended the meeting remotely, and said that he looked forward working with her. Ms. Watkins added that she was looking forward to meeting everyone in person. Town Administrator Cronin stated that Katharine is currently the Town Clerk at Folly Beach and will be starting work as Seabrook Island's Town Clerk/Treasurer on July 1. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned. ▲

WellAged SEABROOK ISLAND



When Sally Kimball and I flew out to San Diego in 2018 to see what this village to village movement was all about, little did I know we would be setting up an entity whose services I would come to rely on myself.

Sally and I came back from that conference and proceeded to set up Seabrook Island Village, a non-profit entity that would provide assistance and services to Seabrook Island residents to empower members of the organization to remain independent at home as long as it was safe to do so.

So, how did I come to use it? On May 27th I called 911 to get me to the hospital as I had been vomiting and was shaking so hard I couldn't stop. Before I knew it I was in surgery where the doctors were removing 21 inches of my lower intestine. The good news is, I survived. The bad news is they have no idea what caused it.

What followed was 16 days at Roper Hospital, 4 in ICU, followed by a hospital stay then 5 days in rehab. When I came home on June 15th I had to use a walker to get from the car to my condo. The process of rehabilitating myself had begun.

Enter Seabrook Island Village. It is a short walk from my condo to my mailbox, but it was a walk I couldn't do. But Village volunteers could do it. My mail was delivered to my front hall every day by Seabrook volunteers. My medications were picked up at Vincent's

Pharmacy and delivered to me directly. My first doctor's appointment found me with Joan Johnson as my SIV volunteer driver. I couldn't have asked for anyone better. She called, well in advance of the appointment, to let me know she was my driver and to set up a time for her to pick me up. I was supposed to be seeing the doctor who had operated on me, but as his office hours were in Summerville, I opted to see a colleague of his who was closer to Seabrook. The visit did not go well.

It was clear from the outset that the doctor had done little to prepare for my visit. The best I could do was get the notes from him that my operating physician had taken. Joan, my driver, suggested I leave the notes with my own doctor, Michael Book, and let him do the follow up. We stopped at Michael's office on my way home to leave the notes with him. That plan worked better than anything I had devised. Thank you, Joan.

My recovery gets stronger every day. I am driving, doing my own errands, shopping, and generally taking care of myself. I want to thank all of the SIV volunteers who were so helpful to me in my process of recovery. I would not be so far along on the wellness chain had it not been for your efforts. I thank you from the bottom of my heart as I could not have gotten here without you.▲

Barbara Burgess

Amenity Cards

Dear Fellow Members of SIC:

Since the open meeting of the Board of Governors on June 24, the Board and management have taken important steps to improve safeguards against outsider access. The requirement of amenity cards for admission and service at the golf, tennis, and food and beverage venues are positive actions for which we thank the Board.

But many members have experienced continuing problems with outsider access to the Beach Club and pool area. Amenity cards are not being required of all entrants there and management is not staffing the entry gates. Also, there has been no progress in opening up the Island House with quality food and beverage. Help get our club back to a not-for-profit private club—following its bylaws—by writing directly to the BOG and to Club management if you have suggestions that could improve your membership satisfaction. Please email both.

Their email addresses are listed below:

- Caleb Elledge, General Manager.....celledge@seabrookisland.com
- Doris Reinhart, President.....dreinhart@bellsouth.net
- Larry Buchman, Vice President.....larrybuchman@gmail.com
- Jim Zielinski, Treasurer.....jim@zfinancialadvisors.com
- Fred Finke, Secretary.....finke74@comcast.net
- Jamie Ryan.....jamieryan1@comcast.net
- Patricia Leibach.....patti.leibach@gmail.com
- Barbara Vincentsen.....vincentsenarch@aol.com
- Chick Vladuchick.....vladuchick@gmail.com
- Marsha Papanek.....mpap77@gmail.com
- Norm Powers.....normpowers@gmail.com
- Kelly Peterson.....keltonrawpeterson@gmail.com
- Jeff Ward.....wardenterprisesinc@gmail.com
- Francis McCann.....fmxmccann@mccannlaw.net

Mark Doane

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Price Improvement

NEW

28 Marsh Edge Lane
Kiawah Island
4,371 SF | 4 BR, 5 BA
\$2,795,000
Kiawah Island Club Membership Opportunity

NEW

2981 Deer Point Drive
Seabrook Island
3,691 SF | 5 BR, 4.5 BA
\$1,299,000

SOLD

2913 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island
2,356 SF | 4 BR, 3.5 BA
\$789,000
Listed and Sold by Emery & Nick

SOLD

2942 Deer Point Drive
Seabrook Island
3,360 SF | 3 BR, 3.5 BA
\$1,350,000
Listed and Sold by Emery & Nick

SOLD

549 Double Eagle Trace
Seabrook Island
1,250 SF | 3 BR, 2 BA
\$531,000

SOLD

2913 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island
2,356 SF | 4 BR, 3.5 BA
\$789,000
Listed and Sold by Emery & Nick



Welcome American Oystercatcher Chicks DY & DZ!

