

Sullivan's Island Town Council

STAFF REPORT

The Sullivan's Island Town Council held their regular meeting on November 17 at 6pm. That meeting was preceded by a public hearing at 5:45pm regarding a proposed "Annual Action Plan" by Charleston County that was apparently presented this past spring and included the request of over \$3 million in federal funds by the County for various projects.

Accreted Land lockdown

After realizing the huge draw which the Accreted Land meetings are going to have, the Council considered the laborious task of hearing public comments. The most recent meeting which was scheduled for November 10 had to be cancelled and rescheduled because so many concerned

residents arrived that they could not fit into the door of Council chambers. A reason for the huge turnout, Mayor Carl Smith suggested, was a letter printed in the *Post and Courier* which suggested the Town might completely level the area in favor of sand dunes.

"That's not going to happen," Mayor Smith said.

However, the biggest issue for the Council was finding a way to limit public comment at the rescheduled meeting. Their main point was that this meeting is not a time dedicated to public comment. "This is not a public hearing. This is a time for Council to meet with the consultants," Mayor Smith said. "I think Council has been generous. I have a problem with 30 people saying the same

thing." Council member Pat O'Neil pointed out that while everyone has a right to express themselves, not everyone has a right to speak for an unlimited amount of time at every public meeting. Council member Jerry Kaynard stated that it has been part of their process to bend over backwards so that everyone can speak their minds.

In the end, they admitted that a 30 minute public comment section would be appropriate. Coincidentally, it took all of 30 minutes for the Council to make a decision about the public comment section themselves. The front beach property owner group and The Sullivan's Islanders make up the two main sides of the debate, as

SI Council from page 3

well as an estimated 80% of the comments the Town has received according to Council member Buddy Howle. Each group will have a dedicated five minutes in the public comment section to speak. Mayor Smith expects the front beach property owners to have an appraiser, as well as realtors prepared to speak on their behalf.

The Accreted Land meeting is rescheduled for December 7 at 6pm with a short Committees of Council meeting to precede it at 5:30pm. Due to the high amount of expected audience members, the meeting will be held at the Church of the Holy Cross at 2520 Middle Street. While it is not required, anyone wanting to make a public comment is "strongly encouraged" to register with the Town prior to the meeting.