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Man, Nature, and New Ideas: The Legacy of Sea Pines Plantation

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Man, Nature and New Ideas: The Legacy of Sea Pines Plantation

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In partial fulfillment of a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Environmental Analysis, 2010/11
academic year, Pomona College, Claremont, California

Readers:
Char Miller
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Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank my readers and my father.
This paper is dedicated to Jan Connors.

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Introduction:

My goal is to learn the history of Hilton Head Island and logically reason out the way it grew, marking Sea Pine's design influence over time and place. This paper is meant to be a piece of nature and history writing, which has implications for the study of environmental economics and real-estate design practices, but is not strictly about either. The thrust of this piece is the mapping of developmental philosophies and their reflection in the land.

This topic interests me because at its core, it looks at how decisions are made, and the trade offs that influence them. The paper is also about the formation of ideas that explore sustainable forms of human-environment interaction, but which do not give up the high quality of life that modern man has come to expect. Environmental issues will continue to influence social, economic and political thought as we move towards mid-century. Sea Pines champions a blending of man and nature that may be able to provide alternative and more efficient solutions to the problems that our society faces.

Methodology:

Over the years, I was fortunate enough to take a few family vacations to Hilton Head Island, always staying at a friends place in Sea Pines Plantation. But not until this past summer (2010) did I begin to study the place. I traveled there twice, once in early July and once again in early August. While there, I interviewed people closely tied to the developmental history of the plantation, including the current president of the resort. I also explored the area, making notes of its features studying the land. I read leaflets and notices, studied maps, and enjoying the flora and fauna. I found books that deal with the history of the island and its developers. I was able to access over sixty relevant news articles from the time that deal with Fraser and his plantation, giving me additional and useful perspectives. In the paper, I use the gathered information to build a narrative around Sea Pines and the environmental ethic created there.

Two quick clarifications

- 1) Sea Pines is just one plantation on Hilton Head Island. However Sea Pines came first and the rest of the plantations followed the model Charles Fraser provided. For the purposes of this design/planning analysis, the distinction between the two is not of utmost importance, although the focus of this study is on the ideals and influences of Sea Pines, not Hilton Head.
- 2) Sea Pines Plantation and Sea Pines Company, will both be frequently referred to as the general "Sea Pines". The line between the company and the plantation was somewhat blurred in real life, as their fates and actions were so closely tied to one another, so precise distinction is not necessary here.

The Seed

An Excess of Natural Wonders

The Golden Isles, a string of beautifully wooded sea-islands caught between the Intracoastal Waterway and Atlantic Ocean, lies off the southeastern coast of the United States. Far famed for its beaches and wildlife, the Sunbelt climate is the main appeal of resort and retirement developments in the region.ⁱ Majestic in the spring and fall, freshly clear in the winter, and with mainland summer heat tempered by the cool ocean breeze, Hilton Head Island is a geographically blessed entity that offers its residents a year-round opportunity to commune with nature.

Roughly twice the size of Manhattan Island, Hilton Head is large and covered by thousands of trees. There are palms and oaks, but pine trees are the most common. Dense and magnificent forests relieve the true flatness of the island and accentuate its natural features. The species diversity on Hilton Head creates a vibrant non-human community to match its beautiful natural setting. The island is located in one of the flyways of migrating birds, so every fall the island experiences a large number of new visitors.ⁱⁱ Bottlenose dolphins are also common, and engage in strand-feeding, a feeding practice only ever witnessed on this island.ⁱⁱⁱ The once endangered alligator can still roam. An estimated “30 species of mammals, 133 different types of birds, 11 fish, 37 reptiles and 20 amphibians”^{iv} populate the island. From herons to seagulls, azaleas to deer and raccoons to dolphins, many different species, plant or animal, find a home on Hilton Head.



“I’m interested in making money, but I’m also interested in history, architecture, trees and birds.”
- Charles Fraser -

Typical of many barrier islands, salt marshes cover a large portion of the land-facing side of Hilton Head. These marshes provide aesthetic wonder, constantly changing their golden hue and sustaining a myriad of plant and animal life. The salt marshes also serve as the basis for the diverse ecology of the island, because they act as a nursery and breeding grounds for birds and fish.^v The nutrient wealthy waters of Hilton Head help maintain the area’s rich biodiversity.

This string of islands is most famous for its flawless beaches. Twelve miles of pure white sandy beach grace the eastern edge of Hilton Head Island along its Atlantic Coast. Just off the coast, sandbars catch shells from tarnishing the smooth beaches and also serve to diminish the heavy waves that would otherwise disturb the waters.^{vi} The

wide beachfronts gradually slope down to the Atlantic and encourage walking, biking and many other human activities. People can simply enjoy this area. It is everything an American beach aspires be; no shells to worry about, easy waves to enjoy with the family, and highways of pristine white sand that stretch as far as the eye can see.



The Set Up



In 1663, when English explorer William Hilton arrived on Hilton Head Island, Native Americans had already lived there for thousands of years. The Europeans quickly developed an agriculturally based economy, which grew until the Civil War at which time the area was captured and held by the Union. After the war was over and the armies gone, the population dropped and the island experienced an extended period of isolation through much of the 1900s.

By mid-century, with ideal climate, beaches and a lush environmental endowment, this little known island secret was set for development. Only thirty miles from Savannah and one hundred miles from Charleston, with the quickly growing Atlanta and Charlotte close by as well, Hilton Head was in a prime location easily accessible to an economically expanding region looking to travel.^{vii} Southerners were making more money and dedicating more time to leisure. The real question was no longer whether it would develop, but how.

Charles Fraser

In 1950, a group of wealthy Georgians bought eight-thousand acres of pine forest on the southern end of the island. General Joseph Fraser orchestrated the operation by forming the Hilton Head Company, a group of southern lumber associates who had bought the island for its timbering potential, as most of the island was covered with virgin pine at the time.^{viii} His son, Charles Elbert Fraser, would emerge as the man to guide the development of Hilton Head.

However unimposing and physically forgettable, Charles Fraser's small size could not contain his mental energy. He was born in 1929 and even as a child his interests and gifts were not in physical recreation, but in design and beauty. He loved to build castles in the sand and to read as much as he could.^{ix} As the eventual chairman of Sea Pines Company, he stayed true to his youthful leanings. He played little golf or tennis, the staples of his development, and spent the bulk of his time honing the design standards that he lived through. A compulsive reader, he was always on the go, generating new ideas, new projects, new anything.^x He never stopped going, engaging, or learning and his dynamic mental energy gave him an unquenchable thirst for knowledge.^{xi} According to Fraser, the way he learned was not simply through innovation or genius, but "The

process is: read and travel, stock my brain, talk to experienced people, stock my brain, scan thousands of architectural photographs, stock my brain.”^{xii}

During Fraser’s first experiences with Hilton Head, he saw an untouched gem of sea island beauty, a wilderness of pristine beaches, venerable trees, and a diverse collection of species. Yet what he saw also scared him. For Fraser was a visionary, and he could see the tangled messes of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and Coney Island, New York rising from this beautiful island. He feared a sprawl of overdevelopment and senseless destruction of the beauty the island offered. Unless a contrary course of action was taken, Fraser thought the island would suffer the poorly thought out development characteristic of much of the eastern seaboard. Apart from its lack of environmental consideration, Fraser thought the then typical style was “a nightmare to anyone with reasonable aesthetic standards”^{xiii}. He knew that development of some sort would eventually occur on Hilton Head, and he desperately wanted the island not to follow in the same footsteps as the rest of the Atlantic coastline.^{xiv}

Fraser Research

During the summer of 1950, after graduating from the University of Georgia, Fraser traveled around the forested island, getting a feel for the landscape by jeep, tractor and foot each day. While the pines were still being chopped and sold, Fraser worked closely with the timbering teams and successfully urged his father to leave the oceanfront strands of trees untouched.^{xv} The idea was to give up guaranteed short-term returns for a possibly greater long-term benefit. He wanted to selectively cut the trees, taking into consideration the potential development of the island. Protecting much of the wild beauty allowed the island to remain a well-forested and wonderful place, one in which Fraser hypothesized people would want to live.^{xvi}