As you walk toward Captain Sams Inlet to watch the dolphins, you will notice yellow signs that fence off an area of the beach between the ocean and the lagoon. That Nesting Area is restricted by SCDNR to protect nesting Wilson's Plovers and Least Terns, two species that are listed as Threatened in South Carolina. This year we were lucky to have both the Least Terns and the Wilson's Plovers nest in the area, and as a bonus we were especially lucky to have our resident American Oystercatcher U5 nest with his mate (Photo 1). U5 is a celebrity among birds on Seabrook (Photo 2). He has been seen and photographed at Captain Sams Inlet since 2012. He has been the subject of numerous articles, and this year he and his mate nested right in the middle of North Beach for all to watch (Photos 3-4)!

In the middle of May, U5 and his mate hatched two chicks (Photo 5). The chicks grew quickly and just before they could fly, they were banded to allow us to follow their progress and to contribute to what science knows about American Oystercatcher behavior and habitat use. The many hours our SIB Shorebird Stewards spent educating and protecting the birds have paid off!

Beginning at the end of April, the American Oystercatchers (hereafter, AMOY), Wilson's and Least Terns (leasies) all scraped out their nests in what was an almost ideal location with low rolling dunes, a few plants for shade, and a lagoon full of fish, mollusks & invertebrates for them to eat. But May was very dry and windy. By the time of the PGA golf tournament there had been no rain, the lagoon was shrinking and the wind built the dunes so quickly that the Wilson's and leasie nests were lost to the blowing and drifting sand. Both species re-nested, but only the Least Terns hatched chicks. In nature's way, those chicks were probably lost to predators or tides and the colony has moved on. We never saw Wilson's Plover chicks. But the two oystercatcher chicks thrived!

On a rainy Sunday morning in mid-June when the chicks were 26 days old, Janet Thibault, SCDNR Coastal Bird Biologist, banded the chicks (Photos 6-8) with the assistance of Glen Cox & Karin King, who first spotted the oystercatcher nest, and Mark and Melissa Andrews. The chicks can now be identified from blue bands on their upper legs as, DY & DZ. Blue bands designate a bird banded in South Carolina as U5's red bands tell us that he was banded in Georgia.

Before banding the chicks, Janet had to consider many key factors: the chick's age, health and whether banding the chicks would provide useful information to science. Birds are banded to allow scientists to track their movements and follow them through their nesting and other behaviors. These observations, known as resights (Photos 9-10), are collected and sent to a registry both by biologists and citizen scientists like Glen Cox, Ed Konrad, and Patricia Schaefer. In the case of oystercatchers that registry is The American



1/ U5 & Family - Photo by Mark Andrews



2/ U5 in 2021 - Photo by Mark Andrews



3/ U5 mate - Photo by Mark Andrews



4/ U5 mate's eggs - Photo by Janet Thibault



5/ Clam feast - Photo by Mark Andrews



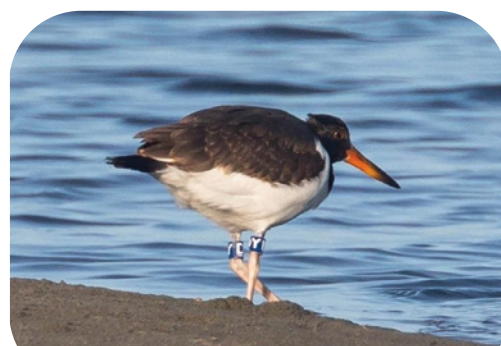
6/ Janet banding - Photo by Glen Cox



7/ DY banded - Photo by Glen Cox



8/ DZ banded - Photo by Glen Cox



9/ DY resight - Photo by Glen Cox



10/ DZ resight - Photo by Glen Cox



11/ U5 in 2013 - Photo by Patricia Schaefer



12/ U5 in 2016 - Photo by Ed Konrad



13/ Shorebird Stewards - Photo by Melanie Jerome



14/ SCDNR nesting area - Photo by Mark Andrews



15/ Least Tern defense - Photo by Mark Andrews

Oystercatcher Working Group (see below).

