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StarNews

WILMINGTON, N.C.

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Officials held a ceremony at "The Point" at the southern tip of Topsail Island on May 19 to celebrate the state taking ownership of the popular undeveloped beach preserve. PROVIDED BY NC COASTAL MANAGEMENT

Successful efforts

'The Point' now under NC control

Gareth McGrath USA TODAY NETWORK

In a ceremony bringing an end to a multi-year effort to protect the popular and undeveloped southern tip of Topsail Island, the N.C. Division of Coastal Management on Tuesday, May 19, formally assumed management of "The Point" in Topsail Beach. • "The Topsail Nature Preserve is a unique coastal resource, and we are committed to protecting its natural integrity and maintaining responsible public access," said Reid Wilson, the secretary of the N.C. Department of Environmental Protection, in a news release. "Conserving places like this strengthens the long-term resilience of our coastal communities, protects natural habitats and preserves the natural features that help our coast adapt to changing environmental conditions."

Tuesday's event brought to an end an aggressive and ultimately successful campaign by the N.C. Coastal Land Trust to protect the popular beach area from development.

Long a favorite of residents and visitors to the Pender County resort island looking to get away from the crowded beach scene, the roughly 150-acre parcel in Topsail Beach is a mix of beach, dunes, wetlands and scrub forest that serves as vital habitat for a host of coastal flora and fauna, including nesting sea turtles and shorebirds.

The area borders Topsail Beach to the

north and New Topsail Inlet, which separates Topsail Island and Lea-Hutaff Island, to the south. It is bracketed by the Atlantic Ocean on one side and the Intracoastal Waterway on the other.

Although privately owned, the Point has been perceived by many for decades as a quasi-public area. But that distinction came into full light a couple years ago when when a Raleigh family that owned the land announced plans to develop the site as a family compound.

See EFFORTS, Page 9A

Restaurants, coffee shop headed to New Hanover

Daniel Sheehan

Wilmington StarNews | USA TODAY NETWORK

An undeveloped property on a major New Hanover County street will soon be home to a collection of dining and beverage options.

Site plans have been submitted for a new retail center at the corner of North College Road and Long Ridge Drive. The project, known as College Landing Retail Center, includes two restaurants and a coffee shop.

The site is located just south of Laney High School, across the street from a McDonald's on North College Road. The property is just under one acre and is surrounded by several businesses, including a Taco Bell, Dollar General and a Smile Starters dental office.

The project is considered a by-right development, meaning that it will not be presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval. The plans will be reviewed by New Hanover County's Technical Review Committee on June 3.

The project includes an 1,897-square-foot restaurant, a 1,964-square-foot restaurant and a 2,034-

See RESTAURANTS, Page 9A

Trucking company sues over foreclosure auction purchase

Daniel Sheehan

Wilmington StarNews | USA TODAY NETWORK

A trucking company has filed a lawsuit against New Hanover County aiming to reverse the business's purchase of a small property that was auctioned off in a foreclosure.

In a lawsuit filed on May 11 in New Hanover County Superior Court, Raleigh-based company Tate Trucking Enterprise requested a rescission of its \$15,900 purchase of an industrial parcel in the 2700 block of North Kerr Avenue. The plaintiff also noted it incurred cost of \$1,698.76 through the transaction.

The conflict centers around whether or not the 10,551-square-foot property is an independent, taxable parcel. While the county superior court facilitated the auction in 2024, the filing alleges that the property is a private roadway that "cannot be exclusively possessed, independently developed, or function as valid standalone parcel."

A spokesperson for New Hanover said that the county cannot comment on pending litigation.

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