



COMMISSION VOTES TO BUY FORMER FISHERMAN'S CO-OP PROPERTY, LINKING COUNTY HISTORY WITH EXCITING OPPORTUNITIES

BRYAN COUNTY, GA – SEPTEMBER 9, 2020 – The Bryan County Commission recently voted to purchase a 24-acre piece of property on Bryan Fisherman's Coop Road. The plot previously was home to the Bryan County Fisherman's Cooperative, which was built in 1979 and sold in 2007. Because it was used by shrimpers to haul in their catches, it has deep-water access.

"It's not often a project comes along that will let us tie in a piece of the county's history with a wide array of positive benefits and opportunities for our residents. When it does, though, we're eager to learn more and consider all the options that exist," said Bryan County Commission Chairman Carter Infinger.

Back in March, the commission exercised the option to buy the property. They have been weighing the considerations and taking into account a study done in conjunction with the City of Richmond Hill a few years ago. The study, concerning access to water, found that few options exist for water access on Georgia's coast.

The fishermen's co-op property has a lot of potential, according to Infinger, and the county wanted to make sure a redevelopment project would be feasible. "There's little doubt that reinvigorating this property would be beneficial for the county and its residents, and we're currently exploring our options for usage. A boat ramp is part of the plan we're devising, and there are a multitude of other opportunities and ideas being considered," the chairman added.

County Administrator Ben Taylor said there are grant funds available that they'll be applying in order to implement the improvements. "We understand that this will be a multiphase project that will have to be accomplished over a number of years. The scope of the facility can grow over time with the financial capabilities of the County," Taylor said.

The fishermen's co-op once consisted of a 900-foot dock, a 30-by-30-foot cooler to store the catch, a large storeroom for supplies, and a facility that could be used as a store for selling fish. At one point, the co-op

was contributing over \$5 million per year to the local economy. The first Bryan County seafood festival – known today as the Great Ogeechee Seafood Festival – was held on the co-op grounds.

“We like how ingrained the co-op is in the community’s history and culture. The opportunity to breathe new life into it is something we find particularly exciting, and I believe area residents are in agreement. Those who remember the old co-op understand what kind of implications this project could have. Younger folks may not know what a hotspot it once was, but there’s certainly an emotional and nostalgic element associated with the thought of reintroducing the co-op to a whole new generation of Bryan County residents,” Chairman Infinger said.

For more information about Bryan County, please visit www.bryancountyga.org or follow the county on their social media accounts, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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