ANOTHER VIEW

In gratitude to developer Dickie Foster

By Tommy Rayfield
Special to the News

For several years I have intended to write a letter to express my appreciation to Dickie Foster for all he has done for Cape Charles. Like many good intentions I've had in my life, I have never gotten around to doing this one, until now. I guess what has given me incentive is turning 70 this past May. There seems to be a greater sense of urgency about many things.

In 1997, we bought Savage's Drug Store and became a part of the Cape Charles community. Since my childhood days in the '40s, I have always had an out-of-town person's identity with Cape Charles.

There are a great number of wonderful memories that will always be with me of the days of the ferries, railroad, The Palace Theater, The Radium Theater, the Legion Hall, the ice plant and of course the beach and old marina. I would dare bet that many of you are like me and wish that you could go back to those days. Life seemed simpler and happier. (I was also young).

By the 1990s, many things had changed in town. The ferries, Legion Hall, Radium, five hotels, all were gone. Many of the other things which remained were either, falling down (like the ice plant) or were in bad condition. It was somewhat depressing just to ride into town and have to pass by the old ice plant and see trees growing out of it.

When Dickie bought the Brown & Root property in 1998, there was a lot of skepticism by many as to what that was going to amount to.

It didn't take long for Dickie to get moving. The transformation he made to the old Hollywood Farm property was fast and unbelievable.

The creation of lakes, rolling hills and beautiful flowers and trees made the place beautiful. Nothing was done in anything but a first-class manner — the creation of two world -class golf courses, the demolishing of the old and building of a new marina. Everything was done beautifully.

Another thing that I take my hat off to Mr. Foster for is what he did with the railroad property. The day after he took over the railroad, he had what seemed like a busload of workers cleaning up the railroad yard.

There had been old railroad ties and brambles staked in the area near to hump for years. It was all gone within a few days after he took over.

Today Cape Charles is a different town.

It will never be the same town it was in the '40s, but thanks to Dickie's incentive (and the hard work of a lot of others) it is a unique town offering two world-class gold courses, a world class marina, wonderful public beach, fishing pier, a central park and some of the most beautiful homes and landscaping one could find anywhere.

Where could you live and have all of these things within walking distance of your home? I know that the fishing pier, central park and public beach were not associated with Bay Creek, but I think that the change in atmosphere gave incentive for these changes to take place.

I know that real estate sales and prices have been hit very hard in Cape Charles, as they have in most all areas of the country, but when things work their way back to something more normal, Cape Charles has more to offer than most anywhere on the East Coast, thanks in large part to the Bay Creek organization and vision of Dickie Foster.

Thanks, Dickie.

The writer is a business owner and Northampton County resident.