

Town of Emerald Isle

Mayor
Arthur B. Schools, Jr.

Mayor Pro-Tem
Floyd Messer, Jr.

Board of Commissioners
Pete Allen
Nita Hedreen
John Wootten
Maripat Wright



Town Manager
Frank A. Rush, Jr.
frush@emeraldisle-nc.org

Mailing Address
Town of Emerald Isle
7500 Emerald Drive
Emerald Isle, NC 28594

Voice 252-354-3424
Fax 252-354-5068

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Town's Position on Potential Sale of Bogue Inlet Pier

According to the current owners, the Bogue Inlet Pier and several surrounding properties are under contract to be sold. The total area believed to be under contract includes approximately 15 acres, of which the Bogue Inlet Pier pierhouse and parking lot occupy approximately 3 acres. The prospective new owners are reportedly evaluating the site and considering redevelopment plans, and will make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with closing on the property in the coming months.

The Mayor, Board of Commissioners, and Town Manager are all concerned about the potential sale of Bogue Inlet Pier and the potential loss of the only ocean fishing pier in Emerald Isle (and one of only two remaining on all of Bogue Banks). The pier has been an important part of Emerald Isle's history, tourism economy, and sense of community, and represents a key public access location for fishermen and beach visitors. The Town has been working and will continue to work very hard to retain a public fishing pier in Emerald Isle. We are all hopeful that the ultimate redevelopment plans will include the retention of Bogue Inlet Pier, and we look forward to working with prospective new owners on this issue.

The prospective new owners have not yet submitted redevelopment plans for review by the Town. Any redevelopment plans submitted will be thoroughly reviewed by the Town staff, Planning Board, and the Board of Commissioners for consistency with the Town's 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan and applicable development ordinances. It is important to note that the entire Bogue Inlet Pier area and other surrounding properties are included in an area that the Town's Land Use Plan classifies as "Village East". The "Village East" area is designated in the 2004 Land Use Plan as an area to be redeveloped with a mixture of both residential and commercial uses in a "village-like" atmosphere. The goal of the Town's plan is to create more a true "downtown" type area, with many public spaces and ideally with the pier as the focal point of the area. The "Village East" concept is a key component of the Town's 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan, which was created with broad citizen input and several layers of review by a citizen steering committee, the Planning Board, and the Board of Commissioners.

As noted above, the "Village East" concept is relatively new, and the Town is just now beginning to draft the specific zoning and subdivision ordinances to address the redevelopment of the "Village East" area. (A similar plan is included for the Islander Drive area, known as "Village West".) The Town recently hired consultants to draft new ordinances tailored to achieve the vision in the Land Use Plan, and they are just beginning work on this project. The Town hopes to have new ordinances adopted and in place for the "Village East" (and "Village West") area within the next 6 – 9 months. The Town will be seeking public input on these new ordinances during this time period, with the first opportunity scheduled for Saturday, June 3 (see related article below).

As noted above, the Town's leadership recognizes the importance of a public fishing pier in Emerald Isle. We are all hopeful that the redevelopment plans will include the retention of the pier, however, if these plans do not include the pier then the Town will explore all potential options to insure the perpetual existence of a public fishing pier in Emerald Isle. Such an effort represents a significant challenge for the Town, but the Town's leadership will be working very hard to meet this challenge.

If you'd like to share your concerns about the pier, or have specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Town Manager at 252-354-3424 or frush@emeraldisle-nc.org.

Design Workshop for "Village East" & "Village West" Areas Scheduled for Saturday, June 3

The Town is conducting an all-day design workshop to receive citizen owner input on the development of new zoning and subdivision ordinances for the "Village East" and "Village West" areas identified in the Town's 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan. The design workshop will be held on Saturday, June 3 at the Emerald Isle Town Hall, with the exact starting time to be announced and posted on the Town's website, www.emeraldisle-nc.org, in the next couple of weeks.

