

Jekyll Island Environmental Assessment Procedure (EAP):

Report summarizing the findings of the EAP Committee considering the design, construction, and operation of the Beachview Club Hotel Expansion

Date of EAP Committee meeting: 11/08/2022

EAP Committee members present:

Ben Carswell, Director of Conservation, JIA
Cliff Gawron, Director of Landscape and Planning, JIA
Yank Moore, Natural Resources Manager, JIA
Dave Smith, Jekyll Island Resident
Courtney Reich, Coastal Director, Georgia Conservancy
Richard Chewning, Camp Jekyll 4-H Center Director, UGA
Allyson Jackson, retired convention industry professional

Project under consideration

The current owners of the Beachview Club Hotel have a proposal through the JIA Design Review Process for an expansion of the current hotel to a total of 76 rooms. This property is looking to be rebranded as a Tapestry under the Hilton flag but will be able to retain the Beachview Club name. The concept for this project was approved by the JIA BOD in October. Some matters already discussed with the development team through the JIA design-review process are touched-upon again here simply for emphasis and documentation within the context of the EAP. All additional information should be submitted to Jerome Johnson at the JIA unless otherwise noted.

Assessment

The EAP Committee finds that this project poses no irreconcilable conflicts with the Jekyll Island Conservation Plan. Conditions of the committee's favorable assessment of this project follow. *Requirements* are essential to the committee's support. *Recommendations* are also provided that the Committee believes would be beneficial investments in the property. Most points pertain to design and construction, but some points pertain to hotel operations. Note that this review does not absolve or supersede any other regulatory, permitting, or mitigation requirements imposed by the JIA, Glynn County, or the State of Georgia. JIA staff stand ready to consult with the project team regarding the implementation of any points presented in this report. The findings articulated in this report should not be construed as reflective of the position of any institution or organization that the non-JIA participants may be affiliated with.

Requirements

❖ *Stormwater Management*

- Under the new revisions to the code of ordinance adopted earlier in 2022 by the JIA BOD, a Stormwater Management Plan for any “redevelopment that includes the creation, addition or replacement of 5,000 square feet or more of impervious cover or that involves other land development activity of one acre or more,” must be submitted.
- In addition to the requirements outlined for the Stormwater Management Plan, a statement and calculations, from a coastal engineer, must be shown that the project and all related activities and parking must meet the standards defined in the Coastal Stormwater Supplement of the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual.
- Bioretention has been an effective tool in combination with native planting at other establishments on Jekyll.

❖ *Lighting*

- As usual, lighting plans, including for the pool area, must comply with the Jekyll Island Beach Lighting Ordinance (in effect May 1 – October 31 each year) and be reviewed and approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, wildlife conservation section, prior to installation. DNR Wildlife Biologist [Mark Dodd](#), is the point of contact for this review, and the JIA requests to be copied on all communications. We advise addressing this requirement early in the project timeline. Expect to meet ordinance compliance standards on at least the east, north, and south facing elevations of the new structure, renovations to the old structure, and associated landscape elements.
- Any construction-related lighting must also comply with this ordinance.
- The committee advises that the rooftop bar will present substantial lighting-ordinance approval/compliance challenges. Note that interior spaces, if open to the exterior and not fully shielded by tinted glass, are subject to the same strict lighting requirements as exterior lighting.

❖ *Trees*

- Trees are a significant component of the nature of this site and the large, mature, Heritage live oaks specifically, should be saved at all costs. The committee suggests using low vertical profile materials with pervious construction within the Critical Root Zone (CRZ) of any live oak tree. There is a path and a few lanais proposed in the CRZ of some of the most important trees on the site.
- Any activities that compromise the integrity of the trees within their CRZ will require mitigation. Trees with activities within the CRZ that have the potential to compromise the integrity of the trees will need to be entered into an aftercare agreement that has routine health checks performed by a certified arborist.

❖ *Bird-friendly Glass*

- 52 of 78 of the Wildlife Priority Species identified in the 2020 Jekyll Island Conservation Plan are birds requiring special conservation attention. Window collisions are increasingly recognized as a major threat to birds locally and globally, especially to migratory passerines. Considering this as well as the size of the new building and the proximity of high-quality bird habitat both on and adjacent to the property, this favorable EAP review is contingent upon the requirement that windows on the proposed new building utilize “bird safe” or “bird friendly” glass or glass treatment. There are several window companies that manufacture bird-safe window products at a similar cost to traditional windows. A post-manufacture product is also available to apply to windows and has been utilized on Jekyll Island at the Camp Jekyll Learning Center. There are example projects in the hotel and convention industry that have utilized bird-safe glass. More information about the issue and bird-safe glass is available here. <https://abcbirds.org/from-california-to-florida-a-push-to-make-windows-safer-for-birds/>. The Jekyll Island Authority Conservation staff, and our partners at Georgia Audubon, stand ready to offer further consultation and facilitation toward the satisfaction of this requirement.

