



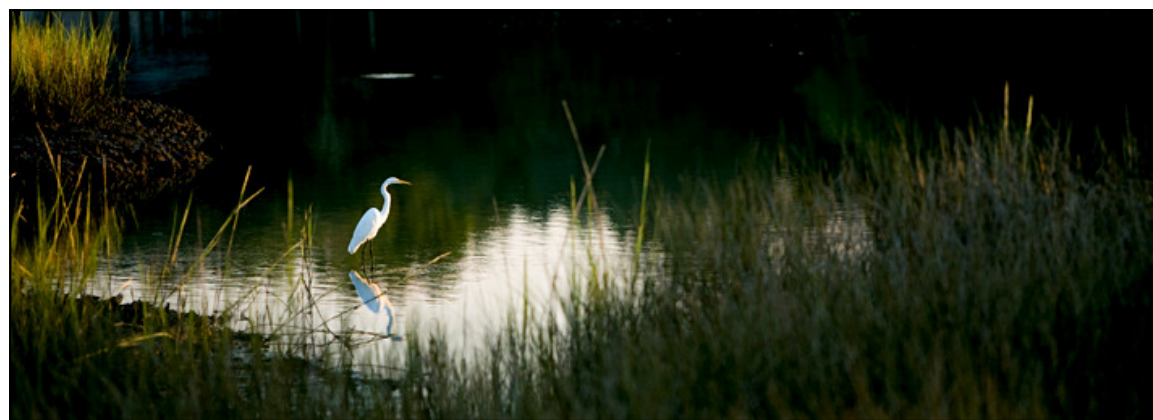
# POPLAR GROVE

Pattern Book

A Pictorial Guide to Architectural Design

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## POPLAR GROVE

“Poplar Grove will appeal most to those who come, not to be seen, but to behold; not to be heard by others, but to listen - to that special wisdom which only nature and history can impart. Everywhere, the emphasis will be on quiet enjoyment and casual, understated charm; an escape from the pretension and formality which have come to characterize too much of our daily lives.

The future of Poplar Grove must be approached, not only as an opportunity, but as an obligation. The cherished sense of a special place, with which generations of owners have looked upon this land, must never be allowed to die.”

*- The Poplar Grove Philosophy*

*December 2004*

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# HISTORY OF CHARLESTON



View of Historic Downtown Charleston.

Founded in 1670, the City of Charleston has grown to be the crown jewel of the historic South. When founded, Charleston was the 5th largest city in North America with a population of 1,200. It is located midway along South Carolina's coastline at the junction of the Ashley and Cooper Rivers. The city was named after King Charles II of England. Charleston is also the location of Fort Moultrie, which was instrumental in delivering a critical defeat to the British in the American Revolutionary War, and Fort Sumter, the refuted site of the "first shot" of the American Civil War.

In 1633, after Charles II was restored to the English throne, he granted the chartered Carolina territory to eight of his loyal friends, known as the Lords Proprietors. Seven years later, the Lords arranged for the settlement, the first being that of Charles Town. The community was

established by English settlers in 1670 across the Ashley River from the city's current location. As the capital of the Carolina Colony, Charleston was the center for further expansion and was the southernmost point of English settlement during the late 1600s.

In 1680, a plan for the new settlement, the Grand Modell, laid out "the model of an exact rectangular town," and the future for the growing community. Land surrounding the intersection of Meeting and Broad Streets was set aside for a civic square. Over time, this intersection became known as the four corners of law, referring to the various arms of governmental and religious law presiding over the square and the growing city. St. Michael's Episcopal,



St. Michael's Episcopal, 1865.

Charleston's oldest and most noted church, was built on the southeast corner in 1752. The following year, the capital of the colony was erected across the square. Because of its prominent position within the city and its elegant architecture, the building signaled to Charleston's citizens and visitors its importance within the British colonies. Provincial Court met on the ground floor of the Commons House of Assembly, and the Royal Governors Council met on the second floor.

