



SUBSCRIBER EDITION

Coronavirus Local News Opinion Business Sports Personal Finance

OPINION AND COMMENTARY

Editorials and other Opinion content offer perspectives on issues important to our community and are independent from the work of our newsroom reporters.

OTHER VIEWS

# Listen to chorus fighting for the ecology: Say 'No' to Bay Point development | Opinion

BY JOHN BLOOMFIELD SPECIAL TO THE ISLAND PACKET AND THE BEAUFORT GAZETTE

UPDATED JULY 14, 2020 11:16 AM



ORDER REPRINT →

In light of talk of a new resort on Bay Point Island — the one the Town of Hilton Head Island is discussing possibly annexing — we asked a leading expert on travel and leisure marketing and research and consumer habits about the pros and cons of | BY DELAYNA EARLEY

Every day when the sun rises, songbirds greet the dawn with a melodious chorus described by Rachel Carson as “the throb of life itself.” Along our shorelines the chorus is joined by the cries of hundreds and sometimes thousands of shorebirds and seabirds that are as much a part of our beaches as the water itself.

In Beaufort County, there is another growing chorus: the sound of leading conservation organizations, joined by thousands of local citizens, saying “No” to the latest plan to develop Bay Point Island.

The Port Royal Sound Foundation. The Beaufort County Open Land Trust. The Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition. The Hilton Head Island Land Trust. The Coastal Conservation League.

TOP VIDEOS

AD



These organizations have been joined by some 20,000 people who have signed on to a petition opposing development on this fragile barrier island.

Hilton Head Audubon is proud to add its name to the list. Audubon has opposed every version of this project since 2016 and remains opposed for the following reasons:

- **Inadequately formed plans for wildlife protection:** Bay Point Island is certified by BirdLife International and the National Audubon Society as an Important Bird Area, a critical winter stopover for endangered Piping Plovers, and during spring and fall migrations, the globally threatened Red Knot. It is estimated that up to 8,000 shorebirds use Bay Point Island to rest and feed during the winter months, to say nothing of the Bald Eagles, Painted Buntings, and others that breed in the woods of Bay Point during the year. We don't know precisely how many, since the current owner and his surrogates have never conducted a bird survey in the 20 years they have held the property.
- **The highly erosional nature of Bay Point:** Bay Point is regularly buffeted by storms and strong tides that shape and reshape its shoreline every year. Historic preservationist Beekman Webb, who first visited Bay Point in the 1960s, recently wrote that "Bay Point is constantly in a state of flux," adding that over the years, "much of the island has washed away, built back up a little, and then washed away again."
- **Insufficiently defined emergency preparedness plans:** The developers claim that a Bay Point Island resort would be self-sufficient. But who will pay for fire protection, emergency services, and the likely need for evacuations during a threatening storm?

Thus far, every proposal to develop Bay Point Island has been defeated in a triumph of common sense, only to be replaced by another mutation of the plan. Now it is back again — this time with flashy eco-tourism messages but very little evidence that the development will minimize its impacts to and protect the ecology and wildlife of the island.

The Bay Point project will go before the Beaufort County Zoning Board of Appeals on July 23. Public attendance at the hearing will be limited due to COVID-19.

Because of this limitation, it is more important than ever that concerned citizens express their opposition to County Council and the Zoning Board of Appeals. Their names can all be found on the Beaufort County website:

<https://www.beaufortcountysc.gov>.

We implore our county leaders to listen to the chorus and ask the Zoning Board of Appeals to reject this unsound plan once and for all. Quite simply: it's for the birds.

*John Bloomfield is president of the Hilton Head Audubon and a member of the Audubon South Carolina Board of Advisors.*

This story was originally published July 14, 2020 5:30 AM.

OTHER VIEWS

READ NEXT

TRENDING STORIES

# Increase access to contraceptives to reduce unwanted pregnancies | Opinion

BY TOM DAVIS SPECIAL TO THE ISLAND PACKET AND BEAUFORT GAZETTE  
MAY 26, 2022 7:00 AM



Having the ability to plan if, when, and under what circumstances to have a child is fundamental to living a healthy and empowered life.

KEEP READING →

## South Carolina ranked among the 10 worst states to live in. Here's why

JULY 19, 2022 5:00 AM

## Here's why the dock on Daufuskie Island finds itself in the middle of a growing controversy

UPDATED JULY 19, 2022 11:21 AM

## Corks wine bar leaving Old Town. Owners plan to reopen in new location, with a new name

UPDATED JULY 19, 2022 2:44 PM

## TikTok trucker dies in crash after posting heartfelt video. 'Just get me home'

UPDATED JULY 19, 2022 7:30 AM

## Predicted most 'perfect day of the year' for SC coming this week. Here's what that means

UPDATED JULY 20, 2022 8:20 AM



OTHER VIEWS

## Beaufort County officials should OK school district's budget with raises for teachers | Opinion

UPDATED JUNE 03, 2022 5:44 PM



OPINION

## Guest Viewpoint: Municipalities in Beaufort Co. must adopt impact fees to address growth

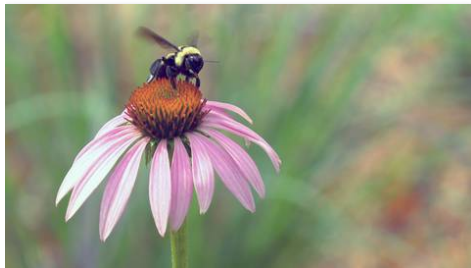
UPDATED APRIL 07, 2022 11:52 AM



OPINION

## Transportation, not workforce housing, is the answer on Hilton Head | Op-Ed

UPDATED FEBRUARY 03, 2021 8:20 AM



OTHER VIEWS

## Keep this Hilton Head dream alive: Show off the good earth and open sky | Opinion

JULY 29, 2020 5:30 AM



OTHER VIEWS

## Ecotourism will protect and preserve Bay Point Island | Opinion

JULY 26, 2020 9:36 AM



SPONSORED CONTENT

## Dentists Hate This New Teeth Whitener And You Can Try It Now



BY CLEANER SMILE

## Take Us With You

Real-time updates and all local stories you want right in the palm of your hand.



[HILTON HEAD ISLAND PACKET APP →](#)

[VIEW NEWSLETTERS →](#)

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

[Start a Subscription](#)

[Customer Service](#)

[eEdition](#)

[Vacation Hold](#)

[Pay Your Bill](#)

### LEARN MORE

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Newsletters](#)

[Archives](#)

[Personal Finance](#)

### ADVERTISING

[Information](#)

[Place a Classified](#)

[Special Sections](#)

[Place an Obituary](#)

### COPYRIGHT

### PRIVACY POLICY

### TERMS OF SERVICE