



Contributed graphic
 The Towne of Seahaven is a proposed mixed-use development for the West End of Panama City Beach. The 52-acre project is fashioned after Sandestin's Baytowne Wharf.

New 'Towne' planned for West End

Developers unveil details for 52-acre Baytowne Wharf-like project

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PANAMA CITY BEACH

A Walton County-style development taking shape on the West End of Panama City Beach will be a one-of-a-kind addition to the area, developers told Beach officials Thursday.

Fashioned after the Baytowne Wharf complex in Sandestin, the Towne of Seahaven is a 52-acre mixed-use development aimed at emphasizing the creation of a pedestrian and family friendly community.

"This is not the same thing as what you're getting up and down Front Beach Road," said David Haight, development manager for The Seahaven Companies.

The property is located a half-mile east of Pier Park and west of Gulf World, with construction planned for both the south and north sides of Front Beach Road.

About 900 units are planned for buildings on six acres on the beaches side of Front Beach Road, he said, which is "far less than what others would do with this size property."

The units would replace Sharky's

Restaurant, the Quality Inn and Best Value Inn.

"We're trying to maximize the value off the beach and on the other side of the road," Haight said.

Some 2,000 units are planned for about 32 acres on the north side of the road, with additional space allotted for residential and recreational construction.

The remaining 13 acres on the north side are planned for the eventual construction of a conference center, Haight said.

Shopping, dining, recreation

"We want this village active and vibrant 18 hours a day," Haight said. "The beach is the primary attribute, but after awhile we all wear out of the sand and sun and saltwater, and we want to create things to do afterward when you're sunburned and tired of that."

The shopping, dining and recreation Seahaven offers will be open to the public, he said.

"We want day visitors. We will invite the

'It's totally unique — not another of the same thing.'

Lee Sullivan
 Panama City Beach mayor

Seahaven



Ross Nowling / The News Herald

SEAHAVEN: Hearings set for Nov. 9 and Dec. 14

public in; the village will succeed if we ask them in," he said. "But first and foremost, this is a pedestrian village."

Panama City Beach Mayor Lee Sullivan said the project may wind up surpassing in quality similar destinations to the west.

"I would not imagine anybody wouldn't be excited

about the addition of this project to the beach," Sullivan said. "It's totally unique — not another of the same thing."

Sullivan said that, thus far, the project appears it will be an attribute to the city.

"I know y'all have thought it out well, and we have not had any angst with it," Sullivan said. "It will be a good thing, it will be a very good thing."

The land has been owned

locally by attorney Julian Bennett and his family since 1924.

While construction on some components has begun, the project is currently in the development of regional impact, or DRI, process — an intensive review by various government agencies necessary before the project may be completed.

Public hearings about the DRI are tentatively set for Nov. 9 and Dec. 14.