

AZALEA COAST

REAL ESTATE

RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE SALES TRENDS	Week of Aug. 17, 2009 Single & Multi-family Homes										All of New Hanover County
	Downtown 28401	Central Wilmington 28403-28405	Myrtle Grove/MJ 28409-28412	Ogden/ Porter's Neck 28411	Wrightsville Beach 28480	Pleasure Island 28428	Topsail Island 28445	Hampstead 28443	Leland 28451-28479	Castle Hayne 28429	
Active Listings:	402	1,181	1,176	710	204	730	328	773	888	73	4403
New Listings:	16	44	52	22	5	25	3	22	50	1	164
Went Pending:	4	18	26	11	4	14	4	6	19	-	77
Sold Units:	1	8	20	14	1	2	2	5	12	1	46
Absorption Rate:	93	34	14	12	47	85	38	36	17	17	22

Note: this representation is based in whole, or in part, on data supplied by Ace Cofer, Hardee, Hunt & Williams. No guarantee is made in any way for its accuracy.

Information provided by
Ace Cofer, Hardee Hunt & Williams, 602 Causeway Dr.

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BY MARIMAR McNAUGHTON, STAFF WRITER

Architect Eric Brown was arranging the final placement of shrubbery at Shannon Garden, Autumn Hall’s town house community. He was moving the bushes around on paper at his office at Habersham, a town of his own design, cultivated from a 275-acre green field near Beaufort, South Carolina. Established in 1998, Habersham is Brown’s billboard, what attracted Autumn Hall developer Raiford Trask III to the architect and his team.

“All of our work is focused on communities just like Habersham,” Brown said.

The project has won awards for light imprint green development and design work.

Hearing Brown talk about a development that lies lightly on the land, preserves trees and water quality is like listening to Trask talk about his design principles.

Brown is one of the many coastal architects hand picked by Trask to create a Cape Fear idiom for Autumn Hall.

“I think that’s how we ended up being a good fit for him,” Brown said. “They already had a great vision before we got on board.”

Brown’s aesthetic will be more apparent as the community breaks ground on Shannon Garden, 17 one, two and three-bedroom units with 23,245 square feet of open space, including 19,205 of park land, 3,390 of alleyways and 650 square feet of green space located on Autumn Hall’s Orton Point Road.

“We’ve been able to come in on a smaller scale and look at various little pieces of the community both in terms of the architecture—what it is, what goes there, what’s it look like, how’s it feel—but also how all those buildings work together at a small level,” Brown said.

In between the high concept of the master plan and the execution of Shannon Garden, Brown and his team have contributed a level of detail, called block design.

“We’ve been able to get really good results with that,” Brown said. “We’ve been able to go in and micro design, dodge trees and look at some shared water quality effects, extra shared open space, better connectivity, hide utilities, all sorts of things like that that can only help everyone at the end of the day.”

Brown said he did not initially plan for that level of detail at Habersham but learned through the process.

“We’ve been able to reinvent how we design now and apply

that to the Autumn Hall project,” Brown said.

Originally platted for a bungalow court of eight single family lots looking into a shared common green, Brown borrowed from the historic context of great southern cities: Savannah, Charleston, Wilmington, taking the central garden template and proposing a whitewashed brick-and-mortar town house community with pedestrian passages that spider off the main green linking the buildings, comprised of two and three-units bracketed by high-walled courtyards buffered by small gardens and alleyways. Each unit will have a main entrance on the common green—with nice stoops and entryways—shuttered windows and window boxes, with an elevated rear porch overlooking the courtyard.