❖ *Waste management*

- Due to the shared nature of the waste disposal situation with the Beach House Restaurant, the committee advises the management group to know the limitations of the capacity of the trash compactor and be aware that no open-top dumpsters or containers will be approved at a later date if capacity is exceeded.
- Wildlife-proof outdoor trash and recycling bins are an essential measure that has been proven to reduce operational costs on Jekyll Island. Any outdoor trash and recycling bins must prevent access by raccoons, feral cats, or other animals. This measure will keep the property cleaner and safer for guests and staff and eliminate wasted time/money spent cleaning up trash scattered by animals.

❖ *Sustainability Certification*

- The Jekyll Island Conservation Plan requires that all eligible redevelopment projects achieve a sustainability certification through LEED, Green Globe, Earthcraft, Georgia Peach, or an equivalent third-party certification program. The development group should inform the JIA of the certification program (and certification level if applicable) selected to pursue and an explanation of why this program is the best fit for the project. Westin Jekyll Island and the Jekyll Island Convention Center are LEED certified.
- The Georgia Peach program is focused on State properties, but because this project is on leased state land, it would be eligible. The Jekyll Island Ocean Club and the dual-branded Marriott on Jekyll are both Georgia Peach Certified. Thus, we are confident that certification of some kind is an achievable and reasonable expectation for this property.

- A compelling justification must be provided to the JIA Design Review group if no sustainability certification is proposed.

❖ ***Historic Resources***

- The archeologist from the Jekyll Island Historic Resources Department must be contacted and provided access to the site where new soil is being disturbed. For this project that includes but is not limited to during the excavation for the footers, pool, and new parking on the north side of the facility

❖ ***Construction-site cleanliness and cleanup***

- The JIA Ordinance concerning the use of EIFS, or EPS construction methods must be complied with throughout construction, including renovation of the existing facility. Fines will be issued for violations.
- During construction, any debris that escapes the boundaries of the site (carried by the wind or in stormwater runoff) should be routinely cleaned up and must not remain beyond the completion of construction.
- Any stormwater conveyances leading off-site must be left free of any debris or sediment following construction. All conveyances must comply with post-construction runoff standards.
- Stormwater management and erosion control BMPs must be in place in accordance with all county and state regulatory requirements throughout the project.

❖ ***Noise***

- Throughout construction and subsequent hotel operations, the project and facility must comply with all applicable local noise ordinances. This is particularly important considering the proximity to residential communities.

Recommendations

❖ ***Rooftop Solar***

- The committee strongly encourages exploring possibilities with prospective renewable energy consultants, contractors, or partners, to evaluate the potential value proposition of including a renewable energy component in your project.
- Renewable options are far more attractive than they were as recently as 5 to 10 years ago. The committee believes that this site with its southerly facing pitched roof, could be an ideal candidate for behind the meter (BTM) solar energy potentially providing near and long-term reductions in operational costs. Please give this and/or other renewable energy options full consideration.

❖ ***Landscaping***

- The committee sees the potential of a low-maintenance native sweet grass planting between the fire access installation and the leased property where the current management mows turf grass down to the bike path. A mutually beneficial maintenance and installation agreement with JIA should be investigated

❖ ***Water Conservation***

- We strongly advise that any irrigation systems should be equipped with rain gauges to conserve water when precipitation is sufficient to meet plant demand.
- Voluntary compliance with the Georgia Water Stewardship Act of 2010, which restricts outdoor watering to hours between 4 p.m. and 10 a.m., is strongly encouraged.

❖ ***Waste Management***

- Ample opportunity to recycle should be made available to guests and staff.
- The committee strongly encourages the management group to investigate the potential for adding a recycling compactor to accompany the existing shared trash compactor at the Beach House restaurant. Open-top recycling containers are hard to maintain on Jekyll due to their capacity to harbor wildlife and suffer contamination issues from uninformed employees or passers-by.

❖ ***Recyclable building materials***

- When selecting building materials, please strive for any recyclable elements that are likely to be replaced within the lifetime of the structure, such as interior design features. Opportunities in this regard are readily available in the region. For example, there are two Georgia-based commercial carpet-tile companies, Interface and Shaw that are global leaders in corporate sustainability and manufacture carpet and tile products. As Georgia companies, use of Interface or Shaw products could be helpful in meeting Georgia Peach certification goals.

❖ ***Lighting***

- Please be mindful with all lighting design, regardless of required lighting ordinance considerations, to minimize the impact of any elements that may be visible from adjacent residential property, including lighting in parking areas, service areas, and accent lighting on the street-facing sides of the building.

❖ ***Bicycle Parking***

- Bicycle parking should be planned-for that meets the [design standard of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals](#) (APBP). This will provide a competitive advantage to the hotel by catering to cycling-oriented guests, groups, and events that Jekyll Island increasingly attracts, especially with the parking requirement variance that was approved by the JIA BOD.

❖ ***Electric-vehicle parking***

- Mainstream market analysis predicts a rapid expansion in the electric vehicle market within the coming decade. Georgia, particularly the Atlanta market which makes up a large portion of our visitor base, is already among the leaders in the nation in electric-car ownership. The development team should therefore plan to include electric car charging infrastructure on site.