Just like the biologists, we can learn a lot from the approximately 60 resights in U5's registry. In December 2008, U5 was banded as an adult on Little Saint Simons Island, Georgia. This makes him 15-16 years old according to SCDNR! In his first few years, he spent most of his time on the Georgia coast with an occasional trip to Deveaux Bank or Captain Sams Inlet. After 2012, he was seen at the inlet far more than in Georgia (Photo 11). Then around 2016, he became a year-round resident of Captain Sams Inlet (Photo 12) with 23 resights by Kiawah and Seabrook residents recorded in the last 5 years. Those resight reports and the many articles that were written about him proved his celebrity status, and gave Janet confidence that we would report DY & DZ sightings as well.

You have the opportunity to contribute to AMOY science by reporting your resights of U5, DY and DZ to the website below. Please remember that resighting requires giving the birds their space - if the birds appear nervous or fly, you are too getting too close. We use binoculars, spotting scopes or long telephoto lenses on our cameras to keep our distance.

We are losing our coastal birds at an alarming rate-their continued survival depends on all of us working together to conserve and protect them. When we first found the North Beach nests, our Shorebird Stewards (Photo 13) mobilized to add shifts to educate folks about the nesting birds. Our stewards talked to over 700 people including about 500 visitors from the start of the season in March until we finished on the 4th of July.

SCDNR posts the Nesting Area (Photo 14) to create a safe place for the SC Threatened Least Terns and Wilson's Plovers to nest, but the yellow signs also protected the oystercatchers. This is known as the Umbrella Effect, where what we do to protect one species at risk benefits other species of concern. The Least Terns' and Wilson's Plovers' sad loss of nests despite nesting among the signs is part of their struggle to survive, but their feisty defense of their nests probably helped to defend the oystercatcher's nest as well (Photo 15).

Thank you for doing your part by respecting the nesting area and walking around roosting, nesting & feeding birds.

AMOY chicks often spend six months or more in their family group before joining non-breeding flocks. Apart from the quick trip from the Georgia coast to Deveaux Bank in 2009, U5 was seen repeatedly in 2010 & 2011 back in Georgia near where he fledged. With some luck, we might see DY & DZ hang around Captain Sams inlet for quite awhile, maybe with U5 and their mother!

All resights for U5 were obtained from the American Oystercatcher Working Group Band Database. Wilmington: Audubon North Carolina; Retrieved from The American Oystercatcher Working Group Band Database Website <http://www.ancperch.org/amoyn/index.html> ▲

Mark Andrews

HEALTHY AGING

Jerry Reves, MD

Hernia: A Common Problem for Men with Age



Readers know we try to address problems of aging and our health that are for the most part applicable to both genders, but inevitably there are specific consequences that affect one gender more than another. So with all apologies to our many female readers this month we address a problem most common in men - inguinal hernia.

Hernias occur when abdominal tissues leave the abdomen and migrate into areas of the anatomy where they do not belong. The kind of tissue is usually fat or intestines. The intestines all belong in the abdomen, but can protrude into other areas.

When they do it is called a hernia. There are a large number of hernias which are generally referred to by the anatomic place that they occur or by what caused them. The more common hernias are inguinal, femoral, incisional, umbilical, epigastric or ventral hernias. Some are caused by congenital openings in the abdominal wall or acquired after age has weakened the abdominal muscles and tissues that keep the integrity of the abdominal wall from being penetrated by tissues in the abdomen.

Figure 1 is the author's attempt to show what happens when a gap in the intestinal wall allows the small intestine to escape the abdomen and protrude below the skin in the groin area and form a bulge. This is usually above the pubic bone and on either side of the groin. The hernias may be labeled reducible, meaning that the bulge or intestines can be gently replaced into the abdomen when lying on one's back. A non-reducible hernia means that the intestine is trapped outside the abdomen. Both ideally should be repaired, but the non-reducible should be repaired to prevent the complication of strangulation.

Incidence and Risk Factors Inguinal hernias are the most common hernias and present as bulges in the groin area. It is estimated that 27% or more of men will experience an inguinal hernia in their lifetime, and as one ages the chances increase. Of the approximate 1 million hernias surgically repaired each year, 800,000 are inguinal and most are in men (97%). The risk factors for inguinal hernias are: male gender, age, obesity, heavy

lifting, smoking, chronic coughing, straining with urination or defecation, chronic obstructive lung disease, history of lower abdominal surgery, and a family history of hernias.

Symptoms

Symptoms of a hernia are bulge in the groin area when standing, pain in the groin area that may radiate into the testicle, burning sensation and/or fullness in the groin and sometimes a swollen scrotum. The bulge often increases in size with coughing or straining. If the pain becomes severe and is associated with nausea and vomiting it can mean that the hernia has become strangulated and requires immediate medical attention. The presence of any of the symptoms requires a visit to your physician for diagnosis.

