

Scenes!

DESTIN & Co.

Developers hope to improve upon Seaside concepts

By KRIS SLOCUM
DestinEast Staff Writer

INLET BEACH — It's been 15 years since Seaside was built and its designers, Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, have the refined their neighborhood plans.

Seaside, while considered a success in community planning, has been updated in a new planned development in Inlet Beach, called Rosemary Beach. The development will be similar to but improve upon some of the Seaside concepts.

"Rosemary Beach will return to the basic principles of the neighborhood," said Larry Davis, owner of Davis Properties of Northwest Florida. "Rosemary Beach was planned by the same people who designed Seaside. They built 70 other communities and are returning to South Walton to apply what they have learned during those 15 years."

Davis's half-brother, Robert Davis, built Seaside. The project is winding through the government approval process. On June 15, the Walton County Planning Commission approved the project with the

recommendation for inclusion of deceleration and acceleration lanes on County Road 30A. The Walton County Commission will vote on the plan at its July 25 meeting.

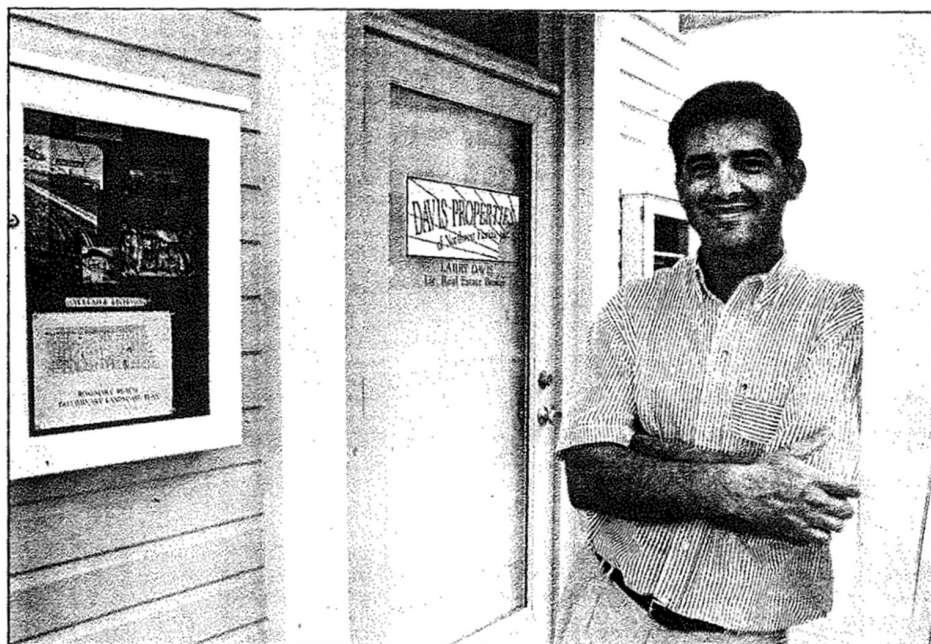
According to Jeff Speck, the Duany and Plater-Zyberk site manager of Rosemary Beach, the new development is "correcting perceived flaws of Seaside."

Speck said DPZ specializes in community planning and town and city revitalization.

The changes aren't exactly subtle. According to Davis, the new community will be based on the way neighborhoods were before the suburban explosion of the 1950s.

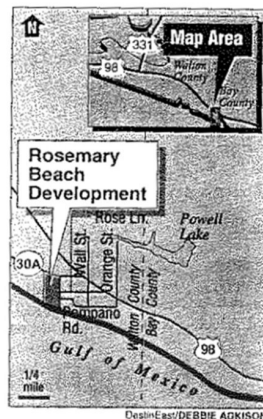
"The suburbs were built for automobiles, not people," said Davis. "The treatment of the car will be different. They will drive on lanes behind the houses, garbage cans and utility boxes will be behind the houses," he said.

And, "In building the pedestrian-only zones in Seaside, they didn't take into account that the cars had to get to the houses," said Jennifer Howard, of the Davis Properties public relations firm, Visible Ink. Pedestrian-only paths will link the neighborhood together in front of the houses. Gone are the roads that twist into each



Idea man: Larry Davis, half-brother of Seaside developer Robert Davis, plans to take the neighborhood concept of Seaside and improve upon it with Rosemary Beach, a new planned development in Inlet Beach.