At this point, Fraser was not a full time developer and had not yet decided to make Sea Pines his life's work. He was only twenty-one at the time, and about to head off to Yale University to pursue a career in law.^{xvii} But while at law school, Fraser never forgot about the island he would eventually call home. He frequently asked colleagues, peers, and professionals what they would do with four miles of beachfront and its inland wonders, always collecting answers and advice, honing the good ideas and throwing out bad ones. He learned scores of things, including how to talk, think and write like a lawyer. His most important class at school, and the one that would shape Hilton Head, was a course called "Land-use Planning and Allocation by Private Agreement".^{xviii} The teacher, Myres McDougal, was an expert in using private covenants to achieve complicated land-use planning goals. From McDougal, Fraser learned the importance of control in development, and the necessity of well thought out development on fragile property.^{xix}

Eventually Fraser began to seriously consider developing the island, and to depart from his path as a lawyer. He began extensively researching what do to and what not to do with new development, specifically on the beachfront.^{xx} Above all, he wanted to avoid becoming a part of the cheap, commercial style that was so typical at the time.^{xxi} Fraser traveled up and down Atlantic coast asking developers of beachfront properties what they would have done differently, if they could do it over again. He heard from almost every developer that it had been a mistake to simply line up and sell the house lots in a row along the beach, because interior values were severely diminished. They also reiterated the lessons of McDougal, by telling him how quickly and easily control of the development can be lost.^{xxii}

Sources of Inspiration

Fraser recognized the influence of Sir Christopher Wren, whose post Great Fire of London plans advocated a new type of city, one that engages sunlight and other natural energy flows among other things.^{xxiii} From the eighteenth century, James Oglethorpe's brilliant town layout for Savannah and L'Enfant's ambitious Washington D.C. plan also served educational models. Decades later, Frederick Law Olmsted designed areas of human development which integrated nature into their composition. The company towns created by industrial expansion of New England in the nineteenth and early twentieth century engaged in strong architecture, landscaping, and environmental management.^{xxiv} In literature, Aldo Leopold and Henry David Thoreau were major shapers of Fraser's thoughts on land stewardship and conservation. And the Georgia poet, Sidney Lanier, inspired Fraser's environmental philosophy to an even stronger degree.^{xxv} These sources taught Fraser the importance of basic efficiency and well thought out planning, and their work inspired a further integration of man and nature.

Ideology

The Fraser family's southern Calvinist roots encouraged the land-stewardship philosophies he lived by. Passages from the Bible, of which there were many in the Fraser home, encourage man to "be fruitful, and multiply and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth on the earth." Fraser developed a desire to place man within nature and to protect both. The mentality reflected in biblical passages where God "took man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it"^{xxvi} encouraged Fraser to want to dominate but also to protect the natural world. His take on Christianity

led to his strong environmental stewardship, and the importance he placed on human-usage values.

Fraser's ideology demanded the use of his extensive knowledge of law. He saw a certain moral responsibility in owning land, and as a result wrote land-use covenants that incentivized protection, and the fulfillment of the stewardship those lands deserved. He once said, "I think anyone who owns a large parcel of land is dealing with something that isn't entirely and completely his. There is a stewardship requirement that goes along with owning that land."^{xxvii} Fraser felt this responsibility, and one of his original reasons for creating the Sea Pines Company was because he strongly believed that, without his intervention, the island would follow the typical form of development that visually and aesthetically polluted the Atlantic coastline.^{xxviii}

The Second Purchase

After the timbering was completed, the island's owners turned to development as the next phase of ownership. However, there was a split among the investors as to how to develop the land. In 1955, Charles Fraser authored a thirty-five page proposal of land planning and land-use control for the island. During his research, he had been unable to find a fitting model to base the island on, so he came up with a unique proposal of his own, taking the better ideas from these developments, and injecting some of his own. Charles Fraser adamantly believed that the island should *not* be developed in the typical beach fashion of the time, and that the natural beauty of the place did not have to be destroyed through its population. However, the other owning parties of the Hilton Head Company quickly discarded his ideas as those of an egotistical and naive youth by the other owning parties of the Hilton Head Company.^{xxix} The owners believed that unproven alternatives were a waste of time and money and wanted to simply subdivide and sell the

land. This ideological break led to the splitting of the original Hilton Head Company. Soon after the completion of the Byrnes Bridge, which connected Hilton Head to the mainland, General Fraser exchanged his majority share of the company for 4,500 acres of sea marsh, forest and beachfront on the southern end of the island.^{xxx}



Charles Fraser formed a new entity, Sea Pines Company, which bought his father's recently split share of the island in 1956.^{xxxi} Sea Pines was now entirely Fraser's show to run, he was the president and founder. The goal of Sea Pines Company was to develop Sea Pines Plantation, the same 4,500 acre tract of land. He hoped to create a year-round community that could experience and engage the beauty of the island. As he was only twenty-seven years old when he set out to develop Sea Pines Plantation, most thought Fraser was underprepared and underage. He dreamt of forming the land into a residential area that supported high-quality human activity, without losing the majesty the area provided. The first lot of his environmentally sensitive development sold in 1958, and the few thousand acres that started Sea Pines Plantation would become a nationally known, studied, celebrated and emulated place by the end of the 1960s.^{xxxii}

The Development

Concept

The actual construction of Sea Pines Plantation began in 1957, with the stated purpose of completing a “high-quality” destination resort. By developing a low-density total recreation environment which fit its natural landscape, Fraser hoped to provide a unique and better lifestyle for a specific community. Through the use of private covenants as legal tools, Charles Fraser planned to retain complete aesthetic and locational control over development. Fraser’s temporal goal for Sea Pines was “to build it in such a way that 50 years from now it will still be extremely attractive.”^{xxxiii}

Environmentally, he was much more concerned with preserving the natural setting than leveling it. The plantation was designed to avoid overcommercialization and Fraser would set aside roughly a third of the plantation for open spaces.^{xxxiv} The Sea Pines Company mentality was that “any resort worthy of its name should promote protection of the natural beauty and wildlife in its area... There is no reason why a private corporation shouldn’t impose upon itself stringent standards for development.”^{xxxv} By resisting the typical impulse of developers to alter the landscape, he planned to provide a better, and a more unique, aesthetic experience. He hoped that incorporating the natural wildlife, forests, beaches and marshes would bolster Sea Pines’ long-term economic and social value.^{xxxvi} Fraser planned the man-made environment to coexist with the natural one, and in doing so create a more perfect blending of the two.

The idea was not just to sell land, but to sell it as a part of the whole. Fraser was selling a community, not only parcels of land.^{xxxvii} He wanted to create an area which would employ the best planning and design thoughts available, and in doing so make an area that people were interested in being a part of, not just for the sake of the land they

owned, but also for the beauty of the land that surrounded it.^{xxxviii} By tying the individual self-interest of property owners to the common good, Fraser incentivized environmental protection and respect within his community.

Control via Private Covenants

Fraser knew how he wanted to develop, he knew that control was critical in development, and he also knew how to retain the control he sought.^{xxxix} A lawyer turned environmental developer, he wrote private covenants which were attached to all deeds sold by the company. Every deed sold had roughly forty pages of restrictions attached,^{xl} with the first one being that Fraser could disallow any building for any reason whatsoever, even if it was purely aesthetic. Sea Pines Company did no actual construction, only management and real estate sales of the land and the private deed covenants gave Fraser power over development on the plantation, long after he no longer held the deeds.

The covenants insured the completion of Fraser's master plan, protected certain environmentally important areas, encouraged aesthetically appealing development, and avoided overcrowding, overdevelopment and unattractive buildings. The covenants suggested housing densities of roughly a unit per acre, covering about half of the land, and focusing development in specific and fitting areas. The remaining half was to hold golf courses, beaches, wildlife preserves, marshes and other open spaces. About 1,400 acres were to remain undeveloped, protected by special open-space covenants.^{xli} Specific land-use covenants were written for a few unique areas, including the beach club sites and the Sea Pines Forest Preserve.^{xlii}

Fraser's land-use covenants were the means through which he was able to strictly control development on the island. His innovative use of these legal tools allowed him to

structure the community, physically, aesthetically and socially. People were willing to buy into this system, even though it limited control over their own property, because they were assured of the long-term value of their land. The guarantee that no strip-mall, billboard or other gaudy development could enter attracted many wealthy buyers. They were protected from visual and community pollution. The covenants maintained the natural beauty of the island while promising attractive and sensible development. The stringent rules became one of the strongest selling points of the island because the restrictions created a common incentive to enhance the quality of the community, and thus increased land values.