By the mid 18th century, Charleston had become a bustling trade center and the wealthiest and largest city south of Philadelphia.

Rice and indigo had been successfully cultivated by gentlemen planters in the surrounding coastal lowcountry while merchants profited from the successful shipping industry. The first American museum opened to the public on January 12, 1773 in Charleston.



Charleston's Old Exchange Building

In 1774, South Carolina declared its independence from the Crown on the steps of The Exchange Building. Soon, the church steeples of Charleston became targets for British warships. A siege on the city in 1776 was successfully defended by William Moultrie from Sullivan's Island, but by 1780 came under British control for 2 1/2 years. After the British retreated in December 1782, the city's name was officially changed from Charlestown to Charleston. By 1788, Carolinians were meeting at the capital building for the constitutional ratification convention. Although there was support for the federal government, division arose over the location of the new state capital. A suspicious



Historic Sketch of the Charleston County Courthouse

fire broke out in the capital building during the convention, after which the delegates were moved to the Exchange Building, and Columbia was declared the new state capital of South Carolina. By 1792, the capital had been rebuilt and became the Charleston County Courthouse.

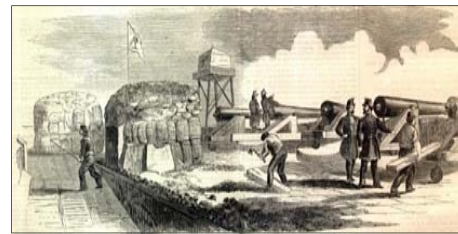
As Charleston has grown over these many years, so have the community's cultural and social opportunities. The first theater building in America, Dock Street Theater, was



Dock Street Theater

built in Charleston in 1736. The Charleston Library Society was established in 1748 by wealthy Charlestonians who wished to keep up with scientific and philosophical issues of the day. This group helped establish the College of Charleston in 1770, the oldest college in South Carolina and the 13th oldest in the United States.

The invention of the cotton gin in 1793 revolutionized cotton's production, and it quickly became South Carolina's major export. As demand for cotton grew around the world, Charleston became prosperous in the plantation dominated economy of the post revolutionary years. It grew to become one of the busiest port cities in the country by 1800, and the construction of a new, larger U.S. Customs House began in 1849. Its construction was interrupted by the events of the Civil War. The South Carolina legislature was the first state to vote for secession from the Union on December 20, 1860. On January 9,



Battery at Fort Moultrie, bearing on Fort Sumter.—Drawn by an officer of Maj. Anderson's command.

1861, Citadel cadets fired the first shots of the American Civil War when they opened fire on a union ship entering Charleston Harbor. On April 2, 1861, shore batteries under the command of General Pierre G. T. Beauregard opened fire on the Union-held Fort Sumter. After a 34 hour bombardment, Major Robert Anderson surrendered the fort. Cadets from The Citadel, South Carolina's liberal arts military college, continued to aid the Confederate Army during the Civil War through the manufacture of ammunition, the protection of arms depots, and the guarding of Union prisoners.

After the eventual destructive defeat of the Confederacy, federal forces remained in Charleston during the city's reconstruction. The war shattered the prosperity of the antebellum city. Charleston's woes were compounded when a 125 mph hurricane hit Charleston in 1885, destroying or damaging 90% of homes. Only a year later in 1886 a major earthquake damaged 2,000 buildings, destroying



Charleston Earthquake August 31, 1886

with the efforts of urban renewal, many of Charleston's historic buildings remain intact.

Charlestonians today refer to their city as the Holy City and describe it as a site where the Ashley and Cooper Rivers merge to form the Atlantic Ocean. It was recently named America's "best-mannered" city and has grown to be the South's tourist Mecca. South Carolina's aquarium is located on Charleston's waterfront. Charleston annually hosts the Spoleto Festival as well as the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition and the Family Circle Tennis Cup. The annual Cooper River Bridge run attracts more than 40,000 people each year.