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other creating loops: the paths and lanes in Rosemary Beach will connect to each other and to main roads.

Everything is designed to be within walking distance.

Homes will not be as brightly painted as Seaside, and will be built upon permeable concrete foundations, eliminating storm water run-off problems.

"People want lower maintenance houses," Davis said. "We are incorporating stucco and limiting the palate of colors a little bit. We are trying to be environmentally-friendly."

The development plans call for public squares and parks. Plans call for businesses that are useful, like a corner grocery store, a dry cleaner and a coffee house, not tourist-oriented businesses. Units where

the shopkeeper lives above or behind the shop, are also planned.

"We won't have any businesses that are franchises," said Davis. "It's very important that they are mom and pop types of stores."

And unlike Seaside, building garages is encouraged in the neighborhood.

Building hasn't started yet, but Davis said by July the developers will have the site open to show potential residents what they plan for the area.

Speck said DPZ got involved with Rosemary Beach in April of last year, and Davis Properties signed on nine months ago.

About 220 homes will be built in the 52-acre development and Davis said the architects and builders are estimating the homes will cost around \$120 per square foot to build.

Re-Formatted for Easy Reading: Developers Hope to Improve Upon Seaside Concepts

By Kris Slocum, DestinEast Staff Writer

INLET BEACH — Fifteen years after the creation of Seaside, its designers, Andrés Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, have refined their approach to neighborhood planning.

Their latest vision is **Rosemary Beach**, a planned community in Inlet Beach that builds upon the principles that made Seaside successful while addressing some of its perceived shortcomings.

"Rosemary Beach will return to the basic principles of the neighborhood," said **Larry Davis**, owner of Davis Properties of Northwest Florida. "Rosemary Beach was planned by the same people who designed Seaside. Since then, they have developed dozens of communities across the country and are returning to South Walton to apply what they've learned."

The project, developed by Seaside founder **Robert Davis** and his team, was moving through the approval process at the time. The Walton County Planning Commission approved the project with recommendations for acceleration and deceleration lanes along County Road 30A, with a final vote scheduled before the Walton County Commission.

According to **Jeff Speck**, Duany and Plater-Zyberk's project manager for Rosemary Beach, the new community was designed to correct some of the flaws identified in Seaside over the years.

"These changes aren't subtle," Speck said.

One of the biggest differences involves the role of the automobile.

"The suburbs of the 1950s were built around cars rather than people," Davis explained. "At Rosemary Beach, cars will be accommodated differently. Service lanes behind the homes will handle vehicle access, garbage collection, and utilities."

The developers also learned lessons from Seaside's pedestrian-only zones.

"In Seaside, pedestrian areas were successful, but vehicle access to homes sometimes became challenging," said Jennifer Howard of Visible Ink, the public relations firm representing Davis Properties. At Rosemary Beach, a connected network of pedestrian paths and service lanes will provide better access while maintaining walkability.

Unlike many suburban developments with winding roads and cul-de-sacs, Rosemary Beach is designed around a connected street network that links neighborhoods, paths, and main roads.

The community is intended to be highly walkable, with homes, parks, businesses, and public gathering spaces located within easy walking distance.

Home designs will also differ from Seaside. Instead of brightly painted exteriors, Rosemary Beach homes will feature a more restrained architectural palette, including stucco finishes and a narrower range of colors. Developers also plan to use permeable surfaces to reduce stormwater runoff and improve environmental performance.

"People want lower-maintenance homes," Davis said. "We're incorporating stucco and simplifying the color palette. We're trying to create a community that is environmentally friendly."

Plans for the town center include public squares, parks, and locally owned businesses such as a grocery store, coffee shop, and dry cleaner.

"We won't have franchise businesses," Davis said. "It's important that these be locally owned, mom-and-pop operations."

The traditional mixed-use concept found in historic towns will also be incorporated, with some shop owners living above or behind their businesses.

Unlike Seaside, garages will be encouraged within the community design.

At the time of the interview, construction had not yet begun, but developers expected to open the site to prospective buyers within a few months.

DPZ became involved with the project in April of the previous year, while Davis Properties joined approximately nine months later.

The plans called for approximately **220 homes on 52 acres**, with construction costs estimated at roughly **\$120 per square foot**.