

Mac On The Mat

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Debate starts over districting plans for Forsyth County elections

By David Perkins Special to the Chronicle

State House members began debating rival plans for overhauling Forsyth County's method of election Wednesday, and no prospect for a compromise was in sight.

But, to the disappointment of proponents of a plan backed by the Forsyth commissioners, the House Subcommittee on Local Government delayed a vote on the bills until next Wednesday, when backers of an alternative bill sponsored by state Reps. Annie Brown

Kennedy and Logan Burke will be heard.

Both plans would replace the county's at-large election system with a plan based on districts. The commissioners' bill, introduced by Rep. Frank Rhodes, a Republican, was a compromise reached last June between the commissioners and Walter Marshall, president of the Winston-Salem chapter of the NAACP. The NAACP had filed suit against the county, charging that the at-large system diluted Afro-American voting strength.

Federal Judge Eugene A. Gor-

don approved the compromise in a consent decree signed in June and 9. called on the commissioners to seek legislative approval. Since then, however, many Afro-American the leaders have criticized Marshall as selling the Afro-American community short in the deal.

Kennedy and Burke introduced their bill on March 14 in reaction to local protests.

Introducing his bill, Rep. Rhodes told the lawmakers that the plan had widespread bipartisan support in the county, including the Forsyth County Senior Democrats,

which endorsed the plan on March

"While other reorganization plans may be possible," Rhodes told the committee, "the Board of Commissioners believes that this court-ordered compromise is the best way to insure minority representation on the board of commissioners while also serving the interest of all citizens of Forsyth County. . . .

"The plaintiffs have been satisfied, the NAACP has been satisfied, the judge has been satisfied and has so ordered that this be presented to the legislature."

John Holleman, chairman of Forsyth's Board of Commissioners, similarly asserted that the consent decree left no room for further discussion. Quoting the judge's statement in the decree that "the Forsyth County Board of Commissioners shall take all steps reasonably necessary to obtain from the North Carolina General Assembly a local act modifying the method of election of the board as set forth (in this decree)." Holleman said, "What that means is we're not in a position to be able to compromise -- that compromise has already taken place. . . .

It is a good bill, it is a good system
-- it protects minority representation
and it does not unnecessarily disrupt the good system that is already
in existence."

The consent decree could, in

fact, be dissolved by the judge if both parties withdrew their support, according to legal authorities. But Marshall has said he will remain neutral in the dispute.

No one opposed to Rep. Rhodes' bill or backing the Kennedy-Burke bill spoke before

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Board hears plans for parkway, transit center

By TONYA V. SMITH Chronicle Staff Writer

A team of consultants will present their findings and recommendations on the proposed parkway to be built through East Winston, and residents will be given an opportunity to address the subject in a public hearing slated for 7:30 p.m., Monday, April 3.

The firm of Kimley-Horn and Associates will recommend that the city nix building a parkway through East Winston, and in its stead, extend 14th Street and build another leg of the Northern Beltway to carry traffic around, rather than through, East Winston.

J. Steven Mifflin, an assistant Regional manager for the consulting engineering firm, presented the preceding preliminary finding during the last of three public hearings on the subject.

"Improving 14th Street and extending it improves accessibility and opens a wide area for development," Mifflin told about 16 East Winston residents during a Jan. 12 public hearing. "We can make local improvements and build the Northern Beltway to serve through traffic."

The Board of Aldermen awarded the contract to Kimley-Horn in May 1988 to study the feasibility of constructing the East Winston Parkway.

After about 20 years of considering the East Winston Parkway, city aldermen said last year that it would provide land for commercial and industrial development in the area south of Smith Reynolds Airport, a move they hoped would generate economic growth in the predominantly Afro-American community. The parkway is envisioned as a short-cut between U.S. 52 and Interstate 40.

City residents have supported the proposal to extend 14th Street, but have said a short-cut is needed through East Winston to make their community a part of the city. However, Mifflin disagreed, saying a parkway would not be feasible because those using it would not stop in East Winston. But the beltway would keep that unneccessary traffic out of the community, he said.

"The purpose of the Northern Beltway for the residents of East Winston is that it avoids taking that 20,000 or 30,000 vehicles a day and dragging them through your community when they aren't going to stop," Mifflin told East Winston residents.

In addition, Mifflin has recommended that the undeveloped parcels of land south of Smith Reynolds Airport be connected by short roads to Liberty Street and U.S. 52

After the public hearing, the aldermen will be asked to accept the consultant's findings and recommendations.

In other business, the board heard an update on the progress of the recently approved transit center. In November, city aldermen authorized construction of the center downtown at the corner of Third and Liberty

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Ap LaserPhoto

Eiffel Fashion

A model presents an Eiffel Tower ensemble: a tight woolen skirt with fake diamonds-shaped Eiffel Tower worn with a beret topped with the 100-year-old monument. The show was a preview for the 1989/90 fall/winter ready-to-wear collection.