Cooper River Bridge Run, 2003

The Medical University of South Carolina is the area's largest employer providing world class medical facilities to the citizens of the area. Much of the history of the old South is to be found in the Charleston area, which boasts many preserved plantations as well as hundreds of historic homes, churches and commercial buildings downtown.



Drayton Hall Plantation



Carolina by order of the Lords Proprietors, published in 1671. (maker John Ogilby)

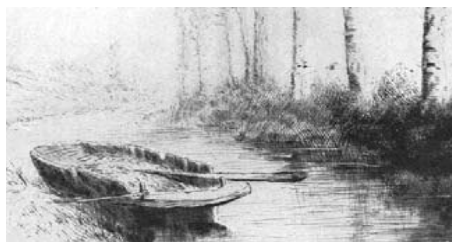
# HISTORY OF POPLAR GROVE

Before there was a state of South Carolina and almost 100 years before our country became an independent nation, Poplar Grove thrived as a major coastal plantation. Originally granted to Thomas Elliot in 1696 under a king's grant, Poplar Grove grew to more than 7,500 acres, serving as an active plantation for rice, cotton, indigo and various other crops for almost 300 years. In the



Rice Fields

early years, the owners of Poplar Grove spent most of the sweltering summer in the small colony of Charleston, which at the time had only a little over 1,000 citizens. Fall, winter, and spring were spent at the plantation house, which was destroyed during the Civil War and now consists of only a few scattered remains. The land plan for the current Poplar Grove Development incorporates many of the original features of the plantation infrastructure, including original dikes, marsh crossings, and irrigation canals (more than 200 years old). Some of the original ma-

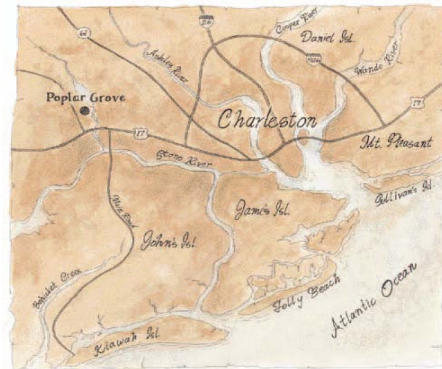


Canals were essential to transportation

terials (recycled bricks, stones, etc.) have been utilized in the construction of Poplar Grove's Boat House.

Following the receipt of his

king's grant on April 24, 1696, Thomas Elliot acquired virtually all of the land in "a cypress swamp along the western edge of Rantowles Creek." After his death in 1731, these tracts were divided among his 6 children. In October, 1738, William Butler, a grandson of Thomas Elliot, joined with his mother Elizabeth Butler and conveyed to William's son (also named Thomas) 570 acres of land on the head of the northern-most branch of the Stono River for 10 shillings. This site is now Poplar Grove. The main drive to our new Poplar Grove community is named for the 10 shillings paid for the 570 acres.



Location of Poplar Grove

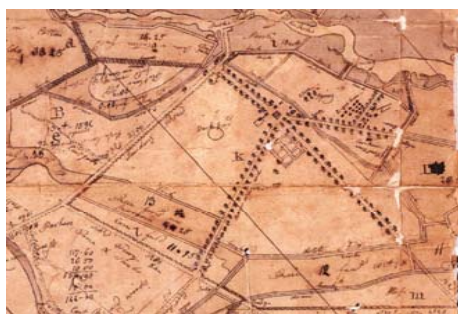
Elizabeth Butler was the daughter of Ralph Emms, owner of adjoining Winter plantation. Elizabeth Butler and William Elliot appear to have received this property as an inheritance from William's father (also named William) 1703-1721. William Elliot had been in the project area before 1720 when his father Thomas conveyed him 650 acres along Rantowles Creek, "where they laboriously cleared and harvested cypress trees." When they conveyed the project tract to Thomas Elliot (1699- 1760), the property was described as, "all that plantation whereon Elisha Butler and Elizabeth, his wife, in her lifetime dwelt, containing



Poplar Grove aerial view

570 acres in which the dwelling house had set Elisha and Elizabeth stands." The lack of plans precludes even a guess as to where the settlement stood. Artifacts recently recovered on the site support the original settlement of the project in the late 1600's and early 1700's and suggest that the project was probably continuously occupied by Europeans until its purchase by West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company in the 1940s.

