

Awendaw and McClellanville: Two charming and picturesque communities north of Mount Pleasant

- by Brigitte Surette
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You may not realize right away that two small, unassuming communities are such a vital part of the Lowcountry. Those who wish to escape steadily growing Mount Pleasant (and the traffic and construction that that growth is creating) have found a bit of bliss in these charming towns.

Awendaw

Awendaw was established in 1992. According to the latest census data, the population was 1,424 in 2018. Awendaw comprises 12 miles and over 60 percent of the area is made up of protected lands – the Francis Marion National Forest, Cape Romaine National Refuge, Sewee Environmental Center and the Birds of Prey center. An active city council with Mayor Miriam Green at the helm, town hall meetings are regular occurrences. In July, the Town officially named the Jefferson Tract at 7900 Doar Road The Town of Awendaw Municipal Park. Each year Awendaw’s Blue Crab Festival is hosted here. A large lake, walking trails and fishing, kayaking and canoeing docks are in the works. The Awendaw East Coast Greenway runs through the park and plans are to connect it to other trails. According to Awendaw’s website, future phases include constructing an amphitheater and event spaces. The town’s new fire department is expected to be completed by May 2020.



Ongoing road improvement projects such as paving and re-paving more trafficked roads are in the works as well as plans to create more green spaces. “Awendaw much like most of the greater Charleston area has seen the inevitable expansion and growth in the home building and industry,” said John Sweeney of Carolina One Real Estate. “Some people are looking to downsize out of much larger homes and families are looking for a bit more space.” New construction in Awendaw Village is ticking those boxes for a range of buyers.

*Views such as this are plentiful in Awendaw and McClellanville.
Photo/Daniel Bates, MCVL Realty.*

Located four miles from North Mount Pleasant and its amenities – Roper Hospital, Costco and Wando High School – it has an away from it all ambiance with drivable conveniences. “Awendaw Village mirrors the area itself,” Sweeney said. “Most of the community will remain as a natural preserve with wooded buffers. The preservation of protected woods makes the neighborhood a very special place.”

Built by Cline Homes, it is surrounded by permanent green space, meaning backyards back up to protected areas of Francis National Forest. The village will comprise 41 home sites and shell-style roads will wind throughout. With 11 different floorplans ranging in size from 2,550 to over 3,500 square feet, the homes have front porches and 10-foot ceilings on the first floor. Wide plank, white oak engineered hardwoods are standard as are quartz countertops and tankless water heaters. Buyers have choices of traditional, transitional or contemporary finishes. Homes start in the low \$600,000s.



Homes in Awendaw Village will range from 2,500 to over 3,500 square feet. Photo/Carolina One Real Estate.

Ed Hunnicutt of Carolina One Real Estate lists a home on 6124 Rudder Lane for \$989,000 in the Romain Retreat neighborhood, a gated waterfront community. Most have their own private docks, but the neighborhood also boasts a boat landing, dock and covered pier. “Residents love the rural setting of Awendaw,” Hunnicutt said. “Lots are large, wooded and private, yet Mount Pleasant is still very close and Romain Retreat’s boat landing and dock gives easy access to Bulls Bay.”

Near Awendaw Village, is Rice Fields at Bulls Bay Golf Club. This community is made up of over 700 acres of green space and there are 65 estate lots within. Large lot prices range from the mid-\$200,000s to over \$1 million. Buyers are required to purchase membership in the private golf club. The community is gated and convenient to North Mount Pleasant, with Towne Centre about 20 minutes away. Currently, there are two home listings in Rice Fields – one at 4267 True Blue Court for \$789,750 and at 789 Bulls Bay Boulevard for \$2 million. If one lives in Awendaw, it’s for the slower pace, country-like environment and limitless opportunities to explore the outdoors.



An Awendaw home at 1048 Main Sail in Awendaw is on the waterfront and lists for \$625,000. Photo/Daniel Bates, MCVL Realty.

Two small restaurants cater to the laid-back feel of Awendaw and the Seewee Outpost is the general store. History buffs are drawn to the one-mile trail, the Sewee Shell Ring Boardwalk, that dates back 4,000 years. A 120-foot boardwalk overlooks a shell mound and the views of the marsh and Intracoastal Waterway are phenomenal. The Awendaw Green is a big draw for residents and folks from all over the Lowcountry. Every Wednesday night, local musicians gather at The Barn to play in a variety of genres -- under the oaks and a sky full of stars.