Diagnosis

The diagnosis of a hernia is based upon a history of the symptoms and a physical exam that allows the physician to feel the hernia with a gloved hand. You will be asked to cough and/or strain during the exam. Laboratory tests are generally performed including a urinalysis and complete blood count (CBC.) Other blood tests may be done to rule out kidney or kidney diseases. Radiologic exams can be done to confirm the diagnosis, commonly either an x-ray of the abdomen or a PET scan. The diagnosis is relatively straightforward; often the patient makes it!

Treatment

While the presence of a hernia is common and generally a benign process, hernias can become entrapped (incarcerated) and blood supply cut off (strangulated) and this becomes life-threatening. Thus, to prevent strangulation and or to treat the symptoms, most physicians will advise hernia patients to have a surgical repair. We have before said that there is no such thing as a minor operation, but as reported above the surgical repair of hernias is performed in over a million people a year with minimal complications. There are three surgical approaches.

Open hernia repair is performed by the surgeon under either local, spinal or general anesthesia with one large incision. This approach is done under direct vision and with the surgeon completing the repair usually on the outside of the abdomen. A mesh patch is usually placed

over the defect. There is a higher risk of infection with this technique.

Laparoscopic repair is performed by the surgeon making 3 or 4 small incisions and inserting instruments through the small incision including a camera that is used to "see" the repair. The surgeon looks at the camera screen, but manipulates the instruments with his hands to dissect the tissue and suture in mesh to cover the defect. This is done in the abdomen and requires general anesthesia as well as insufflation of an absorbable gas to extend the abdomen and allow space to see and operate. This technique has less pain and infection than the open approach.

Robotic Laparoscopic repair has gained popularity among some surgeons and hospitals that have invested in the robotic surgical apparatus. The major difference between robotic and non-robotic surgery is that the surgeon operates robotic arms from a console distant from the patient, and with a better picture and more versatile instruments for the repair. (See figure 2.) Learning to use the robot requires practice (experience) and surgeons who are experienced with it tend to prefer it. The advantages of robotic over laparoscopic alone is that there is generally less tissue disturbance and patients seem to have less pain postoperatively, often not requiring opiates.

With all surgical approaches, patients will be instructed not to lift more than 10 pounds or participate in strenuous exercise for about 6-8 weeks. For those working, return to work is advised between 1 and 2 weeks after surgery. The laparoscopic approaches tend to have faster recovery.

Surgical Complications All three surgical approaches have complications, but in aggregate (counting all complications) the rate is less than 10%, and the major complications such as heart attack, blood clots, and stroke are each well under 1%. The more common complications are wound infection, urinary retention, urinary tract infection, fluid collection, numbness at the surgical site, and hematoma with each occurrence tending to be under 10% and even less frequent with either of the laparoscopic approaches. Anesthetic complications may include, nausea, vomiting, sore throat and general tiredness for a few days. Late complications can be long term pain in about 10% of patients and recurrence of the hernia in 5-10% of patients. Recurrence is less common with open than laparoscopic.

The Bottom Line Hernias are common in older men. When symptoms occur, see your physician and if surgery is indicated - get it. The choice of surgical approach will be made by you and your surgeon in consultation. ▲

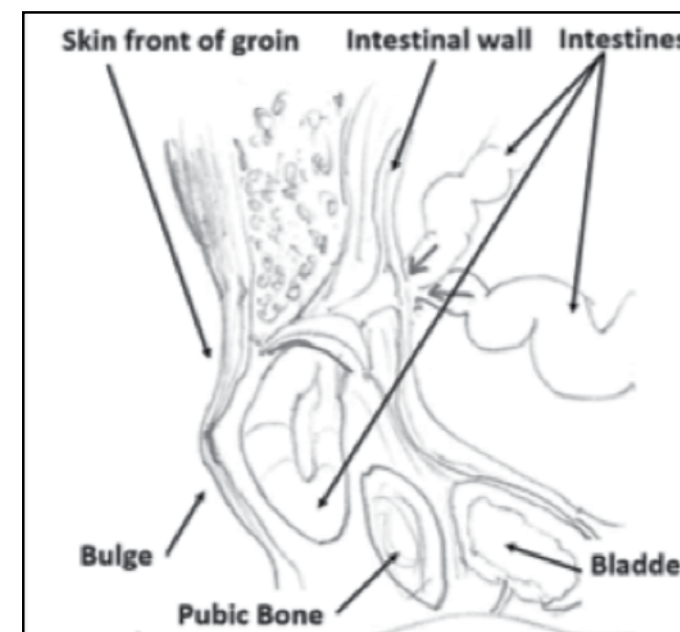


Figure 1 (LEFT) Schematic picture of the front of the lower abdomen and groin (left side of illustration) showing intestines leaving the abdomen and bulging out under the groin skin. (Drawing by J.G. Reves, MD.)