After Thomas Elliot's death in 1760, the Plantation was passed to his daughter, Mary, who was married to Robert McKewen. Thomas Elliot left a substantial estate value at more than 200,000 pounds at his death—a significant sum. After Robert McKewen's death in 1769, Mary married Robert Rowand, an extensive landowner and slave trader from Saint Paul's Parrish. The couple's combined land holdings at that time totaled more than 4,000 acres. A deed from 1795 refers to the project as a "public landing or brick house ... devised to Mary Rowand by her fa-



Actual survey of Poplar Grove area, 1791

ther." Robert and Mary had the plantation under cultivation by 1790, when Robert was listed as "head of family" in the US Census of 1791. On Poplar Grove's Master Plan (shown on the following pages), the plantation land reflects a planned social and economic environment oriented to efficient agriculture production. The settlement was strategically located to take advantage of transportation routes and designed to effectively mesh people in the cultivation of crops. Robert Rowand's Will indicates that Poplar Grove served primarily as a county seat. Like many planters, the Rowand family spent the winter months on the plantation and escaped to their home on 48 Meeting Street during the summer months to avoid the seasonal outbreak of malaria. The plantation affairs were left to a trusted overseer and driver named Cuffee. The overseer was charged with the responsibility of managing the Rowand's Mobawry and Poplar Grove plantations.



Flood canals wind throughout Poplar Grove

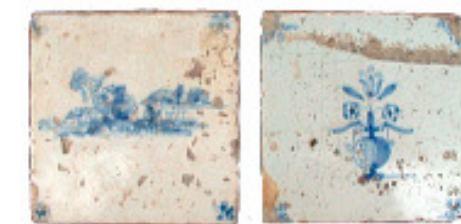
The historic plan shows the special structure of the rice fields, which were intentionally designed and officially organized around a system of flood canals. These canals today will provide access to deep water for many Poplar Grove residents adjoining the marsh. At each canal juncture, gates would have been installed to take advantage of the fluctuating creek to maintain desired water lev-

els. The vast rice fields have slowly been reclaimed by nature. The eroded traces of the ditches and canals and most of the fields are barely visible today. Throughout the former rice fields are remains of low-lying earthen dams once used to impound water and keep out the fluctuating water of Rantowles Creek. The trunks of flood gates, like other parts of the plantation, have long since disappeared.



Remains of a dam gate used to maintain desired water levels

In 1803, the property was surveyed by its owner Charles Elliot Rowand (descendent of Thomas Elliot), only 5 years after purchasing the plantation from his parents. Under his control, the plantation took on a formalized appearance with avenues of oaks providing an entrance to the planter's house. The plantation fields still produced rice, cotton, and provisional crops. Some of the old fields and highlands were allowed to return to mixed woods for timber, but most remained in cultivation.



18th Century Delft Tiles

Artifacts discovered during the recent archaeological investigation indicate that Poplar Grove Plantation enjoyed some level of prosperi-

ty. The fragments of ceramic found around the site of the original Plantation House were Delft and Chinese porcelain, an indication that some of the owners were affluent (an assertion substantiated by census records). Archival research and archaeological testing on the plantation indicates a construction date for the Plantation House of around 1740. This collates roughly to the emergence of a Georgian architecture, traditionally inspired by Old World architecture. The plantation home was brick using English bond, alternating rows of headers and structures, in construction. The low beam walls were four bricks thick (21 inches) and were made to support the structure's weight. Discovery of plastered fragments and later impressions demonstrate the interior was plastered. A large number of bricks remaining indicate a large two-story home, probably Georgian in style.



