



Long Savannah to be new urbanist

Plan to go before Charleston City Council tonight

By David Slade
The Post and Courier
Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Out past Bees Ferry Road, where the subdivisions of West Ashley give way to forest, developers and Charleston officials are refining plans for the equivalent of a new town.

Two development groups would join forces to create the urban center, as part of a 1,540-acre development at the end of a planned extension of the Glenn McConnell Parkway.

Long Savannah Master Plan

[Interactive PDF of the proposed Long Savannah development](#) - *large file.*

The developers of Long Savannah — Associated Developers Inc. and the SIM Group — control most of the acreage, but much of the town-like area would be on 287 acres adjacent to Village Green, owned by HPH Properties of Charleston.

"We're improving on what we were going to do anyway," said Charles Hipp Jr. of HPH.

One of the design firms involved, Dover, Kohl and Partners, helped create the I'On community in Mount Pleasant, and the West Ashley plan incorporates many of the same new-urbanist concepts.

"The whole concept behind new urbanism is that you have mixed uses; commercial and residential and offices and parks," Hipp said. "Rather than being a subdivision, it's more a self-contained part of Charleston."

Where I'On is 243 acres with 759 single-family homes and a small commercial area, the 287-acre HPH Properties parcel could have 1,600 housing units and 300,000 square feet of commercial and office space.

Josh Martin, director of Planning, Preservation and Economic Innovation for the city of Charleston, said the plan takes the principles of the Daniel Island development to the next level.

HPH Properties' plan

HIGH ACRES: 287

RESIDENTIAL (detached, single-family homes): 960 units

RESIDENTIAL (attached, homes and apartments): 640 units

COMMERCIAL SPACE: 225,000 square feet

OFFICE SPACE: 75,000 square feet

CIVIC SPACE: To be determined

"As a planner, you see a few proposed settlements that you honestly believe will end up in a textbook or scholarly articles," he said. "This is one of a handful of settlements in the city limits that will be published and lessons will be taught to future generations on how to implement sustainable urbanism."

Charleston City Council will first consider the Long Savannah plan tonight.

Two-thirds of the housing units could be row homes, apartments or other connected dwellings, under the proposed guidelines.

The Long Savannah property, with 1,253 acres, could have another 3,000 homes or more. The two development plans are scheduled to be considered together by the city Planning Commission on April 23, and could return to City Council for a vote in May.

It could take many years to develop the Long Savannah and HPH land, but eventually, the development could provide an alternative place to work and shop for residents of existing subdivisions, including Village Green, Shadowmoss Plantation, Hickory Hills, Grand Oaks and Hunt Club.

Long Savannah has been the focus of most public discussion because it attracted controversy early on. The development initially was opposed by the Red Top community, though an agreement was reached. The plan also calls for moving the "urban growth boundary" that was supposed to mark the end of suburban development.

If you go

Charleston City Council meets at 5 p.m. today in City Hall, 80 Broad St.

The Long Savannah developers have pledged about \$15 million in public improvements, from extending the Glenn McConnell Parkway to setting aside land for schools, but millions of public dollars also have been committed, for buying Long Savannah land for new parks.

The Charleston County Park and Recreation Commission agreed last year to buy nearly 1,600 acres of the 3,000-acre Long Savannah property for \$6.5 million, and Charleston agreed to buy 232 acres for \$2.4 million. That leaves 1,253 acres for the development.

"The emphasis has kind of been on the Long Savannah portion," Hipp said. "Our piece has been in the city for 20 years."

"What's happening is, between now and the next couple of weeks, you will see the whole thing go through the government process."

Hipp said his company had always planned a new urbanist development.

"When we planned it many years ago, we were on the cutting edge," he said. "What we've been able to do is tag along with a much more sophisticated design team.

Reach **David Slade** at 937-5552 or dslade@postandcourier.com.

Copyright © 1997 - 2007 the Evening Post Publishing Co.