



Cape Fear Firebird

The Light of Save the Cape

January 20, 2011

The options for the property are for industrial use (as it is currently zoned), and the Ports Authority continues to believe this acreage to be prime land for industrial development.

–Shannon Moody, spokesperson for the State Ports Authority

The Industrial Zone

We should be careful what we wish for. As awful as a huge container port would be on the pristine 600 acres of woodlands and marsh on the Cape Fear River, the zoning map of Brunswick County permits worse—the vilest kind of smokestack industries. If the State Ports Authority finally abandons the North Carolina International Terminal and puts the terminal site on the market, the property could be put to any use specified by Brunswick County as “Industrial-General”: animal processing, asphalt, concrete manufacturing, hazardous waste disposal, manufacturing, paper mills, petroleum and chemical refining and products, railroad yard, scrap and waste processing.

But wait, there’s more. This industrial zone (red area on the right) extends over several square miles to the west and north, surrounding the residential area around Walden Creek and embracing on three sides the campus for the South Brunswick High School and Middle School.

How did that happen? The County adopted a land use plan, the *Brunswick County CAMA Core Land Use Plan*, in 2007. The planning report includes a comprehensive review of the characteristics of this area, with the finding that it is among the least suitable in Brunswick County for structures and development. Much of it is pocosin, a kind of upland marsh, and pine woods; some of it has been identified as significant natural areas in the State Natural Heritage Program; all of it drains into the Cape Fear estuary.



There are many other inconsistencies between the planning consultant’s thoughtful analysis and the zoning map that is in effect. That map presents the paradox of permitting the most noxious and destructive uses possible in the most sensitive areas of the County. The situation is quite appalling. We have a short review on our Web site: go to <http://savethecape.org/STC/images/stories/PDFs/Zoning1.pdf>

This situation has destructive potential far exceeding that of the North Carolina International Terminal. There is room for a dozen Titan cements. We have work to do. Help us out, here, please. We need a volunteer task force for this. Contact mike@savethecape.org or toby@savethecape.org.