Lowndes Hill Plantation, Greenville, SC (Today)

Despite the ravages of Malaria and the poor health of Charleston's overall population, several of Charles Rowand's children lived to give him grandchildren and perpetuate his family name. Rowand died in September of 1833, and the plantation was left to his wife Henrietta and their children. Henrietta Rowand held the deed of Poplar Grove until February of 1839 when the executor of Mr. Rowand's estate sold the prop-

Continued on Page 6

# HISTORY OF POPLAR GROVE



*Continued from Page 5*

erty to Captain Thomas O. Lowndes of Charleston. Lowndes paid \$19,500 for 852 acres and acquired adjoining land to eventually develop 5,758 acres in the project area. In the years before the Civil War, the plantation prospered and grew. By 1850, Lowndes had 126 slaves working his plantations. In 1850, Lowndes moved his family to Greenville, SC where he constructed “Lowndes Hills,” which is still standing. In his absence, the plantation grew rice in quantity, along with a wide variety of other goods.

Cotton appears to have added to Thomas Lowndes’s prosperity between 1850 and 1860. In 1850, Lowndes still produced 38,500 pounds of rice. The Lowndes family was an important and influential family during South Carolina’s antebellum years. Lowndes himself was an active planter and farmer, but by 1862, Captain Thomas was an elderly man, “too old to aid the cause in uniform.” He remained in Greenville, SC during the epic struggle between the North and South, believing that Poplar Grove’s rice and slavery would survive the war. It is generally believed that the plantation home was destroyed during the Civil War.

Following the Civil War, Poplar Grove was sold to William Bradley of Plymouth, Massachusetts. Bradley operated large mining operations in the South, primarily extracting phosphate. The Poplar Grove site does not suggest that significant mining activities took place on the plantation. This mining was instead concentrated on other land owned by Bradley across Rantowles Creek. A bridge was constructed during this period connect-

ing the project tract with Bradley’s Beaulieu Property across Rantowles Creek. In 1943, the Bradley Realty Company conveyed the 5,748 Lowndes’ tract (which included Poplar Grove) to the West Virginia Pulp and Paper Company. The company changed its name to Westvaco in 1969 and used the property primarily for timber operation.

Notwithstanding its history as a rice plantation, the property today largely appears in its natural state. Volunteer Roses and Poplar Trees, whose seed might be traced back to when Robert Rowand gave the plantation its namesake, are abundant on the site. Long marsh grasses, which supplanted the rice stalks of the plantation, are also prolific. Although the open fields are now thickly wooded with pines and oaks, and only the foundation remains of the old plantation house, many reminders remain of the years when the plantation was in full bloom.

Possibly the most tangible link to the past are the Gibbes, Washington, Grant, and Ancrum families that live west of the project lands on land “claimed by sundry persons” a century and half after emancipation. These descendants of freed men still live and work the same land that their ancestors toiled on for nearly 200 years.

