

# East Winston residents vent over construction along U.S. 52



Holden

## Holden's legacy remembered

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

Gov. Pat McCrory ordered all North Carolina state flags to be lowered to half-staff on all state facilities from sunrise to sunset on Wednesday, Aug. 27 to honor Col. Richard W. Holden Sr., who was the first African-American Commander of the NC State Highway Patrol. Col. Holden passed away on Aug. 22 at the age of 67.

"Col. Holden led the North Carolina State Highway Patrol with a great amount of dedication and excellence," Governor McCrory said. "We will all remember and cherish his legacy. He set a fine example for future commanders with his leadership. Ann and I will be praying for his family and friends during this difficult time."

Holden was one of the first black state troopers in North Carolina. He rose through the ranks during his 35-year career with the Highway Patrol, becoming commander in 1999. He retired in 2004.

A graduate of N.C. A&T, Holden is survived by his wife Sandra, daughter Shonda, son, Richard Jr. and eight sisters and brothers.

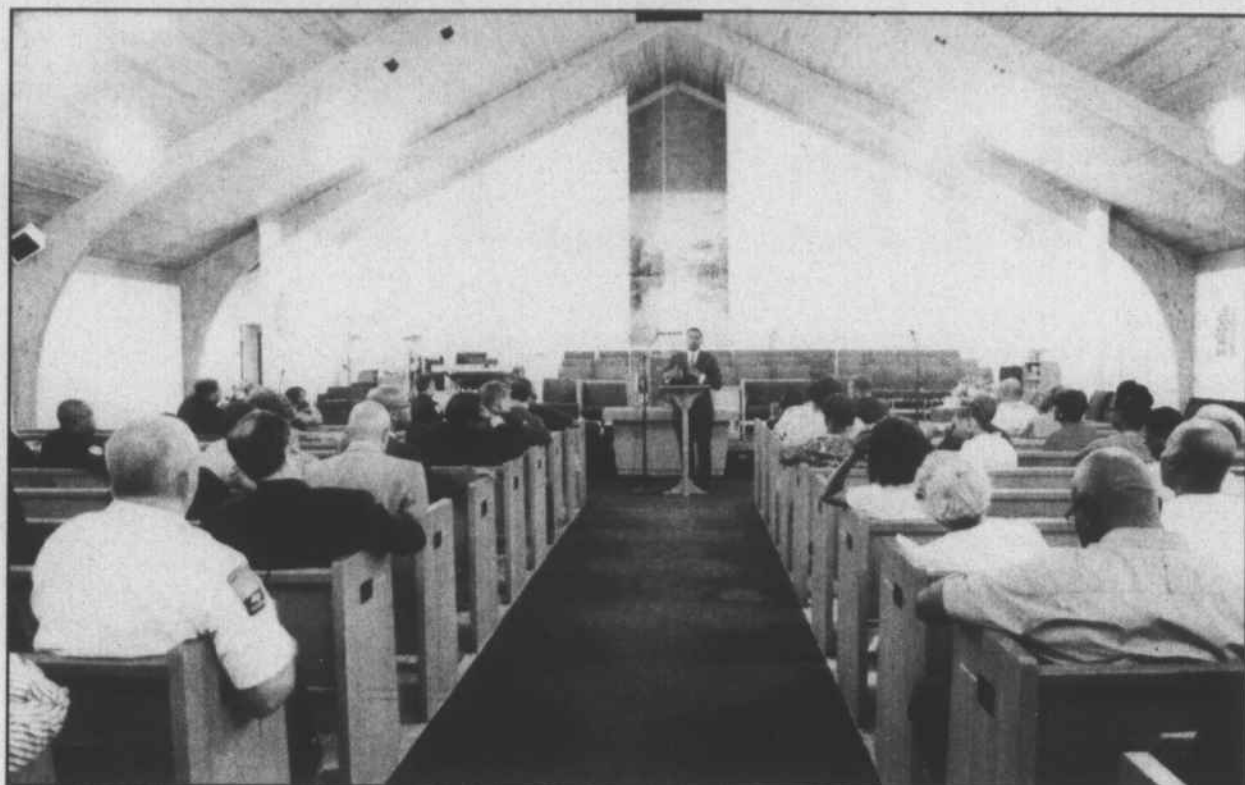
BY CHANEL DAVIS  
THE CHRONICLE

Traffic headaches caused by the \$68.9 million Salem Creek Connector project was a major topic of discussion at a community meeting called by East Ward City Council Member Derwin Montgomery. Dozens of residents came to Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church on the evening of Thursday, Aug. 28.

When it is completed, the Salem Creek Connector is supposed to make it easier for drivers to access U.S. 52 from Winston-Salem State University, Salem College and the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter. But construction of the connector – which is not slated to be completed until June 2016 – has vexed many.

"The contractors (Blythe Construction Inc. and Parsons Brinckerhoff Inc. of Charlotte) and DOT are well aware of how this project is affecting this community. We are working as hard as we can to get this project done," Pat Ivey, a division engineer with the NC Department of Transportation, told residents. "There are simply some things that have come up with the railroad and utilities that we are having difficulties working through."

The connector will be a 1.1-mile, four-lane road with a median from Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, south of Winston-Salem State University, to Rams Drive at the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter. The project also includes building 11 bridges over parts of Salem Creek and U.S. 52, constructing a new diverging diamond inter-



City Council Member Derwin Montgomery addresses the crowd.

Photos by Chanel Davis

change at U.S. 52, removing the Rams Drive and Vargrave Street interchanges and realigning side roads and intersections, including ones at Diggs Avenue, Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and Vargrave Street. A roundabout at Salem Avenue and City Yard Drive is also expected to be built.

Cassandra Lane is a member of Morning Star, which is just off Vargrave Street. She said congregants and visitors are having a much more difficult time getting to and from the church.

"What really concerned me was the access into the church now that it

is one-way in and one-way out. A lot of people utilize U.S. 52 to come to the church," Lane said. "The church body was trying to figure out if there was another way to bring people to the church. If people don't have options, they're not going to come. Without the various options of entry-ways, some of the visitors and members have declined (to attend)."

Rev. Kenneth Holly, operations director of Whole Man Ministries of North Carolina, said the altered traffic patterns are not good for business in the area, where Whole

Man owns property. Holly attended the meeting for some answers.

"The one-way traffic has taken the ability to access (the property) as much as we would want to away," Holly said. "We wanted to find out more about the process and what they are doing as far as straightening it out."

Police Chief Barry Rountree was on hand to talk public safety and crime statistics.

"We are down in some categories and up in some categories. As far as burglaries, we are down 3.3 percent; larcenies and armed robberies are down," Rountree said. "One area that we are mainly concerned about is homicide. We are up from last year around this time. We are working with the

community to combat that particular crime category."

In the wake of the killing of Mike Brown in Ferguson, Mo., attendees asked Rountree about the training local officers receive to deal with the city's racially-diverse population.

Rountree said that officers go through sensitivity and diversity training that covers dealing with people of different races, religious beliefs and sexual orientations.

"Our officers also have training with dealing with people who are resistant. We escalate the approach that we use depending on the actions of the person that we are dealing with. We want them to use the least amount of force to get the situation under control," he said.



## An Evening with —msnbc host and author— Melissa Harris-Perry

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Wait Chapel, Wake Forest University

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