Figure 2 (RIGHT) From: <https://clinicalcenter.nih.gov/dpms/imri.html>. Shows in the foreground a console where the surgeon performs a robotic laparoscopic operation. Anesthetized patient is in the background with robot. Department of Perioperative Medicine of the NIH Clinical Center.



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C.O.V.A.R. CORNER

JOANNE FAGAN Secretary for COVAR

Purchasing a Property in an Association or Regime

COVAR, the Council of Villa Associations and Regimes has 41 member communities on Seabrook Island. Within these communities, there are 1355 properties that are classified as a cottage, townhome, or villa. The unit's range in size from 1 bedroom to three-bedroom units.

During the Covid pandemic, the number of property owners on Seabrook Island that stayed in their homes increased, especially during the period of April 5-May 15, 2020,

when Short-Term Rentals (STR) were restricted. When the rental restriction was lifted, STR's were in great demand, as visitors came to realize the value of living on Seabrook Island.

The outdoor lifestyle that Seabrook Island encourages was a great life-saver for me personally during the trying times of 2020. Being able to be outdoors, walking and biking, made a great impact on my health, both mental and physical. I felt fortunate that, even with mask restrictions and social distancing measures in place, I was able to maintain some semblance of "normal". Thus, it came as no surprise when real estate prices went through the roof on Seabrook Island!

During the time period of January 1, 2021, and June 30, 2021, 74 villas, cottages or townhomes were sold on Seabrook Island. Of the 74 properties, Spinnaker Beach Cottages and Tarpon Pond Cottages had the most sales with 8 units each, followed closely by Summer Wind Cottages with 7, Atrium Villas, High Hammock Villas and Pelican Watch Villas with 6 each and Marsh Oak at Bohicket Marina Village with 5. These sales were valued at almost 33 million dollars. Many listings were sold for over asking price and in a matter of hours. Some listings were already contingent before they appeared on the Seabrook Island Real Estate (SIRE) website.

So how do you decide what type of property to consider purchasing on Seabrook Island?

Speaking from personal experience, my husband Doug and I had a few main considerations in purchasing our villa on Seabrook. We knew that we wanted to downsize, as it would be just the two of us, with occasional family visits. A view was important, a sense of community paramount, but most importantly, our goal in our future retirement was to own a property that we could easily travel without the worry of single-family home ownership. This led us to search for a villa with our real estate agent, Mary Ann Lloyd from SIRE.

Purchasing our villa in the Treetop Villa Association fulfilled our requirements. Within walking distance to the beach and great views of Tarpon Pond and The Ocean Course, we have a virtual nature show every day from our windows. Our association fees, which are separate from our SIPOA fee, cover landscaping, irrigation, outdoor lighting, tree maintenance, pest control along with road and driveway maintenance. Our management company does a great job controlling costs while hiring the best vendors. These factors all contributed to our purchase making the most sense for us at this stage of our life.

So, what questions should you ask if you are considering purchasing a property in an association or regime?

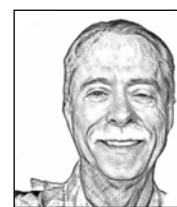
- What are the Homeowner Association (HOA) fees and how often are they paid?
• What services does this fee include?
• How is the fee paid and are there penalties for late payments?
• How often have the dues increased?
• Have there been any recent special assessments that will affect my purchase?
• Do you anticipate any future assessments?
• Do I also pay another fee to Seabrook Island Property Owners Association (SIPOA)?
• Does the HOA Reserve account have an adequate balance to cover operating expenses without special assessments?
• Does the HOA have a Reserve Study that outlines future Capital Improvement projects and how they will be funded?
• How many units are in the HOA? Of this number, how many are rental units or investment properties?
• How many members are on the HOA board and how long are their terms?
• How often are HOA meetings held and when will I vote for the board?
• Where can I find/view the HOA governing documents - Covenants and Bylaws and HOA Rules and Regulations?

governing documents - Covenants and Bylaws and HOA Rules and Regulations?

Buying my villa on Seabrook Island was the first time we had purchased property in a homeowner's association. I didn't ask many of the questions from the list above, and fortunately it worked out. But there are many scenarios where these questions can benefit a potential buyer.

In addition, if you are considering purchasing a property in an association or regime on Seabrook Island with the intention of using it as a rental property, please take the time to review the Town of Seabrook Island ordinance 2020-14, which governs Short-Term Rental units on the island, including the business license and STR permit fees, as well as the State Tax obligations. Most importantly, make sure you have read and can comply with the Rules and Regulations for that association/regime. These rules and regulations apply to property owner and rental guest alike and will be enforced by your HOA.

