

Townhouses okayed for Merchants Way

• Booker has concerns
about nearby Super
fund site

By Matthew J. Permar

During last week's meeting (Thursday, Aug. 17) the Glynn County Board of Commissioners (BOC) voted 5 - 2 to approve the rezoning of 10.79 acres at 240 Merchants Way in Brunswick from General Commercial to Medium Residential.

The rezoning will allow the property owners, Wen Kuo-Hao & Din Ma Sung, to build 112 townhouse units on the site at a density of 10.38 units per acre.

The Medium Residential (MR) zoning allows for a density of 16 units per acre.

The Superfund site that
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was once a Hercules dump site, where the Nalley car dealership parks cars, is adjacent to the west of the site.

Adjacent to the east is the Legacy Apartments complex and to the north is the rear of the Walmart Super Center.

The Mainland Planning Commission (MPC) voted unanimously 5 - 0, with two members absent, at its regular meeting on August 1, to recommend that the BOC approve the rezoning as presented.

Commissioner Allen Booker (Dist. 5) asked Senior Planner Maurice Postal about the Superfund site and storm water runoff onto the townhouse site.

Postal said staff had checked it and that the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) said the site was "capped" and there was no concern regarding contamination.

Booker said, "The EPA says it's capped but they don't live here. I want to make sure it's safe."

The property owners agent Chris Amos of CSEC Inc., said the monitoring wells showed no contamination

above 30 ft. deep. He said nothing they were doing would be that deep. He said the EPA report says the contamination is not getting worse.

He also said some of the monitoring wells were going to be removed, but the whole site is still being monitored.

Asked to verify this, Amos said, "I have the EPA report."

This was not enough to satisfy Booker who was concerned that some of the monitoring wells were being removed. "I thought this would always be monitored," he said.

Amos reiterated that the contamination was 30 ft. down and they weren't going down that far, not for the foundations, not for water and sewer lines and not for any children's play areas.

"The capping was done under EPA regulations," said Amos, "and it will keep the contamination there."

Booker said he still had questions for the EPA about removing the wells.

"And what happens when there's a big storm," Booker asked, "I need to hear this from them (EPA)."

During the public hearing a member of the Altamaha Riverkeeper organization spoke saying the Glynn Environmental Coalition had evidence that the

Superfund site was not secure.

Based on the woman's comment Booker said, "Based on this new information, we need to know if it's accurate. We need to deal with this prior to any building permits being issued."

Booker then made a motion to approve the rezoning with the condition that information is provided from the EPA that the site is capped.

BOC chairman asked if he was talking about the Superfund site or the site that was being rezoned.

Booker said he was okay with the rezoning, but he wanted the county to check on the Superfund site before construction starts.

Commissioner Walter Rafolski (At Large #2) seconded the motion.

Commissioner Bo Clark (At Large #1) noted that property in question is one of the largest homeless encampments in Glynn County and that the Legacy Apartments were next door.

Booker said he was only going on the information provided about the possible leakage that night. He also said Legacy is not next to the Superfund site.

The motion passed 5 - 2, with Clark and Rafolski voting against.