

# THE STATE PORT PILOT

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**Tourney time**

The State Port Pilot tournament begins Monday with 16 teams, 24 games.

December 22,

50 cents

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## Hospital answers inquiry

Dosher Memorial Hospital owns and operates 11 properties in Southport that are not part of the main acute care facility. As a government entity, Dosher pays neither city nor county property taxes for this income-producing property valued at nearly \$2.7 million.

If the property were not owned by a government entity, it would generate nearly \$13,000 annually for the City of Southport at its current tax rate of 49 cents per \$100 valuation.

A list of hospital-owned properties and their values is among the 13 pages of information Dosher Memorial Hospital prepared in response to citizen questions presented to hospital trustees by city alderman Paul Fisher in November. Fisher said his "constituents" had compiled the questions and said some of them had come from the new civic group Concerned Citizens of Southport.

The citizen questions, Fisher said, were posed as voters prepare to vote on a proposal to extend Dosher trustees' taxing authority at referendum in May. The hospital will ask for authority to levy a property tax of up to four cents per \$100 valuation for 30 years. Taxing authority is critical to obtaining the most favorable financing arrangements for Dosher's master development plan, trustees have said.

The complete list of citizen questions and hospital responses follows:

**1. Do Dosher Hospital and its affiliates pay any property taxes to the City of Southport?** Dosher Hospital has no affiliates and pays no property taxes to the City of Southport. The issue of taxation of hospital property was addressed in early 1996 by Brunswick County's attorney and tax administrator. This issue was reviewed by the North Carolina Institute of Government and the opinion of both the county attorney and the Institute of Government was that the hospital was exempt from taxation pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 105-178.1 (See letter attached.)

**2. A. List all properties owned by Dosher Hospital and its affiliates within Southport city limits.** See Tab A.

**B. Indicate which have structures on them and which are parking lots.** See Tab A.

**C. How many of these properties are rented or leased?** See Tab A.

**D. How many of these properties are rented or leased by doctors, dentists or other members of the medical profession?** See Tab A.

**E. How many of these properties are rented or leased for other than hospital-related activities?** None.

**F. What are those activities?** Not applicable.

**G. What is the maintenance costs for each property?** The hospital does. See Questions, page 12

## CHRISTMAS PARADE



Photo by Jim Harper  
Christmas just keeps coming, and coming, and coming. On Saturday here it was coming down the street in Bolivia, in the form of the town's annual parade, and candy rained and excitement ruled. Happy holidays.

## Airport hearing

# Flight plan still not clear

By Diana D'Abruzzo  
Staff Writer

Residents who fear their homes or businesses will be cleared away when the Brunswick County Airport extends its runway spoke out at a public hearing last Wednesday, asking officials for more details on the project and pleading with them to be up-front and fair.

Most of the public hearing at the Oak Island Recreation Center was spent addressing questions from the audience of about two dozen, though a few residents simply spoke up to tell airport officials of their frustrations and fears regarding the runway expansion.

"We have been stabbed in the back so many times, we want reassurance we won't be stabbed in the back again," said Louis Murray, who owns businesses in the area that have recently gone through Oak Island annexation and added taxation by the Southeast Brunswick Sanitary District. "We've got to be nervous that we'll be shafted again."

The airport learned last month that more than \$2.5 million in federal

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**'Corporate presidents like to fly in; they don't come on a bus. To have a progressive community, you have to have an airport that's a viable tool.'**

Jay Talbert  
Consulting engineer

## Southport planners: Preservation, city growth both needed

By Terry Calhoun  
Staff Writer

Preserving the old town at the core of the city while reaching out to incorporate the new — that was the message Southport planners sent to aldermen Thursday night.

The planning board asked the city attorney to research and possibly draft an ordinance to set a six-month moratorium on redevelopment in an area commonly referred to as the "historic district" — the portion of downtown that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Southport actually has no historic district. City ordinances have never established an area subject to development or architectural design review.

In nearly the same breath, the board passed Jerry Axelrod's motion to "encourage" the board of aldermen to push the current city limit to Long Beach Road.

Quoting the Town of Oak Island mayor's recent "Stay small and die" remark, Axelrod told the board, "To do nothing would be just short of criminal."

Discussion centered not so much on whether to work toward annexation of outlying areas as it did on which areas to pursue. The motion itself referred to property on either side of Highway 211

"Now we are, at a time of rapid development and increasing intrusion into our city by outside interests ... most of those interests are economically based and have little if any interest in our quality of life."

Steve Bliss  
City planner

from the current city limit to the intersection with Highway 133 (Long Beach Road), but discussion quickly turned to the Highway 87 corridor as well.