Seabrook Island continues to grow and expand. Future development is anticipated not only at Salt Marsh Townhomes but also the Village at Seabrook. I hope you find this information useful if you, a friend, or family member are considering purchasing a property in a COVAR represented association or regime.▲



GLASS HALF FULL Perspectives BOB LEGGETT

IS THIS AS GOOD AS IT GETS?

The US economy is booming and US stocks were very strong in the first half of 2021. Nobody would currently characterize our investment Glass as merely "Half Full" - more likely, they would call it "Overflowing". What's not to like? Unfortunately, investors can't just assume current data trends (positive or negative) will be repeated in the immediate future. Financial markets may reflect current and past data, but future results are dependent on future data. That is what we mean when we say the markets discount the future.

[Some readers may be confused by this bit of investment jargon, so let me explain briefly: This isn't a discount as in "15% off the retail price", this use of the word discount is defined as "to anticipate or take into account something, such as a future event, in present calculations or planning". In other words, current stock and bond prices represent the collective outlook for economic, central bank, financial, geopolitical and other factors that may impact interest rates and stock prices down the road.]

So, the key question to answer is "What should we be discounting?" Will the Glass continue to overflow into the future, or is this As Good As It Gets? (I'll shorthand this as AGAIG) As noted at the outset, the current data is very positive, but it can be viewed from two different perspectives: rate of change (momentum) and levels of growth (trend).

Starting with the economy, we see very strong momentum. First quarter GDP was a very strong +6.4% and by the time you read this, the first estimate of second quarter (Q2) GDP will have been released. The Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank GDPNow model is at +7.5% for Q2 GDP and a July Wall Street Journal economists survey pegged it at an even-stronger +9.1%. Literally nobody expects this momentum to be sustained in the second half and on into 2022.

That does not mean investors should be bracing for a Recession, as the underlying data supports a continuation of growth, simply at a slower pace. So, GDP momentum is AGAIG, but the trend remains favorable.

Two of the factors behind the GDP surge are clearly showing slower momentum. Federal Government stimulus payments remain high (positive levels and trend), but clearly are slowing regardless of the fate of the \$3.5 trillion Infrastructure Bill. Also, the Federal Reserve ramped up its monthly bond purchases to a staggering \$120 billion last year. Not only is that unlikely to surge higher, it may be tapered to a somewhat lower level later this year.

There is plenty of cash available, both for corporations and for consumers. Between cash flows and taking on debt, corporations are expected to increase capital spending further. Although peak personal savings rates occurred months ago, consumers continue to increase their huge cash hoard. May 2021's annualized savings rate was \$2.3 trillion, nearly twice the pre-pandemic level of two years earlier. While re-openings allow people to spend some of the cash, it will likely continue to support consumer spending growth trends for months to come.

In other areas, the "easy comparisons" that generated huge year-over-year growth rates are being replaced by improving numbers from last year's recovery after the severe lockdown Recession. Employment and incomes bounced back sharply, but momentum has slowed - another AGAIG reading, but steady growth is continuing. The manufacturing and services sectors of the economy have rebounded strongly, but year-over-year momentum is slowing, both due to the tougher comparisons and shortages of parts and labor.

So, how should we interpret the current stock market situation? What is being discounted and what should we expect? First, momentum has been extremely strong, both for earnings per share (EPS) growth and for the major US stock indexes. Let's start with EPS. The Q2 earnings reporting season is underway and results are expected to be VERY strong, as the consensus Wall Street estimate for the S&P 500 is +65%! At the outset of Q1 reporting, the consensus was only +16% and actual growth was +48%. This "positive EPS surprise" forced analysts to raise their full year estimates and the positive revisions were a driver of higher stock prices in Q2. The easy comparisons to the Recession's EPS plunge are a big part of the strong momentum, so comparisons will be tougher beginning with Q3 which means EPS is likely also in the AGAIG group.

The S&P 500 year-over-year momentum peaked in March at +56% and had subsided to a mere +41% by the end of June. At the end of March, the S&P was at 3973. Although price momentum had remained AGAIG, the price trend remained favorable, as the S&P closed Q2 at 4297 (another 8% higher). It since climbed higher to new records above 4400, or 10%+ above the price at the peak momentum.

Interestingly, neither the calendar 2021 or 2022 S&P 500 EPS estimates have returned to the levels forecasted before the Lockdown Recession began, but the stock market surged. In fact, the S&P 500 closed at new record highs 34 times during Q1, including the final day of the quarter. Since stock valuations are derived from a simple Price divided by EPS formula, lower EPS and higher Price must result in a higher Price/Earnings Ratio (P/E). The current forward 12 month P/E is at a well-above average 21-22x.