A visitor will not see the easements or read the covenants. The tools used to make this place are not what a person will experience, but what the tools incentivized, smart

and lasting development. People see the trees and animals, the uninterrupted sand dunes and the open grass areas, the attractive homes and the ample recreation. It is not the covenants that we recognize as beautiful, but what they created.

Experts

While Fraser himself was the general master planner and hub of all thing Sea Pines, he hired hundreds of experts to figure out the best ways to complete each specific project. The idea was for every aspect of his resort to be as top-tier as possible. In all respects, whether it be golf or road placement, he wanted anything and everything to be first class. To attract the affluent community Fraser wanted, the experience needed to be top notch.^{xliii} As the leader he had a remarkable feel for good land-use planning, and also an uncanny ability to attract talented help.^{xliv}

Sea Pines Company worked with a variety of experts as it grew. Fraser believed that the physical planning of everything from streets to green spaces needed to be skillful, so he contracted brilliant Boston-based landscape architects Sasaki & Walker to create the master land development plans.^{xlv} He worked with them to create a new concept, a new breed of development that connected man to the environment, and created a sense of place for the entire community.^{xlvi} When he decided to legally cut off areas from development, Fraser teamed up with wildlife expert Dr. Frank Arnold to pick the areas and boundaries for the Open Spaces and the Forest Preserve that were most conducive to providing wildlife shelter and animal migratory corridors.^{xlvii} Fraser again called on Arnold, who was also a skilled entomologist, to help create a mosquito control program that would make Sea Pines more bearable in the summers.^{xlviii} Additionally, the notable architects who designed the houses of Sea Pines came from Harvard's Graduate School of Design and worked closely with Fraser to create a now famous style. He also hired

first class recreational experts to build his resort. Famous course designers George Cobb, Pete Dye and the legend-to-be Jack Nicklaus lead the layout and construction of the golf courses. And former Wimbledon champion Stan Smith directed the tennis programs. These people knew what to do in their respective areas of expertise, and Fraser was the one who brought all of their knowledge together in a single development.

Even though he was not the expert in each matter, Fraser was very attuned to each specific issue and paid close attention to detail. He “understood the role of architects, the landscape architects, the engineers – and never confused them.”^{xlix} His role was a leadership one, providing the philosophical, economic and aesthetic detail for each specific project.^l He was the conductor of the orchestra, and let others play the instruments. It became a Sea Pines policy to bring in the very best consultants available to help on every project,^{li} and a large reason why Sea Pines remains successful is because of the first class thinking that created it.

Community

Roughly thirty five thousand people now live on Hilton Head full time.^{lii} The resort is aimed to be an elegant escape for the affluent and sports-minded. Vacationers and residents are the two main groups of people on the island. The primary traveler to Hilton Head is the classic family vacationer who are drawn mostly from the eastern seaboard. Many who decided to live on the island are retirees, but Sea Pines is not a retirement community in any true sense, simply a place that attracts retired people.^{liii} Hilton Head now serves a broad national base, but Georgia and its bordering States are the main feeders to the island and as part of the Bible/Sun belt regions, the community is fairly conservative.

Those who came were attracted to the island and its unique way of life.^{liv} These people wanted a low-density area that catered to sports enthusiasts. Despite many similarities, resort and retirement communities are more self-contained than classic suburbia, with a stronger sense of community and fewer connections, both economic and physical, to the greater population. People who actively choose to live in an area have a strong commitment to the aspects of the area which originally brought them in. In the case of Sea Pines, residents are very committed to maintaining the environmental prestige of the area. The community members chose to live in this area, and are thus very dedicated to keeping growth in check while protecting the natural setting. The residents also have a vested interest in maintaining the beaches and the natural environment, because they felt those are the primary draw of the destination.^{lv}

Rising incomes in the late 1950s led to the ability of more and more families to afford high quality vacations or even second-houses, and changing lifestyles increased demand to be a part of this new type of culture.^{lvi} There is no denying it, Sea Pines was made by the rich, for the rich. Hilton Head embodied the best the South Carolina “Low Country” life had to offer, but also the monoculture that entailed. Sea Pines has only ever been populated by rich white residents. Some community members are absurdly wealthy, although most islanders are members of the upper-middle class. In the earlier years, there was a tendency of buyers to convince their old friends to come to the island and become a part of Sea Pines as new-buyers. This trend served to make the community a tightly knit one, but also reinforced the emerging socioeconomic cast of the plantation.



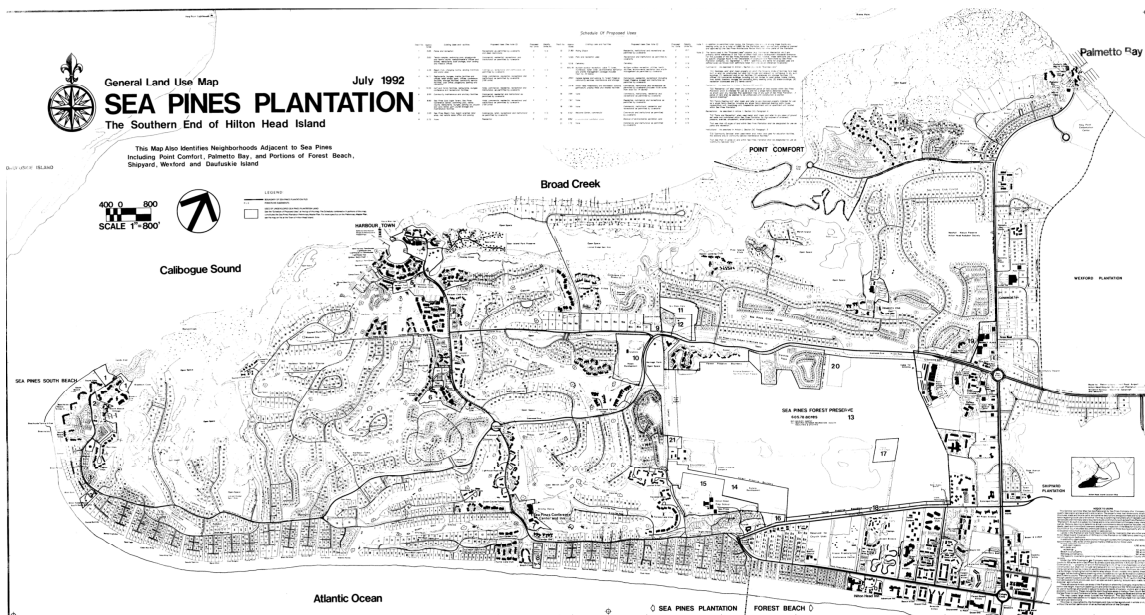
In general, lots started off as fairly expensive purchases (\$3,350 in 1957) and, as the popularity of the plantation grew, became extremely expensive and then altogether impossible to afford (as high as \$3.5 million) for non-wealthy families. It is a sad reality that, despite its innovations, Sea Pines was exclusive to those wealthy enough to afford it, and flourished only for the well off.

Master Plans

According to Fraser, Sea Pines attempted to fit

“development into the natural structure of the landscape. Assigning land use by density and character in direct relationship to the ability of the landscape to absorb development can be the single most important factor in maintaining the overall physical quality of the community. The landscape itself can often suggest specific solutions for site engineering, location of amenities, and architectural solutions.”^{lvii}

Between 1957 and 1974, nine different master plans were generated with ever changing densities, proposals, usages and amenities, all depending on the best and most recent information available.^{lviii} The plans built off of each other and the opportunities that the continued success of the plantation provided, continually becoming more intricate and precise as development neared completion. The plans won national awards as a result of their innovative blend of wildlife conservation mixed with private recreational and residential development.^{lix} These plans detailed most everything, from the location of roads to the specific land-uses allowed in certain area.^{lx} The plans emphasized careful land-usage with importance placed on environmental protection and an integrated and beautiful man-made landscape.^{lxi} Fraser “wanted to implement the master plan, to develop homesites, to walk that tightwire between the desire for a hideaway and the desire for community which are the opposites everyone is looking for in a resort residence.”^{lxii} As a result of these plans, which were edited over and over again, designed and redesigned, the privately planned plantation of Sea Pines represents some of the best results of design that community planning has to offer.