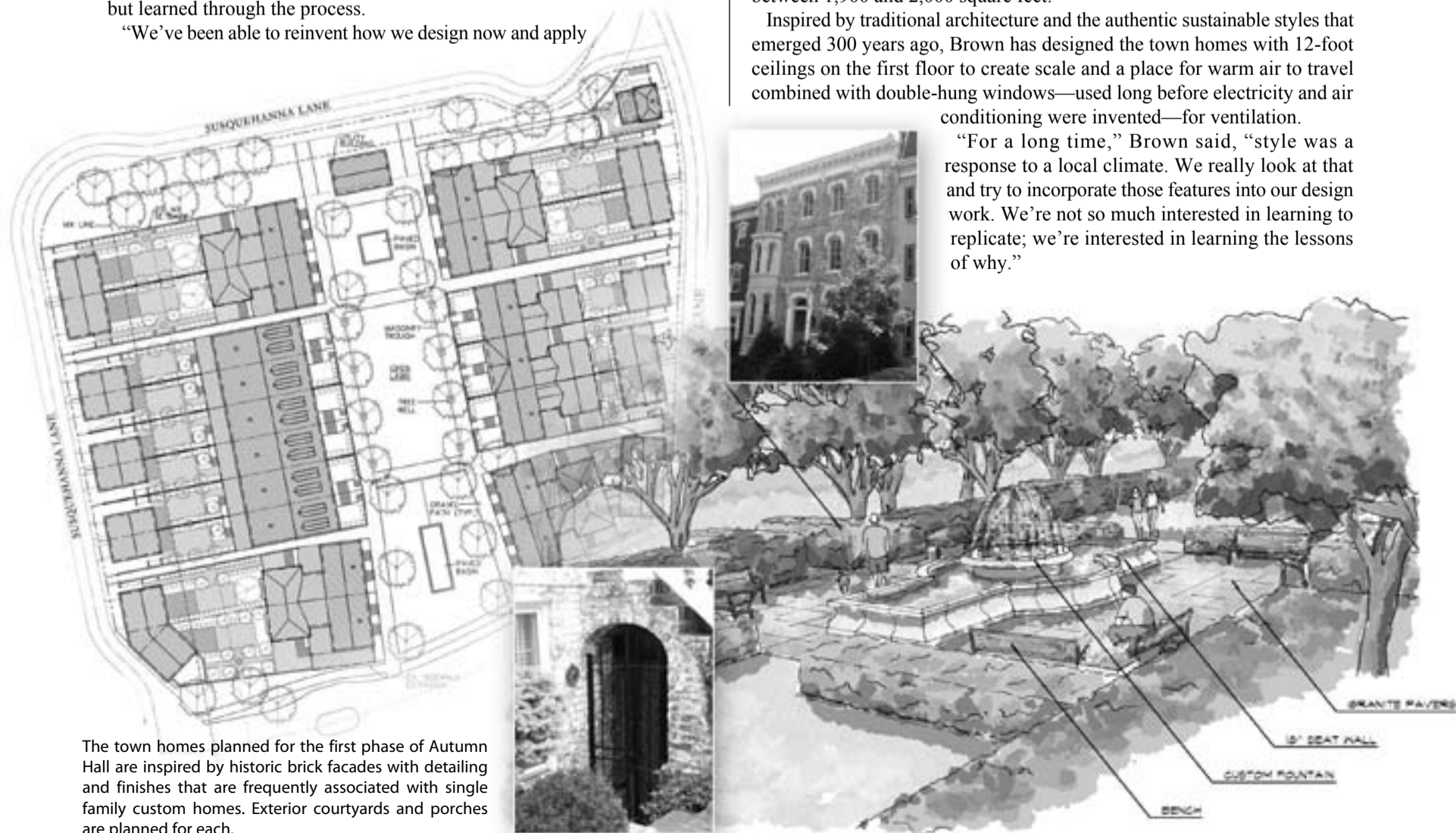
Typically in a town house, Brown said, a homeowner gives up privacy for convenience and location, a concept that is not lost on the Autumn Hall planners who have devised a live/work neighborhood. Brown’s designs emphasize that lost privacy, with ample outdoor space within the Shannon Garden enclave with access to the grander context of Autumn Hall’s exuberant walking and biking trails, and recreational amenities without the suburban big-house mentality.

“You’ll have three different experiences,” Brown said. “You’ll have the public realm out your front door which you can engage in if you like; you’ll have this very private screened porch which will be elevated; and you’ll have this very private courtyard ... in the rear.”

The central garden will serve as a rainwater collection site for all of the units and passive design components built into the landscaping, the outdoor spaces—to support kitchen gardening—and the floor plans which mindfully encourage a renaissance of aging-in-place values, with considerations for entry ramps, wheelchair clearance, roll-in showers and elevator shafts. One scenario provides a three-bedroom, master down plan; another is a two-bedroom plan with an optional third bedroom on the third floor. Both are between 1,900 and 2,000 square feet.

Inspired by traditional architecture and the authentic sustainable styles that emerged 300 years ago, Brown has designed the town homes with 12-foot ceilings on the first floor to create scale and a place for warm air to travel combined with double-hung windows—used long before electricity and air conditioning were invented—for ventilation.

“For a long time,” Brown said, “style was a response to a local climate. We really look at that and try to incorporate those features into our design work. We’re not so much interested in learning to replicate; we’re interested in learning the lessons of why.”



The town homes planned for the first phase of Autumn Hall are inspired by historic brick facades with detailing and finishes that are frequently associated with single family custom homes. Exterior courtyards and porches are planned for each.