The "Village East" and "Village West" areas are both areas expected to be redeveloped in the future, and both include a vision of a mixed-use, pedestrian friendly area with many public spaces to create a "village" type feel. The following is an *updated* excerpt from the Town's 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan describing the "Village East" and "Village West" areas:

Village-East (Town Center)

The Village-East area is planned as a long-term program for reinforcing the older commercial district that is centered in the Bogue Inlet Drive area in a way that creates a more traditional Town Center for Emerald Isle. The Town Center concept will include a mixture of uses that are similar to those found in traditional small towns. It could include retail shops and restaurants, retail, business support services, recreation and entertainment enterprises, public and semi-public uses, and residences. The plan will examine the potential for locating business and residential uses in mixed-use structures.

The Town Center will strive to offer pedestrian and bike connections to surrounding neighborhoods and will offer easy access from the ocean to the sound, including a safe and attractive crossing at Emerald Drive. Within the current height limits, second-story residential uses will be considered.

Planning for the Town Center will incorporate some surrounding residential areas to reinforce linkages to the town center and to encourage development and redevelopment of residential uses that support the planning themes for the area. Two levels of residential densities are planned: maximum net density within areas currently zoned business is 8.0 units per acre; and maximum net densities for areas currently zoned for single family or duplex structures ranges from 3.5 dwelling units per acre to 5.8 dwelling units per acre.

The Town will encourage development and redevelopment of the Village-East Town Center by initiating a long-range planning process through a partnership with property owners, residents, business owners, and affiliated local groups. The Town will also examine opportunities for public actions to support the concept. This may involve programs such as sidewalk improvements, property acquisition, and landscaping in the public right-of-way. Any development or redevelopment of properties in this area must comply with all of the policies of this plan. Building heights will comply with the Town's current building height limits.

Village-West

"Village-West" includes the area in the western section of the Main Business Area with current land uses that are heavily oriented toward vacation and recreational activities. The general location of the area is on the south side of Reed Drive. Its western "boundary" is the Holiday Trav-l Park and it includes the business and amusement uses along Islander Drive.

Upgrade and redevelopment of existing uses is encouraged in this area. The Town recognizes that such a development may involve reconfiguration of some of the current land uses. This area may contain an appropriate site for a motel or small hotel. In addition to lodging, the area is appropriate for related activities such as restaurants, small specialty shops, beach-related goods, and entertainment.

Any development or redevelopment of motels or hotels in this area must meet specific site development criteria included in Town's land use policies. These development criteria and density limits are designed to

address traffic congestion at the Emerald Drive-Coast Guard Road intersection; protect water quality; preserve native vegetation; and protect surrounding residential areas.

The Town will continue to encourage a mixture of uses tied to the tourism industry in the “Village-West” area. As examples, these uses include camping and residences, lodging, beach-related retail services, restaurants, and amusements. The Town will encourage well-landscaped parking areas, appropriate signage and lighting levels. Any new uses or redevelopment of existing uses in this area must be consistent with all of the policies in the plan. Building heights will comply with the Town’s current building height limits.

All residents, property owners, and visitors are encouraged to attend the design workshop on June 3. Please come out and share your thoughts on how the new zoning and subdivision regulations for these areas should be written to insure consistency with the goals outlined in the Town’s 2004 CAMA Land Use Plan.

Most Fireworks Are Illegal – Make Sure You Follow the Law!

Under NC state law, any fireworks that explode or fly are illegal. The Emerald Isle Police Department receives many fireworks complaints each summer, and will aggressively enforce fireworks violations this summer. These illegal fireworks are a severe safety hazard to persons and property in Emerald Isle, particularly during southwest winds that blow from the ocean and have the potential to blow fireworks onto structures. The Police Department will confiscate illegal fireworks, and will charge offenders with a fine up to \$500.00.

Town Fireworks Display – July 4 at Bogue Inlet Pier

The Town’s annual Independence Day fireworks display, co-sponsored by Bogue Inlet Pier, will be held on Tuesday, July 4 beginning at 9:30 pm. Fireworks will be set off from the end of Bogue Inlet Pier, in the 8500 block of Emerald Isle. Come on out and enjoy the fun!