

REAL ESTATE

Planning chief says remarks not endorsement of project

As planning division director for the city of Charleston, **Christopher Morgan** routinely comments on upcoming projects.

He works with developers on their projects and makes formal recommendations to board members at city meetings, which usually are attended by only a handful of citizens.

But his opinions rarely end up in marketing materials.

In a press release for a condominium complex called **The Grove at Fenwick Hall Plantation**, Morgan was quoted talking about the Johns Island real estate market in general.

“(City officials are) seeking to assure that the daily needs and services are met in the Maybank core of Johns Island and (are) also seeking to assure that this core is an excellent location for a variety of housing needs,” he said in the statement.

The statement wasn’t meant to sound like an endorsement, Morgan clarified on Thursday.

City spokeswoman **Barbara Vaughn** said staffers routinely comment on projects as they make their way through the



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maze of zoning and planning approvals.

“But it may be perceived by others that it was an endorsement, and that was a mistake,” she said.

The 80-unit community is a converted apartment complex on River Road, just north of its intersection with Maybank Highway. Developer **Jamie Kerr** of **St. Andrews Gardens Investors** describes the corner as “the front door” of Johns Island.

“Even though some people say the condo market has already happened, we feel like for first-time home buyers that this is a great price point for them,” he said.

“For first-time home buyers as well as investors, at the right price, real estate makes sense.”

Most condos are priced in the \$140,000 range.

Kerr also said growth on the

island is expected to “explode” in future years, and that the homes are in just the right spot.

“A lot of people think that Johns Island is out there, but it’s only 11 to 12 minutes from downtown,” he said.

Moving parts

Charleston Marine Manufacturing Corp., a ship-repair company originally formed to help redevelop the former Navy base, has leased almost half a block of space in North Charleston.

Company officials agreed to lease 5.1 acres of property, which includes a 127,000-square-foot building, from a private investor group.

The parcel at the intersection of Carner Avenue and Jacksonville Road is zoned for industrial use.

Representatives from **Colliers Keenan of Charleston** represented both ends of the deal. **Ha-good Morrison** represented the tenant while **Peter Fennelly** and **Simons Johnson** represented the investors.

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