Ap

Mike Tyson thrills youth with special visit

By TONYA V. SMITH Chronicle Staff Writer

Butterflies fluttered in Troy Hatcher's stomach about 8 a.m. Saturday morning as he and his family drove into the parking lot of the Twin City Medical Building.

It wasn't a doctor's examination that the 17-year-old was worried about, but in two hours he was scheduled to meet the undisputed heavyweight boxing champion of the world.

"I'm kind of nervous, but Troy's very excited," said Mary Hatcher, Troy's mother. "It's something he's been praying for and we're glad to see this moment arrive."

A few months ago Mrs. Hatcher helped Troy compose a letter to Mike Tyson asking him if would visit Troy. The Hatchers live in Ararat, Va., but Troy has doctors in Winston-Salem and his father works

for Stroh Brewery Co.

"We wrote a letter telling him Troy would like to see him," Mrs. Hatcher said. "We told him (Tyson) we knew he had a busy schedule, but we had heard about his desire to be with children and how he loved children."

The Hatchers have always tried to make Troy's dreams come true because he is a "special child," said Clifton Hatcher, his father.

"What he wants we try to get it for him because he's something special," Hatcher said of his son who has had cerebral palsy since birth.

Cerebral palsy is a crippling disease resulting from any of several disorders of the central nervous system caused by brain damage, especially before or during birth. Its victims are usually severely retarded, unable to talk and confined to a wheelchair, said Dr. Charlie L. Kennedy, Troy's physician.

"But Mr. Tyson is not coming here because he (Troy) is sick," said Kennedy. "They didn't know about his illness. They're coming here because Mr. Tyson loves children."

Troy's dream came true when he saw Tyson and his promoter, Don King, making their way through the crowd of about 100 fans.

"Hey, how you doing Troy?,"
Tyson said taking pictures of the teen.

Troy's face lit up and he smiled as Tyson squatted beside his wheelchair. Tyson, who spent most of his youth in and out of reform schools, said his hard childhood has given him a special love for children.

"I had a rough childhood but it was something I just got accustomed to," said Tyson, who holds the heavyweight boxing titles of the World Boxing Association, World Boxing Council and International

Boxing Federation. "That may have been a blessing and the reason why I just love kids."

He smiled at Troy and leaned closer as the youth playfully punched Tyson in the nose.

"I'm very determined to go all over the country, but there are so many letters," Tyson continued. "I usually call most of them. But this time the timing was right. We had available time and I was determined to come see him. This worked out great because he caught us at the proper time when there wasn't much going on."

Tyson and King had planned to make a stop in Winston-Salem on March 30, after journeying to Indonesia. They hastily rescheduled the visit fearing that they wouldn't make it back to the states in time, said King.

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Tenants, landlords to learn specifics of housing laws

By TONYA V. SMITH Chronicle Staff Writer

Workshops that will educate city residents about their rights and responsibilities as tenants and landlords are only part of the activities on tap for Fair Housing Month.

Sponsored by the Human Relations Commission's New Horizons Fair Housing Committee, Fair Housing Month will officially begin at noon on April 5 with a presentation of proclamation and guest speakers at Winston-Square Park, Deltra Bonner, chair of the Education Committee, told New Horizons committee members during a meeting Tuesday.

In addition, community workshops will be held April 6,11,17 and 18. There also will be an essay contest and a poster contest for the city's youth. The schedule includes:

April 6, 7-9 p.m Community Workshop at the Forsyth County Main Library on "Fair Housing New Amendments: Adding Families with Children and Handicapped as Protected Classes.

 April 11, 7-9 p.m., "Landlords/Tenants Rights and Responsibilites"

•April 17, 7-9 p.m., repeat of

April 6
•April 18, 7-9 p.m., repeat of

April 11
•April 24-28, display of poster contest entries in the main library

 April 27, 7 p.m., Awards presented to essay and poster contest winners

•April 28, winners' posters to be displayed in the lobby of City Hall

Fair Housing Month is coming at a good-time because it will allow the commission to quickly disseminate information about two new federal laws protecting families with children and the handicapped, said Florence Corpening, committee chair.

The federal laws prevent residential dwellings from turning down potential residents because they have children, or because they don't have facilities for the handicapped, said Paul Shepard, an attorney and chair of New Horizon's Local Compliance subcommittee.

His committee has prepared a draft of the local version of the federal law for the review of the Human Relations Commission, the state Housing and Urban Development (HUD) department, and for eventual approval in the state legislature, Shepard said.

Although local entities have 30 months to comply with the new federal laws, Corpening said her committee refuses to wait until the 11th hour.

"We're really sort of pro-active in our response to its (the federal legislature) coming through," Corpening said. "We're really trying to move on with getting this in action in our community."

The committee also is pushing a survey that would determine the degree to which fair housing is alive and well in Winston-Salem. The committee submitted the proposal two years ago but HUD turned it down, saying Winston-Salem was too small of a sample area to study, Corpening said. HUD's approval would mean it would help pay for the almost \$25,000 study.

"HUD turned it down because

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photo by Sonja Covington

17-year-old Troy Hatcher and his mother, Mary, greet Tyson.