Awendaw's zoning allows for 0.29 acre lot sizes where public water or sewer is in place and it has its own water system that may be expanded in the future. According to Daniel Bates, Broker and Owner of MCVL Realty, there has been a "massive migration escaping the growth and congestion of Mount Pleasant over the last five years." "The movement doesn't feel like typical urban sprawl," Bates said. "Buyers have a genuine interest in country life." If you need a more seaside village scene, McClellanville is just a few minutes up the road.

McClellanville

As the areas – Awendaw and McClellanville grow – there is a growing interest from residential developers, but many are hampered by a lack of infrastructure in the area, according to Bates. "Commercial buildings for sale are lease are few and far between but commercial land is still priced very well." McClellanville is a coastal community about 30 miles from Charleston and has over 100 historic homes, churches and other properties that are listed on



A birds-eye view of McClellanville. Photo/Daniel Bates, MCVL Realty.

"McClellanville is one of the last fishing villages on the east coast and residents and leaders of the community continue to strive to preserve its small-town character," said Bates. "Lots can't be subdivided smaller than an acre. We are sandwiched between the Cape Romain Wildlife Refuge and the Francis Marion National Forest." Bates, who has been a lifelong resident of McClellanville, said that the town rejects public water and sewer seeing it as "slippery slope" that can lead to overdevelopment. He said the area is a slow, controlled growth as he's seen vacant lots with newer homes being built in recent years. If you live here, you understand that major change is probably not going to happen and that's most likely why it's becoming more and more popular. Think community oyster roasts, town hall meetings, dances on the docks and art parties. Local guitar and piano lessons for the kids.

the National Register of Historic Places. It was founded in the early 1850s by rice planters and the village served as a summer retreat for the wealthy. A range of architectural styles exist here – Gothic, Queen Anne, Colonial, row homes — as well as newer homes sprinkled throughout the area. This picturesque place has a main street, known as Pinckney Street, which has boutique shops, antiques, art galleries, a museum and a restaurant that is pure southern charm at its finest. The town proper is a little over two miles, but residents here love it for just that reason.



Shrimp boats off Jeremy Creek in McClellanville. Photo/Brigitte Surette



McClellanville remains a "sleepy fishing village" and its laid-back ambiance reflects both its past and its present. Photo/Brigitte Surette.

dogs sleep in the middle of the road. There's a boat in every yard and fences are rare. You can borrow a cup of sugar from your neighbor instead of going to the store." Bates said there is an abundance of acreage and building lots that begin in the \$70,000 range. "Half of our sales are vacant land and some buyers build right away while others have a five- or ten-year plan," he said. So far, the prices in McClellanville are reasonable compared to some



A historic home in the quaint town of McClellanville. Photo/Brigitte Surette.

Volunteer residents decorating Pinckney Street for holidays. It is a step-back-in-time kind of place. A walk along the docks on Jeremy Creek, which runs through the center of McClellanville, is the place to unwind. One of those places that remind one just how special the Lowcountry truly is, shrimp boats line up here to bring residents the freshest seafood possible. "I like to tell people that if you look up 'quaint' in the dictionary there should be a picture of McClellanville," Bates said. "Roads are two-lane and shaded by oak canopies. Homes built in the 1800s intermix with new ones. Children ride bikes and

of its pricier neighbors. Awendaw command a bit more because of its proximity to Mount Pleasant while in McClellanville, a "standard" home with a one-acre lot in the center of town can begin in the \$300,000s. Bates said buyers who are accustomed to turn-key homes are having a hard time with McClellanville homes that are "behind the times" in design or need a little maintenance. Even so, the tranquil setting in this sweet little town is hard to beat. The connection within the community is genuine and residents,

according to Bates, "look out for each other." "We're all amazingly different, but we manage to come together as a community and break bread at local restaurants," he said.



In McClellanville, the pace is unhurried and the view, beautiful. Photo/Daniel Bates, MCVL Realty.



John Sweeney



Ed Hunnicutt



Daniel Bates



Large estate-like homes can be found in the pristine countryside of Awendaw. This home, located at 6124 Rudder Lane, is listed for \$989,000. Photo/Carolina One Real Estate.