Does that mean the stock market is discounting even-higher EPS growth rates? I don't think so. The Glass Half Full Perspective is that the S&P is discounting a continuation of three current trends: rising forward EPS, positive estimate revisions, and continued Fed largesse resulting in low interest rates. If you are bullish on the stock market, you need to monitor all three factors closely.▲

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURES: The opinions voiced in this commentary on current economics and markets are my own and not the opinions or positions of any entities or organizations with which I may be affiliated or associated. This column is for general enjoyment and not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual or institution.

Early Renderings of Ashley River Pedestrian Bridge Unveiled



The movable span on the proposed Ashley River Crossing bridge would function as a swing span drawbridge | Renderings by HDR, Inc., courtesy City of Charleston

Charleston city officials got a look at early conceptual renderings of the cyclist and pedestrian-only Ashley River bridge under development at a virtual city council committee meeting Monday morning.

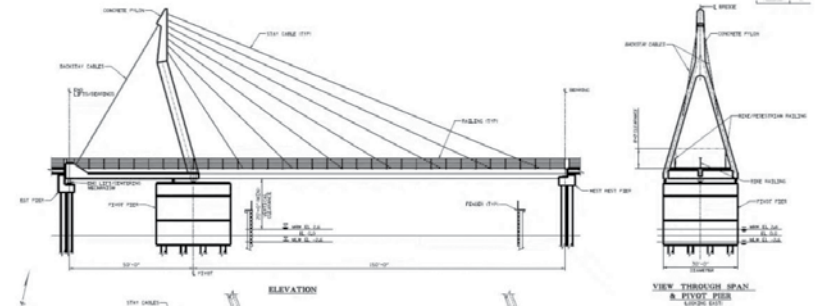
Jason Kronsberg, the city's director of parks, told members of the Traffic and Transportation Committee the project is progressing through the design-build phase of the project, which includes technical assessments and checks with state and federal agencies before beginning to talk with potential firms about construction.

The renderings discussed Monday are subject to change as the planning process moves ahead.

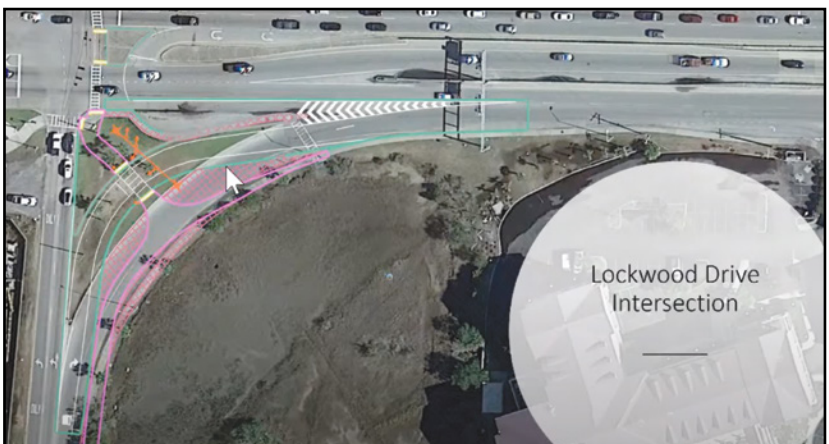
The renderings shown Monday show the "Ashley River Crossing" bridge as a cable-stayed swing span drawbridge with a single pivot point on the south side of the existing channel opening.

Initial renderings show a 150-foot movable span that does not alter the alignment of the initial channel used by vessels to pass the river's two existing

Ashley River Crossing - Movable Span



The movable portion of the bridge is currently conceptualized as a cable-stay span | Renderings by HDR, Inc., courtesy City of Charleston



Crossing facilities at major intersections will be pumped up to accommodate additional pedestrians and cyclists | Renderings by HDR, Inc., courtesy City of Charleston

drawbridges. Renderings also show spaces for outlooks on either side of the movable span.

Improvements that come with the bridge's construction include more robust cyclist and pedestrian crossings connecting the bridge to the West Ashley Greenway and downtown medical district. Charleston has been granted more than \$18 million in federal money to build the additional bridge, billed as a way to ferry non-car travelers on and off the peninsula for recreation and commuting. A number of cyclists have been struck crossing the existing bridges, with the latest fatal accident coming just late Friday when a 23-year-old Texas man was struck by a car and killed while riding his bike over the bridge.

