



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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Photos show Battery Saxton site in early June with construction equipment, then July 6 with the property cleaned.

Historic Battery Saxton site in Beaufort cleared, graded after Boundary Street construction

Beaufort leaders and a local historic preservationist walked the Civil War Battery Saxton site this week to review Beaufort's clean-up after construction equipment for Boundary Street intruded on the protected park.

Equipment and materials still near the Battery Saxton site are in the Boundary Street right-of-way and apart from the actual earthenwork Battery Saxton. That part of the park has been marked off with silt fencing since construction started. The materials, part of an improved drainage system, are scheduled to be installed belowground later this month.

As part of the city's clean-up efforts, more than 300 cubic yards of soil were moved from the city park and the site was leveled. Grass seed will be planted without disturbing the integrity of the historic site any further.

Mary Lou Brewton of the Beaufort County Historical Society met Tuesday at the site with Beaufort City Manager Bill Prokop and Sammy Negrón, the Boundary Street project manager consultant. Douglas Bostick, executive director of S.C. Battleground Preservation Trust, had planned to attend but was unavailable.

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.

“Beaufort’s history is an essential part of what makes our city special,” Beaufort Mayor Billy Keyserling said. “We took the necessary steps to repair the damage we caused at this city park and historic site. When the Boundary Street project is complete, Battery Saxton will be showcased as part of a larger open park area.”

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.

A new intersection at Boundary Street and Robert Smalls Parkway is expected to open in August.

For more information, visit www.boundarystreetupdate.com.

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