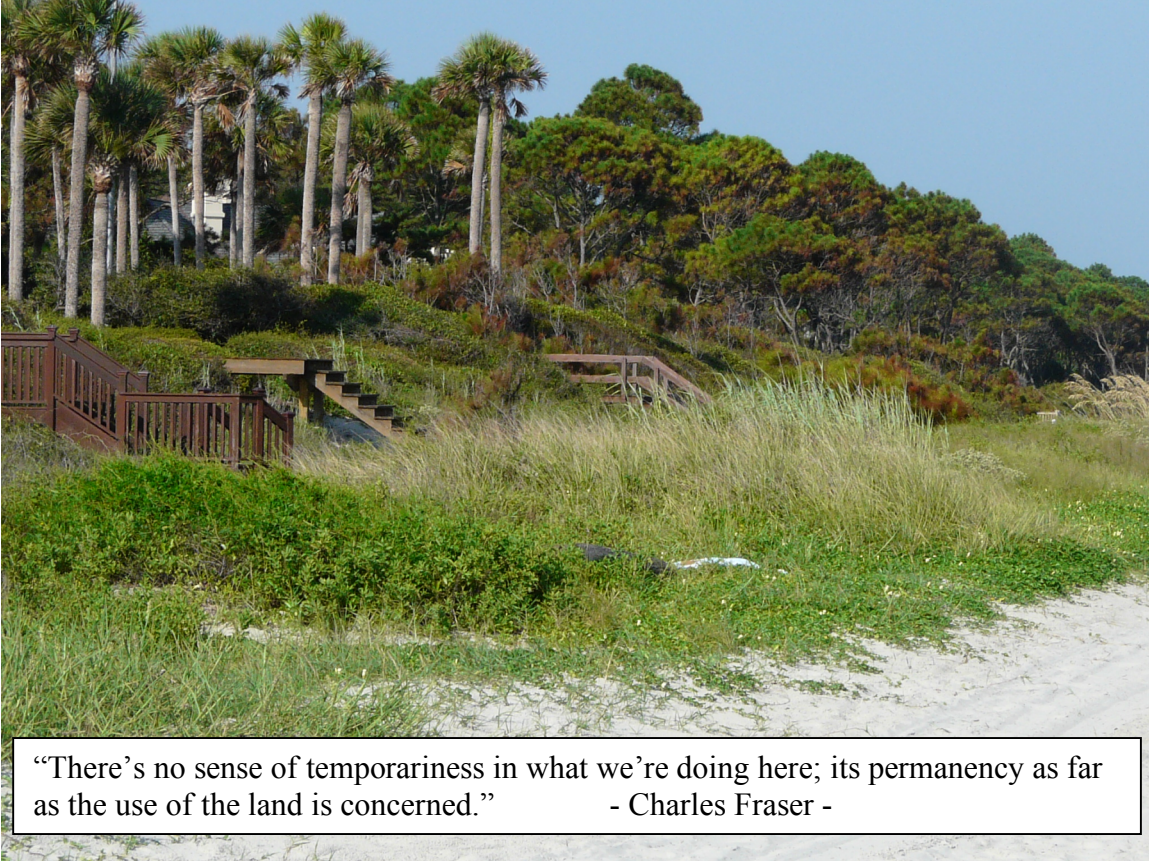


General Land Use Map

Efficient Land Use

Each feature of Sea Pines tries to match its natural setting and work with its surroundings in an efficient manner. Fraser purposefully placed houses to give the residents magnificent views of lagoons, marshes, golf courses and the ocean.^{lxiii} Planners angled buildings to save as many trees as possible, and designed roads to avoid them.^{lxiv} Fairways too were angled to save trees and take advantage of the landscape, making the transitory experience not simply a rush from A to B, but rather another form of experiencing nature.^{lxv} The meandering roads serve as a form of traffic calming because the cars cannot gain too much speed, which increases safety, decreases noise, and creates a more comfortable place for people to live. The mass of trees and lack of long straight roads makes it so that one cannot look in any direction without experiencing nature. Roads twist and bank through tall pines to cut as few trees as possible, and rows of untouched dunes flank the wide beaches to protect the oceanfront views.^{lxvi} Development has been held off of the beach and hidden in the trees behind, and similar housing

strategies flank the golf courses as well. One can still walk through this plantation and find areas that contain the purity of nature, and experience hundreds of views unmarred by concrete and brick.



“There’s no sense of temporariness in what we’re doing here; its permanency as far as the use of the land is concerned.”
- Charles Fraser -

The effect of these simple placement tools is staggering. Winding, well landscaped roads, and a strong integration of the built environment into the natural environment led Pulitzer-Prize winning author John McPhee to observe that

“An aerial view of Sea Pines Plantation reveals the great number of houses there, and how close to one another they really are, whereas an observer on the ground – even in the most densely built areas – feels that he is in a partly cleared woodland with some houses blended into it.”^{lxvii}



Aesthetics

The covenants set up an Architectural Review Board which enforced the design standards of the Sea Pines Company and was partially composed of architects and chaired by Fraser himself. The ARB had much more power than a typical zoning board, and was thus able to keep the design practices of Sea Pines in check. The Board maintained the legal right, through the covenants, to reject any building. An example of the intensity of and control granted by these covenants, which provided control over almost everything inside the Sea Pines gates.

“No building, fence or other structure shall be erected, placed or altered on any lot in . . . Residence Areas until the proposed building plans specifications, exterior color or finish, plot plans (showing the proposed location of such building or structure, drives and parking areas), and construction schedule shall have been approved in writing by Sea Pines Plantation Company.”

Every aspect of development was inspected, reviewed and approved by the Architectural Review Board. In this manner, Fraser had the ultimate say in all matters, so was able to retain the tightest form of aesthetic control.

The main goal of the ARB is to reflect the aesthetic established in the early development years. The new structures are meant to follow in the footsteps of their predecessors and appear as if they are parts in one design continuum. The homes' mass and height are limited, so as never to appear massive or bulky.^{lxviii} These size limits help Sea Pines avoid the fate of much Florida's coastline, where towering hotels line the beaches, rising above all other features and dominating the natural landscape. The ARB gives architects a certain style to work within, and because all the buildings are of the same general breed, Sea Pines appears to have been painted by a single hand.



Architecturally, Sea Pines is a work of subdued brilliance. The excellent architects who worked with Fraser’s company formed the ‘Sea Pines Look’ a previously unseen design statement. Fraser recognized the importance of proper design on the front end, and the inability of the Architectural Review Board to actually create the final product, as it could only technically limit bad design. So he worked closely with the architects to create “a low-density environment where homes are fitted into the natural landscape, and built of forest-blending bleached cypress wood stained with muted, naturelike colors of soft brown and pale grey.”^{lxix} These colors recall the local tones of tree bark and lichen. Sea Pines encouraged architects to design buildings that used a restrictive set of exterior colors and materials, and also gave the plantation a unique identity and sense of place to fit the seacoast environment.



Fraser orchestrated the Sea Pines style to take advantage of its surroundings. The construction tends to be modern, somewhat Wrightian and a little Japanese, with sharply angled planes of bleached-cypress and cedar siding overhung by pitched shingle roofs. Generally the floor plans of the houses were open, so that the kitchen, dining and living areas fed into one another. The fenestration pattern was informal, with large area of glass and sliding doors so that residents could experience the natural wonders that surround them, even while in their homes. The interiors are open and well spaced, using picture windows, glass doors, skylights, balconies and patios to allow large amounts of natural lighting and the integration of the man made environment with the natural one.^{lxx} All the stop signs, roadside mailboxes, and fireplugs are green, and houses do not rise above the tree canopy. To avoid any visual pollution, all of the street signs are close to the ground and lettered on wood.^{lxxi} The contemporary camouflage of this breed of architecture uses the hues of the forest, creating a special quality of design while still blending with and preserving the natural elements of the landscape.^{lxxii} This controlled approach keeps the

typical architect's design hubris in check, as no one structure is able to stand out. The built environment blends into, and almost grows out of, its surroundings.



