



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Beaufort leaders to work with preservationists to relocate work area near historic Battery Saxton

Beaufort City leaders will work closely with historic preservationists to move construction equipment and materials away from a Civil War fortification on Boundary Street and to clean up the city-owned park property.

When construction crews temporarily moved equipment and materials to the location this spring, they stayed off the historic site and marked it with silt fencing to keep it protected. The lay-down site is close to Boundary Street – the Civil War Battery Saxton is close to the marsh.

“Good people, working with good intentions, come to good conclusions,” Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling said Monday afternoon.

Monday afternoon, Keyserling met with Douglas Bostick, executive director of S.C. Battleground Preservation Trust, and Mary Lou Brewton from the Beaufort County Historical Society to address concerns about heavy equipment and concrete being stored near the Battery Saxton city park beside Wendy’s restaurant.

“We heard their concerns, we understand their concerns and most importantly, we share their concerns,” Keyserling said. “Although efforts were made not to intrude on the historically-important parts of the site, we are going to take steps to fix any damage done and to relocate the construction equipment and materials.

“Beaufort’s history is what drew many people to come live in our community,” Keyserling said. “We value our history.”

As part of the city’s efforts to address concerns at the city park site at Battery Saxton:

- City leaders and the Boundary Street construction team will establish a schedule for clean-up and restoration of site using smaller equipment and a preservation approach

- The City will coordinate with Bostick to have a preservation expert on-site providing guidance during the clean-up
- Around June 15, the city will transfer all equipment to a new staging site at the closed Huddle House on Boundary Street
- City leaders will return the Battery Saxton site to pristine condition with proper signage marking its use as an earthen fortification for the Union Army.

Battery Sexton was an elongated dirt mound built in 1862. It was part of a series of earthworks built by Federal troops occupying Beaufort during the Civil War. Laid out by the 1st New York Engineers with the assistance of black laborers, it featured three eight-inch howitzers and was occupied by Union troops from 1862-65 as one of two batteries anchoring a line from Battery Creek to the Beaufort River.

Prior to becoming a City of Beaufort park, the property was used by a car repair business. In 2001, the Historic Beaufort Foundation erected a marker on the site. Battery Saxton is named for Brig. Gen. Rufus Saxton, an ardent abolitionist who served for most of the Civil War in and around Beaufort in the Union Department of the South.

Construction along Boundary Street started in January. The lay-down site beside Wendy's and adjacent to the Battery Saxton site was used for equipment and materials such as storm drainage and curbing.

When completed, Boundary Street will remain a four-lane roadway but will feature improved intersections with traffic signals; left-turn lanes; and landscaped middle median; and sidewalks and pathways for pedestrians. The project is scheduled for completion in 2018.

For more information, visit www.boundarystreetupdate.com.

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