Kronsberg said the initial timeline for construction has the bridge complete in 2025, though initial phases may move faster. If costs exceed initial funding, Tecklenburg said Monday the city could pursue funding from a number of sources to cover additional costs.▲

Sam Spence, City Paper



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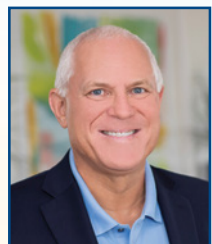
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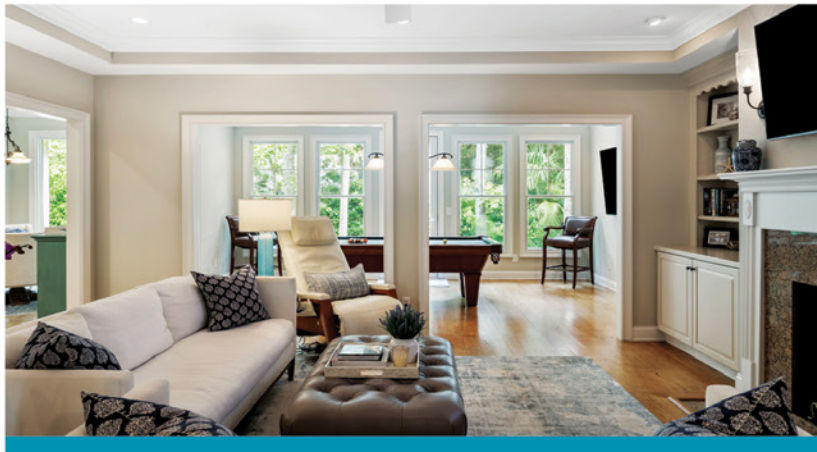
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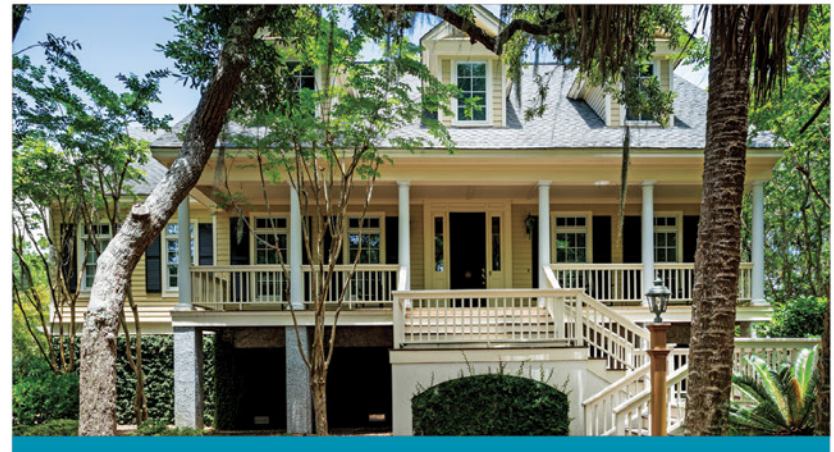
2251 Catesby's Bluff - \$1,850,000
Beach access | 4 BR | 4.5 BA



2867 Old Drake Dr - \$1,495,000
Wooded view | 4 BR | 4.5 BA



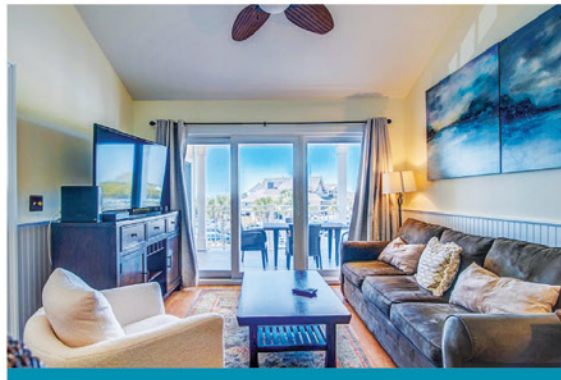
2923 Baywood Dr - \$1,325,000
Wooded view | 4 BR | 4.5 BA



3012 Marsh Haven - \$1,311,000
Marshfront | 5 BR | 3.5 BA



2939 Atrium Villa - \$789,000
Ocean view | 2 BR | 2 BA



2944 Atrium Villa - \$675,000
Golf/Ocean view | 2 BR | 2 BA



2918 Atrium Villa - \$659,000
Golf view | Ocean peek | 2 BR | 2 BA



1325 Pelican Watch Villa - \$534,000
Ocean view | 1 BR | 2 BA



2336 Baywood Dr - \$175,000
L4 B2 | Wooded view | 0.46-acre homesite



2767 Old Oak Walk - \$119,000
L17 B43 | Wooded view | 0.33-acre homesite