Environmental Protection

In addition to declaring the island a bird sanctuary and no-hunting zone,^{lxxiii} Fraser legally cut off the development of hundreds of acres of forests, marshes, lagoons and meadows to preserve the environmental quality of Sea Pines.^{lxxiv} The Open Space easements permanently protect the acres from development. The six hundred acre Forest Preserve sits in the middle of the plantation, providing a large area for wildlife and a place for its residents to walk and explore. Alligators, deer, and various birds and fish find homes in the Forest Preserve, an incredible natural refuge full of lush foliage and animal activity.^{lxxv} The open space covenants were legal restrictions he made on himself,

on his own property, because he cared to protect the areas and wanted to promote the environmental ethic of Sea Pines.



Without any outside or governmental requirement, he legally committed himself to preserving at least a quarter of the plantation.^{lxxvi} Fraser protected roughly eighteen-hundred acres of now highly valued real estate, because he believed in the importance of the natural environment.^{lxxvii} In a time when environmental consideration was years away from the national conscious, this man was willing to give away millions to promote a standard that was not yet popular. In 1983, Fraser made twelve million dollars when he sold Sea Pines. And at 1983 land values, the Open Space easements that had been created represented over seventy-five million dollars worth of land. He willingly gave away over six times what he made – a notable gift to the future.

A New Type of Community: Based on Recreation and Leisure

As much as anyone in the United States or the world at large, Charles Fraser invented the modern concept of resort/retirement living – and Hilton Head became the Mecca for all who worshipped at the shrine.^{lxxviii}

Sea Pines became a low-density heaven for sports enthusiasts. In the late 1950s, Fraser and his staff recognized that the leisure market in the United States had great potential for growth in the 1960s. The Sea Pines Company emphasized the sports resort concept, and increasingly marketed itself as such. Residents or vacationers could spend their time in close proximity to a variety of sports activities including golf, tennis, swimming, fishing, and boating.^{lxxix} At the time, America was a society of booming sports recreation, where the wealthy were living longer and retiring earlier. Fraser bound Sea Pines to the ever growing high-quality leisure market by creating a beautiful area where one could swim, golf, play tennis, bike and participate in a variety of other recreational activities, all while in close proximity to the natural wonders his environmentally sensitive design provided. He became the most celebrated resort developer of his generation.

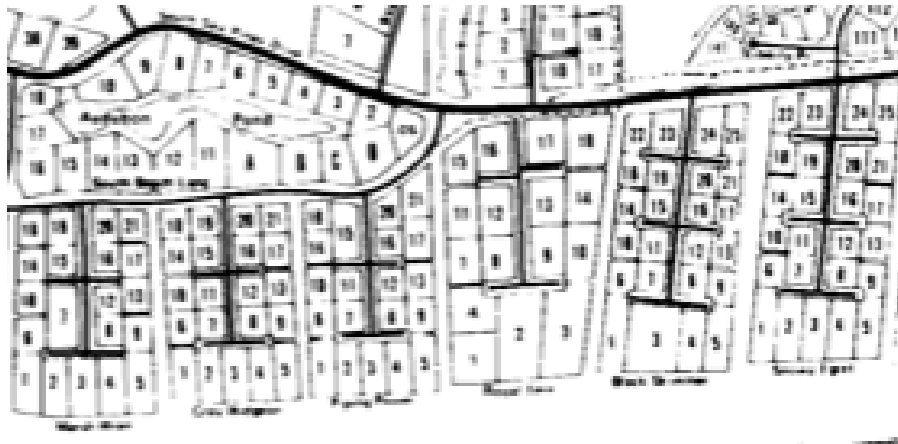
Raising Interior Land Values

For Sea Pines to avoid the “visual pollution” typical of seashore resorts, it would need to give people a reason to buy non-beachfront property.^{lxxx} Fraser wanted a full community that did not simply line the ocean, so the goal became enhancing the value of interior land and drawing some development to other parts of the island, as people would already buy property close to the beach. Wonderful lagoons, inland waterways, golf courses, tennis courts, and a harbor were the main means of creating strong real estate

values, and Sea Pines was at the forefront of this business and community planning strategy.^{lxxxix}

Placement

Many houses that line the golf courses are nestled in the woods along the fairways. Oceanside development, too, is set back from the beach, and behind the primary dune line, leaving the beachfront unscathed and natural.^{lxxxii} The company developed a then unique street system for housing development. The main roads are far off of the beach, while short perpendicular dead-end roads give access to the homes on the beachside of the road. Instead of the then typical single row of houses along the beach, the ‘double-T’ system created a series of cul-de-sacs and short streets which extend from the pushed back parallel main street to the beach.



The ‘double-T’ street system. The main road is on the top with the T shaped streets extending towards the beach and the Atlantic.

Instead of a complete drop in value after the one row of beach front housing, Fraser’s design produced incrementally decreasing land values as lots pushed inland. “There’s less drop in prestige than there’d be if you had to cross the main road to get to the beach,” said Fraser. “There’s a psychological lift in being on the ocean side.”^{lxxxiii} Sea

Pines found that this system gave depth to property values, instead of a sharp drop after the first row of houses.^{lxxxiv} The series of beachside house groups lead to increased land values because there were more available oceanfront lots and a dramatic increase in the available high-value real estate of the area.^{lxxxv}



The design also called for public paths, which lead from the road to the beach, giving everyone in the Sea Pines community convenient access to the ocean.

Golf

Golf may be what Hilton Head Island is best known for, and remains the main form of outdoor recreation on the island. The courses themselves have been the most successful way to increase interior property values. By creating large tracts of open space and water to flank with houses, significant amounts of real estate could be sold in less attractive land. Golf broadened not only the count of people coming, but also the time period of the year for which they came. Golf helped turn Sea Pines into a year round

resort, and increased the number of people coming and staying outside of the beach-oriented summer visitors market.

Hired by Fraser, George Cobb designed the first golf course on the island. Sea Pines completed the Ocean Course in 1960.^{lxxxvi} Fraser wanted golf, just as everything else, to be first class on his island.^{lxxxvii} Banked by extensive vegetation, the course puts an emphasis on waterholes and creates a challenging but fair experience. The course further attracted the affluent crowd he wanted and created more than three hundred real estate lots to be sold lining the fairways. The full eighteen hole course was uncommonly beautiful, particularly the fifteenth hole which used a breathtaking ocean view to inspire and astound those who played. This signature hole and course jumpstarted the golf culture on the island, which quickly became a world-class resort. Two courses followed, Harbour Town and Sea Marsh.^{lxxxviii}

On the suggestion of Jack Nicklaus, Charles Fraser picked Pete Dye to design the challenging but unforgettably beautiful Harbour Town course. Finished in 1969, the course and its iconic lighthouse became one of the most recognizable in the world.^{lxxxix} To give Sea Pines and its new course attention, Fraser planned a professional tournament. The first Heritage Golf Classic was played on the Harbour Town Links, with Sea Pines Company offering a prize of one hundred thousand dollars. The prize money, in combination with an Arnold Palmer victory gave the first annual 1969 Heritage Golf Classic national attention. The Heritage also brought in large crowds of people, nearing 100,000, who were able to experience the island first hand, and spread the word to their friends. The tournaments only got more popular, pulling in steadily increasing numbers of visitors, and more and more publicity for Sea Pines and Hilton Head, and in 1974 the

Heritage debuted on national television. The favorable publicity, national attention and crowds of visitors and customers more than made up for the lost money on the first few Heritage tournaments. Millions of Americans had seen the dense forests, extraordinary views and subtle charm the Sea Pines had to offer.^{xc} Fraser was not simply selling land as many had done before him, he was selling a complete experience, a *gesamtkunstwerk* [German idea meaning “total work of art”].^{xci}

Tennis

Tennis joined golf as one of the two most popular forms of recreational activity provided by the Sea Pines Company. Along with the golf boom, Charles Fraser was able to anticipate the sharp rise in the nationally popularity of tennis in the 1970s.^{xcii} Stan Smith, former tennis star and Wimbledon champion, was made the Director of Tennis for the Plantation where he lived year-round.^{xciii} As the touring pro for the resort, Stan Smith gave people another reason to talk about Sea Pines.^{xciv} Most of the courts are made of clay, which is a soft and easy surface to play on, encouraging recreation for all ages.^{xcv} Sea Pines had seventy courts by 1974, making it the largest tennis complex in the world and allowing the plantation to continue to serve and attract its targeted upscale market.

