

Media Release



bluffton
HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

March 8, 2016

For More Information:

Debbie Szpanka
Public Information Officer
Town of Bluffton
20 Bridge Street
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910
(Office) 843.706.4534
(Cell) 843.540.2274
(Email) dszpanka@townofbluffton.com

Town of Bluffton Finalizes Multi-Party Agreement Impacting Okatie River
Headwaters and National Healthcare Corporation

The Town of Bluffton, along with Beaufort County, Kent Estates property owners and National Healthcare Corporation (NHC), finalized an agreement on February 26th facilitating the sale of 111 acres to Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Preservation Program. This action promotes preservation of land in the critical headwaters of the Okatie River while allowing NHC access to Davis Road to expand its operations.

Kent Estates is the area located adjacent to Highway 170 between Bluffton Parkway and Highway 278.

With this new agreement, the Town terminated Kent Estates Development Agreement in order for Beaufort County Open Land Trust to purchase the land. The objectives of this purchase are to mitigate the pollutants which will enter the Okatie River and use this parcel for public access and open space.

“It is a rare occurrence for a development agreement to be terminated,” Mayor Lisa Sulka said. “It is also uncommon for the new agreement to support both environmental protection and economic development. I am proud of the representatives of each organization who strategically discovered solutions to many issues within these parcels and provided clarity to the future ownership of Davis Road.”

The Town released the previous property owners (i.e. New Leaf, LLC and Colony Bank) from its development agreement and transferred the development rights of the properties to the town’s Development Rights Bank. These rights to 449 residential dwelling units and 95,000 square feet of commercial space can be sold by the Town to other property owners or held indefinitely so as to reduce the overall planned development of the Town. Additionally, as a result of the property sale, the Town has also rezoned this area from a planned unit development (PUD) to a preserve district.