Little energy was spent on the annexation issue. The intent of the board

See Growth, page 7

## Consortium told:

# Bald Head must ask, like others

By Richard Nubel  
Staff Writer

Bald Head Island is no different than any other beach community when it comes to qualifying for a 50-year federal commitment to beach renourishment, members of the Brunswick Beaches Consortium were told last week.

The village has to ask for it.

"Go get a resolution in Congress and we'll start looking at it," said Wayne Bissette of the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers' Wilmington District.

Bissette and Corps official Tom Jarrett, also of the Wilmington District, issued that preliminary assessment of Bald Head Island's ability to seek inclusion in the federal Shoreline Protection Program on Wednesday. Beach communities in the federal Shoreline Protection Program share cost with federal and state governments for an initial all-out nourishment of their beachfront. Beaches undergoing Shoreline Protection Program projects are then renourished by the Corps every three years to replace sand that has eroded. That cycle of renourishment continues for 50 years, under the program.

Bald Head Island officials recently have claimed the village was ineligible for inclusion in a Shoreline Protection Program. In November, village council instructed

See Consortium, page 6

## Brunswick planning issue

# St. James property owners want more info on project

By Terry Pope  
Staff Writer

Rumors had St. James Plantation developers proposing everything from a gas station to another Wal-Mart in two master plans up for adoption by the Brunswick County Planning Board last week.

St. James residents who wanted to know for sure what would be built in their town asked that master plans for Phase III and The Paladin Club golf course project be tabled until they can study the maps more closely. They filled the public assembly room to capacity and stated their concerns at the Wednesday public hearings before developers offered a compromise — to

table action on the two plans until a town meeting is held to ease residents' concerns.

"The developers in question have been very successful developers," said St. James Plantation project manager Mark Brambell. "They did not do this by not listening to the people who live in St. James or people who are future residents of St. James."

Last week's confrontation between St. James Plantation developers and residents of the Town of St. James pointed out two noteworthy facts about changes in the county's newest town — that residents and town council are taking a more active role in deciding what is proper development within the municipality

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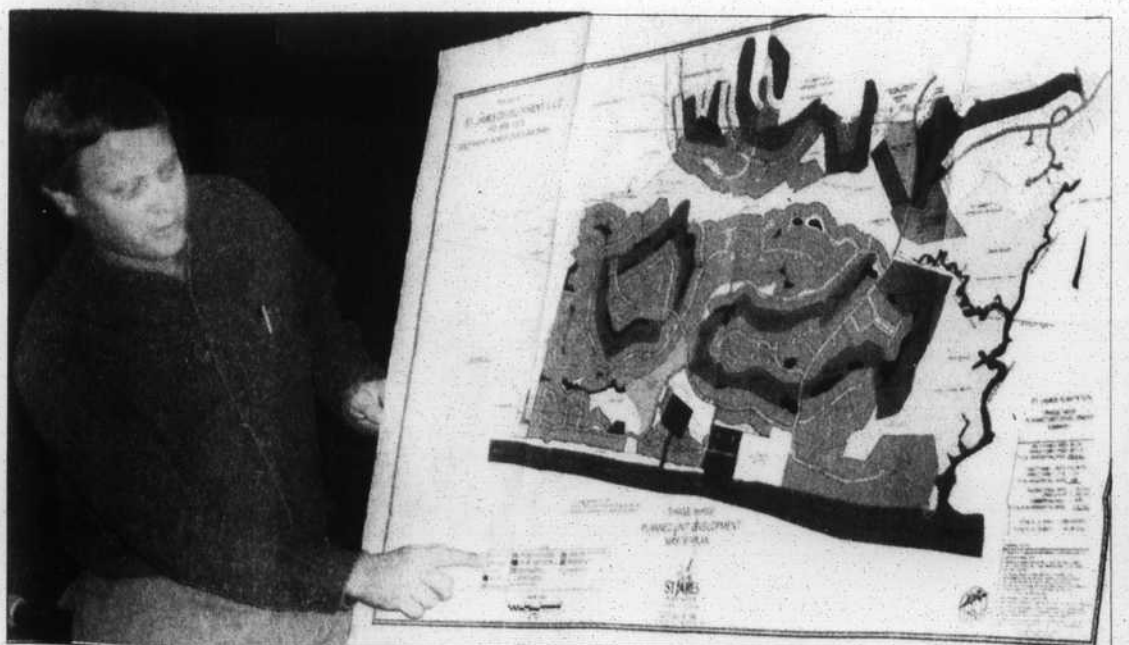


Photo by Terry Pope  
Planning board chairman Alan Lewis stepped aside, then took the floor to explain the project he helped design, before the board suspended discussion of the St. James Plantation proposal.