Sea Pines hosted a variety of tournaments in the 1970s, attracting professional players and legends such as Billie Jean King and Martina Navratilova. Tennis was developed much in the same way as golf, with Sea Pines holding and promoting events, encouraging the best players of the time to compete, and inviting the nation to view the wonders of the resort. The Family Circle tennis event, the richest event on the professional tour for women became what The Heritage was for golf, an annual opportunity to increase the visibility of Sea Pines. The tournament was accessible to

viewers, and so was the plantation. People could play where the pros played, right next to their summer homes, and the popularity of the resort continued to grow.

In 1981, Tennis Magazine proclaimed Sea Pines the best tennis resort in the world. This was not only because it offered the best facilities and programs, but also because Fraser's paradise offered so much more than just tennis.^{xcvi} The opportunities people could engage in and the experiences they could have seemed unlimited on this beautiful island, and tennis was just another part of the whole.

Harbour Town

Sea Pines was largely completed when Harbour Town was built in 1969. Harbour Town is a small community within the much larger Sea Pines community, but nonetheless remains its heart and center. The harbor was Fraser's gem, built on the Calibogue Sound and recognized as the most beautiful marina of the intracoastal waterway.^{xcvii} Many yachts anchor in the water, and scores of residences, shops, villas, restaurants and open spaces cover the surrounding land. Harbour Town is a dense area of subdued commercialization, covered in shades of salmon, blue and white which gives the area a neo-Portofino feel, reminiscent of Italian waterfront architecture.^{xcviii} He broke from his typical architectural style because he wanted the harbor to have a different feel, and sense of romance. Fraser knew exactly what he wanted, spending millions to create this haven, and even an extra \$50,000 to save one particularly beautiful oak tree.^{xcix}

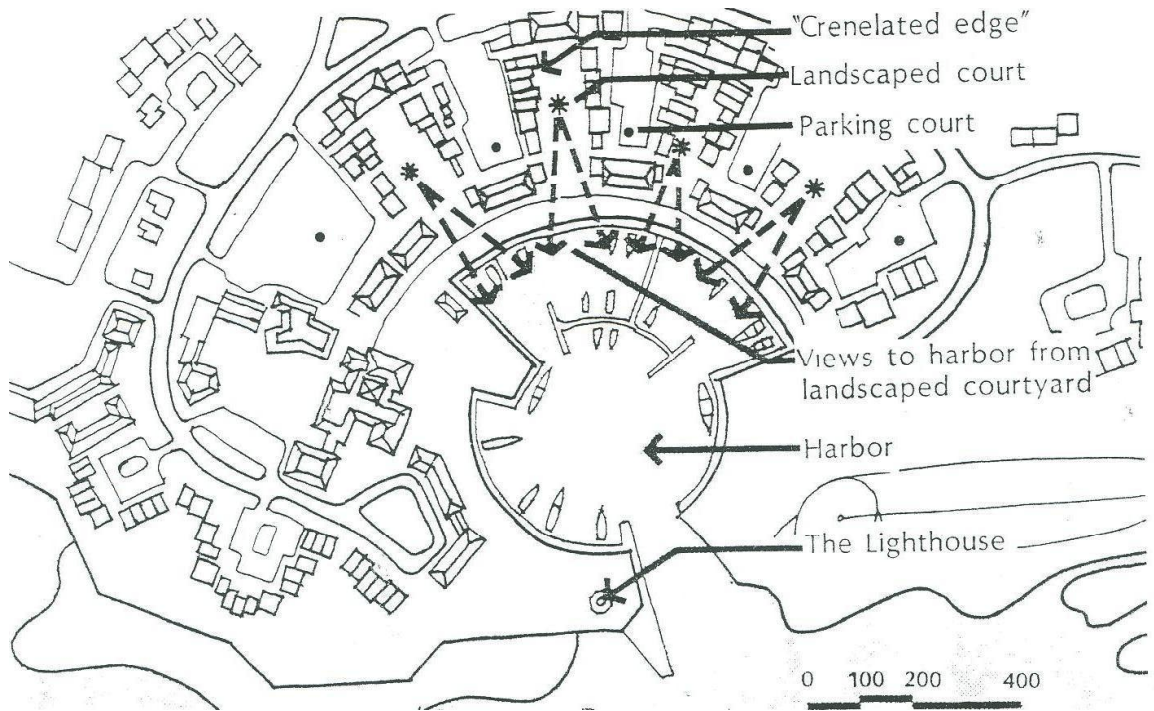
Harbour Town was designed for pedestrians.^c The area is perfect for strolling, window-shopping, and breathing in the fresh sea air. Fraser purposefully planned the area to not have enough parking for its major events, so during these peak times of golf and tennis tournaments off site parking is used. He wanted to encourage walking and biking,

and also to remove the visual pollution of overflow parking. The extra space is used for the children’s playground, food areas, and open grassy parks.



“It doesn’t need to be there. But it’s essential for the appropriate romance. Little harbors ought to have lighthouses.” - Charles Fraser -

The true heart of Harbour Town is the lighthouse, the most iconic and recognizable image of Sea Pines. The aesthetically wondrous Harbour Town lighthouse is a ninety foot tall red and white banded polygonal structure located at the opening of the marina.^{ci} The final hole of the Harbour Town Course, ranked one of the two best coastal resort courses in the world,^{cii} sits just across the entrance to the marina. This famous 18th uses the famous lighthouse as a backdrop to create “one of the most heroic finishing holes in golf.”^{ciii}



Harbour Town led to even more publicity for Sea Pines, becoming one of the most televised and photographed resort features of the southeast. Harbour Town increased interior real estate values in Sea Pines. The beautifully expensive mix of restaurants, boats, stores and a lighthouse, coupled with a new golf course and tennis club, drew people in.^{civ} At this new site many different types of housing were available, from houses with views of the new course to residences just off the marina where one could experience the beauty of the Calibogue Sound without even leaving the house. The Sea Pines Company, following in their own footsteps, placed houses in ways that limited crowding and enhanced views. Individual buildings were placed in a staggered manner on landscape courts which radiated away from the harbor's edge. This plan gave each housing unit a direct view of and immediate access to the harbor. By doing using this form, they tripled real estate value around the circular harbor, giving the 2,000 foot marina nearly 6,000 feet of frontage.^{cv}

The Impact

Awards and Recognition

Sea Pines received massive amounts of praise, awards and recognition from 1957 on. Within the first three decades of its inception, Charles Fraser and his plantation had already received over thirty awards for land-use planning and community development. Magazines, newspapers, architects and environmentalists cited Sea Pines for its unique aesthetic and conservationist approach.^{cv} Fraser earned a national reputation as a nature-first developer who made places of human enjoyment, while leaving their environmental wonders intact.^{cvii} Recognized as a genius land planner, and an environmental idealist, Fraser received praise from extremely well read magazines like TIME, Forbes and Sports Illustrated, which only served to increase the profile of the island as well as its influence on developments that were to follow it.

Among a myriad of other awards and publicity which spread the Sea Pines ideology and increased demand to be a part of the community, the most notable (as recognized by Fraser) are recorded in Appendix 1. In addition to extensive coverage in John McPhee's best selling book and narrative biography, *Encounters with the Archdruid*, Fraser and Sea Pines were covered in many high profile national and international news sources including those listed in Appendix 2.

Change from Old

That Sea Pine's innovations may not seem groundbreaking today is a testament to Charles Fraser's fifty year old vision of the future. Sea Pines Plantation broke from many of the traditional development practices of its era. Fraser's decision not to divide and sell his entire property was a sharp break from the 'develop everything' attitude of most projects that had come before it. The general practice of land development in the United States at the time was more focused on the massive and cheap creation of places to stay

and eat, gaudy amusements, and overcrowded beaches.^{cviii} Hilton Head Island was set up to follow in the footsteps of its poorly designed predecessors, at a time in American history where few people questioned growth. Extensive growth in other areas had polluted waters, leveled sand dunes, infilled marshlands and lagoons, and destroyed forests. But Fraser refused to buy into this bulldozer mentality, and developed in a way that did not so heavily damage the fragile environment of the barriers island.