# POPLAR GROVE MASTER PLAN

## Charleston County

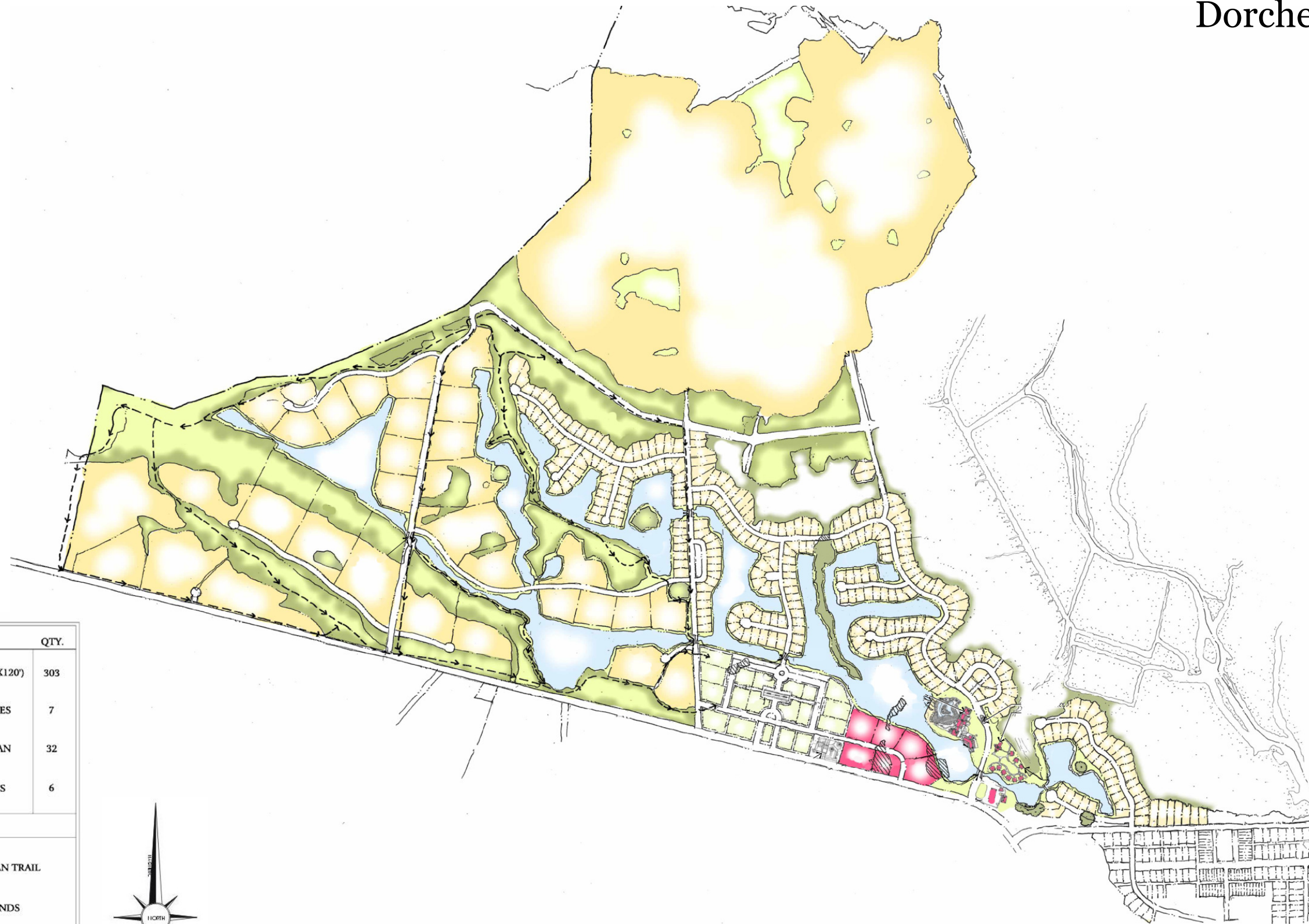








**Disclaimer:** This land plan for Poplar Grove is conceptual only and will change substantially as the development is completed over time. Land features and uses, housing preferences, amenity location, etc. will influence the long term design.



# POPLAR GROVE MASTER PLAN

## Dorchester County



DESCRIPTION	QTY.
 HOMESITES (+/-75'X120')	303
 VILLAGE HOMESITES	7
 ESTATE/EQUESTRIAN HOMESITES	32
 COMMERCIAL LOTS	6
<b>LEGEND</b>	
 HORSE/ PEDESTRIAN TRAIL	
 IMPACTED WETLANDS	

**Disclaimer:** This land plan for Poplar Grove is conceptual only and will change substantially as the development is completed over time. Land features and uses, housing preferences, amenity location, etc. will influence the long term design.