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Residents urge protest against two proposed developments

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RESIDENTS in Abaco yesterday urged the community to come out and protest against two proposed major developments.

Government ministers toured the sites of the developments yesterday as residents expressed opposition to the plans.

Deputy Prime Minister Brent Symonette and his entourage, including Environment Minister Earl Deveaux and Minister of Lands and Local Government Byran Woodside, took an early morning tour of Orchid Bay in Great Guana Cay where developers want to expand the existing marina to encompass more than 300 boat slips as well as expand land use to incorporate more private lots.

With a 200-boat-slip marina at the Baker's Bay development just yards away sitting under-used, resident Stephen Jenkins said he does not see the sense in building another large-scale marina as it would create over 500 boat slips on the 9.25 mile island.

"Business is dead everywhere since the recession. The marinas are empty," Mr Jenkins said.

"And it is all the big developments that are failing.

"I'm not against development, I'm just against these big projects that don't work.

"It's the small, sustainable developments are working."

Great Guana Cay residents said Orchid Bay developers are planning a \$400 million development including a \$150 million Rosewood brand waterfront hotel, set aside 66 boat slips for visitors to the hotel, and 116 slips exclusively for landowners, creating 324 boat slips.

Orchid Bay general manager Jimmy Albury did not return calls from The Tribune yesterday to confirm details of the development.

The official visit went from Great Guana Cay to Hope Town in Elbow Cay where dignitaries met with Hope Town District Council officials to tour the proposed redevelopment of the Elbow Cay Club and Marina.

Mr Symonette said the plans include building houses, a small club, a spa, extra docking spaces and a breakwater.

Residents of the six by half-a-mile island are petitioning against the development as they claim it is too large. An online petition has been signed by 750 people who pledged: "This extensive development will cause major impacts to the Elbow Cay environment both on land and sea.

"It will negatively impact our island's already strained infrastructure.

"We feel it will spoil our local amenity and have serious consequences for the local community and local business establishments now and for future generations."

Mr Symonette and ministers then went on to Marsh Harbour to tour the new administrative building of local government offices built by the National Insurance Board.

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Posted By: local hopetown On: 10/29/2010

Title: Get the facts straight

We as locals are not against the developemnt, but the size and density of the project. Also the is doing fine as jobs are concerned. The majority of the signatures are loyal tourist and second homeowners that support our island. And further more the density of the project would not "enhance the quality of our island" so please get the facts straight before running off at the mouth!

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Posted By: It's Me! On: 10/28/2010

Title: Foreigners AGAIN!!

There are fewer than 400 people who live on this Island (Elbow Cay), yet 750 have signed the online petition. Since a large majority of the Local Residents are in favour of this project, the question on my mind is, "who do these 750 signatures represent?"

The group of protesters reflected a strong foreign element, and numbered less than 30 persons.

This Island certainly needs the jobs that would be created by this project.

Some people who have second homes here, worry that such an establishment might 'hog-up' some of the Tourist Business, however I believe that this facility would enhance the quality and number of visitors to this Island.

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