Most development done on similar strands of beachfront in the Sunbelt had very little control or restraint placed on growth. Local zoning laws were generally weak and unable to provide the structure necessary for the areas to become effective communities. These developments lacked the needed land-use controls to prevent overcrowding and overcommercialization. Motels, parking lots and billboards covered these areas,

destroying the natural beauty for short term commercial purposes. The lack of appropriate walking spaces and neighborhood centers provided led to inefficient human usage of the land. People simply could not enjoy these places to their fullest potential. Through their extensive legal controls, Sea Pines Plantation displayed a great amount of restraint and forethought by not overdeveloping the land and by not trading the integrity of the land for short run profits.^{cix}

The New Standard

Sea Pines became a manicured world of expensive and elegant houses, surrounded and enveloped by scores of trees and natural vegetation, well tended lawns, and pristine golf courses. Bicycle paths weave through the forests, while trees overhang the condominiums and tennis courts. Nature consumes the development, and the line between what is man-made and what is natural begins to blur inside the boundaries of the plantation.

Fraser built the first-class resort and its amenities into a breathtaking environment of forests, lagoons and beaches. The scenery combined with its amenities makes the whole community a vibrant and wondrous place. Its residents have found not only an escape from the overdeveloped world of the mainland, but also a wonderful nature in which to play golf, fish, swim, ride horses and hike.^{cx} The resort/retirement concept caught on and Fraser's environmental ethic spread along with it. A new generation of communities followed Fraser's lead, blending careful and sensitive developments to house the new surge of golfers, tennis players, and recreational activity in America. Others could not help but attempt to emulate the resounding success experienced in Sea Pines.

Today, people in our business talk of the ‘Hilton Head style’ as a generic term,” says Robert Marvin, one of the nation’s most acclaimed landscape architects. “Charles Fraser and his people at Sea Pines have influenced our entire industry with their architectural form of using natural colors, building into wooded areas, cutting patches of light and grass, and many other similar things that have become vogue all across our country.”^{cx1}

His developmental competition recognized the important role Fraser played in the refining of their craft, acknowledging the great deal of quality innovation that he brought to the table. He set the standard and everyone tried to keep pace. Even the families of the original timbering Hilton Head Company ended up copying Fraser’s developmental style, despite their initial rejection of his proposals. The bar was set and the market dictated that others had no choice but to follow, the plans were simply too good to avoid.

Fraser’s brilliant designs and community planning strategies were quickly copied by other plantations on the island, and from there the concept spread to much of the Sunbelt and southeast region. By the end of the 1960s, Charles Fraser’s environmentally focused development movement had gained thousands of followers,^{cxii} and Sea Pines became one of the most lauded residential and resort operations in the world.^{cxiii}

Those who copied Fraser attempted to mirror his planning concepts, aesthetic practices, and innovative use of legal tools. Sea Pines provided inspiration and a model for many spin off recreation communities that also aimed to attract a wealthy class of residents and vacationers.^{cxiv} In the legal realm, the covenants he wrote have exerted extensive influence on the implementation and control of other resorts. Fraser developed a very specific set of wording on his legal documents as a trained lawyer, and the land-use controls he wrote have been copied and used hundreds of times by other developers.^{cxv}

The architectural style pioneered by Fraser and his cohorts first spread along the eastern seaboard into Florida, Georgia and the Carolinas.^{cxvi} Throughout the sixties, the plantation became more and more acclaimed and soon the highly innovative and previously unseen “Sea Pines look”, a careful and creative blending of the man made and natural environments, was widely copied. Homes featuring large modern windows, subtle colors, and natural materials, covered by pitched, shingled roofs became increasingly popular and used in other planned communities.^{cxvii} Sea Pines became the one of the most copied in the resort development business, and ‘the Sea Pines look’ became a widely known and used term.^{cxviii}

Eventually Sea Pines became one of the definitive models of the development world. It was the style and the planning that had people so enthralled, for none before had so deftly and completely constructed a world that harmoniously blended man and nature. Many since have followed the ideology of creating a carefully planned landscape that mixes the natural world and built environment. By creating the new standard of greatness, Charles Fraser thus redirected the vacation and developmental habits of the United States, and the world.

Sea Pines University

With his original project largely completed, Fraser looked to explore other areas. The Sea Pines Company began to develop multiple projects ranging from River Hills Plantation in North Carolina to Amelia Island in Florida, and all the way down to Palmas del Mar in Puerto Rico,^{cxix} and by 1973, Fraser was engaged in 12 separate projects.

Fraser created the Sea Pines University, an unofficial term for his intellectual crew of followers and coworkers. Working for Fraser became a demanding training experience that brought in a new era of executives with Fraser-like community building

skills. He hired MBAs from Harvard, Wharton, Stanford, UNC – Chapel Hill and Virginia. His young staff helped plan, market and manage several of the new resorts that Sea Pines Company had set out to develop, always using Sea Pines itself as a model, and learning from the best, Fraser himself. The University became a laboratory for experimenting with new techniques, engaging in design innovations, and honing a new ideology of development. Over one hundred eventual executive officers of major real estate enterprises graduated from Sea Pines University during the late 1960s and early 1970s.^{cxx}

The economic recession of 1974 hit the resort and development business particularly hard. The crash dispersed these ambitious young Fraser-trained managers, engineers and architects across the United States. These talented professionals quickly rose to leadership roles in the reviving economy of 1977 and 1978. Graduates from Sea Pines acquired high management positions at major developments as far away as the Caribbean and the Philippines.^{cxxi} Fraser followed his graduates closely and observed that “the Sea Pines MBA recruits of this period have since become some of the most seasoned and resourceful executives in America and by 1982 headed many major projects from Vermont to Hawaii.”^{cxxii} Each of these graduates carried Fraser’s mentality, and the work of Sea Pines continued to spread.

The Influence

Hailed as one of America’s great vacation destinations, the island could influence the world simply through its existence and the example that it set. The plantation was known from Paris to Tokyo and its worldwide popularity only helped increase the demand to be a part of the island, and further encouraged all developers to follow in its

environmentally focused footsteps.^{cxxiii} Sea Pines became the benchmark which all resorts that followed patterned themselves after and were measured against.^{cxxiv} This was the first and best large scale development of its type, and soon became the standard by which all other resorts were judged.^{cxxv}

Thirty years after the beginning of Sea Pines, the island was attracting well over a million visitors a year and had more than twenty-thousand residents.^{cxxvi} The sheer number of people experiencing this wondrous place increased the visibility of Fraser's ideology, and the amount of influence he would have over development that was to follow. Some design professionals claim that Fraser had the most beneficial impact on land use policies in the United States than any other man in the forty years following World War II.^{cxxvii}

The presidents of nineteen other resorts worked under him before leading their own enterprises.^{cxxviii} He had a hand in all of their educations, and influenced the way they would develop their resorts in the future. It quickly becomes difficult to know exactly how much and in what ways Sea Pines changed the world around it, because there are so many variables and possible outcomes. But Sea Pines University, the national media, and the general changing of trends suggests Sea Pines to have had a major influence in the shaping of current developmental ideology.

We may take it for granted today, but at the time, in a world of little environmental restrictions and no concept of sustainability, Fraser displayed true genius and care by attempting to make man more compatible with the earth.^{cxxix} Countless articles applaud Fraser for his creation of this developmental masterpiece, while noting the importance of this man's uniqueness in an era before the emergence of the

environmental movement. Many magazines and newspapers have recognized the vast number of Fraser's original design ideas that have been implemented at other resorts as a result of Sea Pine's success. In the years after the explosion of Sea Pines' popularity, the architectural patterns and environmental protection the plantation promoted became almost expected of developers. The Sea Pines model, mixing environmental and commercial, became the norm.^{cxxx}

An Early Environmental Economist

Fraser was blessed with a conservationist's reverence of the natural world and also a realist's acceptance of the effects of man on it.^{cxxxii} He saw the beauty of the natural world as useful in its application to human enjoyment. Fraser defended the necessity of development of the natural world, and specifically his island by saying that "A fundamental part of the pursuit of happiness is one's annual vacation. Hence this beach is for a public purpose."^{cxxxiii} For Fraser, the beach is there to serve people, and as long as people must be there, then he believed they should levy as little environmental harm as possible – light footprint.

He saw high quality development on an island of such natural beauty as not only the right thing to do, but also the most financially viable. His goal was to make a profit while encouraging people to experience the natural world without spoiling it. He believed in the profitable stewardship of the land. The restraint demonstrated by Fraser in not overdeveloping the land reflects the importance he put on conservation. His reasons to protect the natural beauty of the island were many. First, do no harm, the land deserved to exist as close to unharmed as possibly. Second, and far more importantly, protect the natural charms of the world so that other people would be able to experience them, both at the time of development and for the years after. Fraser was a human usage

environmental economist, who believed the most valuable offerings of nature were those that could be experienced and known by humans, and that society should protect the natural world for its own extended benefit.

In his time, many environmentalists criticized him for damaging the island. They strictly adhered to a type of environmentalism that promoted the separation of man and nature, and the protection of the world by leaving it as untouched as possible. Fraser developed a basically untouched sea-island paradise and forever altered the ecosystems there and a significant anti-following saw him as a cutthroat developer who used the banner of conservation to rally people to his resorts.^{cxxxiii}

Fraser responded to these sentiments by attacking their purely existence-value based ideology. He had an idealists respect for the environment, but also recognized the realities of human development and societal expansion. He saw their breed of naïve and anti-progress environmentalism as inferior. The belief that a beautiful place should be totally cut off from people repulsed and confused Fraser.^{cxxxiv} He believed that a combination of man and nature is the ultimate goal. He strongly disagreed with anyone who would put one above the other, either through destroying the natural environment or by completely isolating it. He was diametrically opposed to the “anti-human” form of environmentalism that began to take hold of the country in the 1970s.^{cxxxv}

In the fight between human-usage and existence-value environmentalists, Charles Fraser was even able to win over the conservationist’s conservationist, David Brower. The two spent a period of time exploring Cumberland Island in Georgia and while there, Fraser told Brower “I think of land-use in terms of people. At Hilton Head, we have proved you can take any natural area and make it available to people while at the same

time preserving its beauty.” The two both recognized the sliding spectrum of human development within nature. While Fraser supported an inherently higher level of human usage, Brower also recognized that his ideals of purist conservation could never hold in the real world. Brower had found his type of developer if development *had* to happen. Near the end of their time spent together, Brower urged Fraser to continue his course, despite the necessary changing of the natural world that any human usage creates, and that many of Brower’s followers criticized Fraser for.

“You, Charles Fraser, have got to persuade the whole God-damned movement of realtors to have a different kind of responsibility to man than they have. I have seen evidence of what you can do. Now make others do it. The system must be used to reform the system.”^{cxxxvi}

Charles Fraser once said that “[in Sea Pines] we save seventy five percent of the marsh, as a balanced approach between the interests of recreation and the interests of the [conservationists]. *Man has to use some of the salt marsh if he is going to live near the sea.*”^{cxxxvii} As an environmentalist developer Fraser accepted the damages that man could cause to nature, but spent his life trying to limit them.

He always balanced the benefits gained through increasing development and raising profits against the cost of damaging the natural landscape and the community. And considering the rarity of untouched land on the Atlantic seaboard, cautious development was necessary. When asked whether he could have made more money, faster, and more easily, by relaxing his own standards and not placing as much importance on the natural environment, Fraser responded

“The long run is not over,” he says “and I don’t think you could rationally prove to yourself that the rape of the land would be more profitable. Nor could you prove the opposite. So since you cant prove it either way, you might as well do it right.”^{cxxxviii}

Conclusion:

Sea Pines is the embodiment of an ideology that fought the popular trends of its time.^{cxxxix} Fraser proved that overestimating the taste of the American people could actually work, and that providing the most beautiful experience possible, despite its cost, could actually prove economically profitable.^{cxl} Environmentally centered development attracted wealthier customers, enhanced land values and increased demand for the real estate. The Sea Pines Company found that proper consideration for the land did not deter profitable real estate ventures. Sea Pines' then innovative practice showed that intelligent legal controls could promote aesthetically pleasing and environmentally sensitive communities that increased demand and enhanced real estate values. Sea Pines served as a model, showing the world that a large area of oceanfront property that limited architectural styles and land usage could still be economically successful.^{cxli}

Charles Fraser did not only achieve economic success, but social and temporal as well. He started the idea of setting the buildings into nature, rather than leveling nature and then building the buildings, which was then the prevalent idea almost everywhere else in the United States. Concern for nature was not popular and barely talked about when Sea Pines was developed, but that did not deter Fraser from sticking to his master plan. Sea Pines proved that creative land planning coupled with environmental considerations can build a strong and beautiful community, while also meeting the financial and social goals of the developers.

In the 1950s, when few were thinking about environmental conservation, Charles Fraser helped develop not only an island, but an ethic. He wanted people to see the world, to live within nature. He was a true, and early, environmental economist. He spawned a generation of new development that focused on integrating mankind with nature. He

forever changed the way development was done in this country and around the world. Because of Fraser, we have moved further along the spectrum towards living in concert with nature. In today's world, the better resorts, and real-estate developments in general, work within their natural setting, attempting to emphasize and play on, rather than alter, the beauty that the world provides.^{cxlii} And that is the legacy of Sea Pines Plantation.

Appendices:

APPENDIX 1 - Awards and Recognition

“1957 – Second International Urban Design Conference: Designs for Sea Pines cited for exceptional merit and shown at a number of universities.

1959 – The American Society of Landscape Architects: Certificate of Excellence in Design and Private Community Planning.

1962 – SPORTS ILLUSTRATED magazine: Ranked Sea Pines as “second to none” among recreation communities in the United States.

1968 – Citizens Advisory Committee on Recreation and Natural Beauty: Charles E. Fraser appointed to membership by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

1968 – The American Institute of Architects: “Citation for Excellence in Private Community Planning” – the first U.S. recipient of the award. The award is presented “in recognition of private entrepreneurs who create an orderly environment and sense of place through design of cohesive and meaningful communities”^{cxliii}

1969 – recognized by the Bank of Beaufort Historic Foundation for his “major contribution to the economy of Beaufort county through the development of Sea Pines Plantation on Hilton Head Island.”

1972 – Appointed to President Nixon’s citizens Advisory Committee on Environmental Quality.

1974 – Chosen one of the country’s two hundred upcoming leaders by TIME magazine.

1974 – Elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees of National Recreation and Park association.

1974 – The American Society of Landscape Architects: Excellence in Private Community Planning for Hilton Head Plantation.

1977 – American Society of Landscape Architects: Charles E. Fraser selected as an Honorary Member of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

1980 – World’s Fair Energy Exposition: President Jimmy Carter nominated Charles E. Fraser as Commissioner General of the U.S. Government, confirmed unanimously by the U.S. senate.

1981 – The South Carolina Travel Council/South Carolina Chamber of commerce: “Most Outstanding Commercial Attraction.”

1983 – Elected Honorary Member of the American Institute of Architects.

1985 – Elected President, South Carolina Chapter, National Association of Office and Industrial Parks.

1985 – Urban Land Institute: Charles E. Fraser and Sea Pines Plantation recipients of ULI Award for Excellence for Large-Scale Recreational Development.^{cxliv}

1994 – Urban Land Institute: received the Heritage Award, the equivalent of a Nobel Prize. The award is not given annually, but periodically to deserving recipients. The number of awardees is still in single digits, and includes the Rockefeller Center in New York City.^{cxlv}

APPENDIX 2 - News articles about Charles Fraser and Sea Pines Plantation

Associated Press. August 29, 1982.
Business Today. 1977.
Financial World. September 19, 1974.
Forbes. February 1, 1974.
Fortune. October 1967.
Gentlemen's Quarterly. May 1969.
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Montreal Gazette. August 16, 1975.
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Newsweek. January 3, 1966.
People. June 2, 1975.
Saturday Evening Post. March 3, 1962.
Southern Living. April 1985, March 1970 and March 1972.
Sports Illustrated. December 1965 and January 28, 1974.
St. Petersburg Times. June 30, 1974.
Tennis Magazine. October 1981.
The New Yorker. March 27, 1971.
Time. July 15, 1974.
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Washington Post. May 26, 1976.

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- An Environment with Half-Dozen Sports*. Washington Post. May 26, 1976.
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