

# Controversial Zoning Classification Approved

**BY BILL MCGOWAN**  
Sunset Beach Town Council set the sky as the literal limit for some developers Monday night by approving a controversial zoning classification for several mainland properties which carries no height or density restrictions.

Council agreed to rezone four parcels of land at the regular mon-

thly meeting, but it took the tie-breaking vote of Mayor Pro-Tem Ed Gore to override objections to two of the changes.

Each of the rezoning requests was voted upon individually, and while council became deadlocked on two requests, its members voted unanimously to approve two others.

On a motion by Councilman George

Foster and a second by Councilman Don Safrin, council voted 3 to 2 to approve a zoning change for a tract of land along N.C. 179, owned by David Stanaland and bordering the Calabash River, from MR-2 (mainland residential) to MB-1 (mainland business). The MB-1 classification will allow the construction of both commercial buildings

and multi-family housing units on the same land.

Foster and Safrin voted in favor of the measure, while fellow council members Katherine Hill and Mary Griffith voted in opposition. Gore, sitting at the head of the table during the long absence of Mayor Frances Kanoy, voted to allow the reclassification, breaking the tie and

enacting the ordinance to rezone the tract.

The same vote was recorded on a request by Sea Trail Corp, Island Development Corp. and Oceanside Corp. to rezone 13.2 acres at Bonaparte's Landing from MR-2 to MB-1. Again, Gore voted in favor of the request to break the tie on council. The land will be used for both

multi-family housing and businesses.

Two other rezoning requests received unanimous council approval, in spite of the fact that one of them involved the MB-1 classification to which Hill and Griffith had voiced opposition.

One of the requests was filed by Mike Brazeal, the new owner of Lan-

(See PETITION, Page 2-A)

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## Orrock Appeal Delayed

The State Personnel Commission has delayed its consideration of an appeal filed by former Brunswick County Social Services Director Jamie Orrock, originally scheduled Tuesday, Feb. 5, until its next meeting on April 16.

A continuance was granted at the request of Mary Easley, new attorney for the Brunswick County Board of Social Services, indicated Joe Totten, a hearing officer with the Commission.

The board dismissed Orrock Nov. 30, 1983, after former departmental van driver Donna Hinson Rivenbark brought a claim of sexual harassment against him to the board.

Based on two days of testimony heard in August, Commission hearing officer Barbara Coward recommended in October that Orrock be reinstated with back benefits because the board had failed to show that he had sexually harassed a former DSS employee as charged. If her recommendation is upheld by the Commission, it will be advisory only, not binding in any way on the social services board.

In December County Attorney David Clegg notified the Commission, at the request of the social services board, of that board's intent to file objections to Ms. Coward's report. At the time the social services did not have an attorney of its own and Clegg served in that capacity.

Ms. Easley said the service agency (See ORROCK, Page 2-A)



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

### First Impressions

Three-year-old Jason Dall didn't know what to think recently as Crime Prevention Officer Nancy Simpson of the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department rolled his tiny fingers in ink and took both finger and handprints. Back in the hands of his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Dall of Southport, the prints could help trace Jason if he were to disappear. Jason was one of 27 youngsters from the Leland Branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to get fingerprinted during a tour last Wednesday afternoon.

## Greater Efficiency Basis For Reorganization Plan

**BY SUSAN USHER**

Reorganization of personnel and equipment from several departments into a new division of county government is expected to result in greater efficiency, Brunswick County Commissioners said Monday night.

Darry Somersett will manage the new construction and maintenance division, pooling personnel and equipment from at least five existing departments in an effort to both more efficiently in terms of time and money.

He previously directed the mosquito control program as well as supervising the maintenance garage. His new office will also handle bidding for construction projects and equipment.

After more than an hour of discussion Monday, commissioners delayed until their next meeting a decision on whether to restrict informal bids to items of \$2,500 or less and whether that limit should apply to all departments or just to the construction and equipment division. Commissioner Frankie Rabon said that while most questions relate to construction, he feels the policy should be consistent and apply to all departments.

In the interim, County Manager Billy Carter is to obtain "impact statements" from all department managers on what effect a stricter bidding procedure would have on their departments.

Based on Carter's estimate that direct and indirect costs of bidding

could run as much as \$700 to \$1,000 on some items, Commissioner Grace Beasley said she was concerned that formal bids would add too much to the cost of some items.

Presently formal bids are required only on items valued at \$10,000 or more, with "informal" bids used for all others. To get informal bids, managers call several vendors who are on a list of companies interested in bid participation.

The method has encountered problems, with commissioners Jim Poole, Herman Love and Chappell saying most of the complaints they hear come from among the county's numerous contractors.

"We've got to have something better than what we've got," said Chappell. "Before you know as well as I do that several people weren't asked, but only a few."

He said whatever system is adopted he wants to have records available showing what firms were contacted and when.

Somersett will report to County Manager Billy Carter under the reorganization.

Commissioners stressed that for the present the new division requires no immediate increases in employees, salaries or machinery, but indicated additions might be considered when developing the 1985-86 budget.

### Land Acquisition

After a two-hour meeting behind closed doors, commissioners instructed Planning Director John Harvey to begin making land acquisition

for the county water system.

The board had previously instructed Harvey to detail what effect the additional responsibility would have on his time and other responsibilities, Chappell said. In the past land acquisition has been handled by several county employees.

### Other Business

In other business, commissioners:

- Learned of two breaks in the county water line requiring emergency attention by County Engineer Dan Shields. On Saturday a failure developed in an eight-inch raw water transmission line at Beaver Dam Creek that has been in use 10 years, shutting down part of the original wellfield at the N.C. 211 plant until the break is found and repaired. A 600 mgp leak that developed Sunday at Saugean Creek was expected to be repaired by midnight Monday. Westward customers were temporarily without water, but were backed from another pumping station.

- Commissioner Rabon suggested a joint meeting be set up in February with the social services board to discuss problems within the agency.

- Members voted to advertise for bids for a roll-over truck and related equipment for the Lockwood Folly convenience station. They also reviewed technical specifications for the station, which County Engineer Dan Shields said must be approved by the state before construction bids can be advertised. Presently the county does not plan to place an advertisement (See PUBLIC, Page 2-A)

## Ocean Isle Will Consider Extending Moratorium On House-Moving

**BY SUSAN USHER**

Ocean Isle Beach Commissioners will consider Monday afternoon whether to extend a week-long moratorium on permits to move houses imposed earlier this week in a special joint session of two town boards.

The moratorium was imposed Monday morning by town commissioners meeting jointly with members of the planning and zoning board. The action came partly in response, Mayor LaDane Bullington said, to rumors circulating that certain unnamed parties have plans to relocate and "stockpile" several houses until they could be transported off the island across the highrise bridge now under construction.

To her understanding, the houses would be set on pilings, but not improved or attached to electrical power or septic tanks.

Commissioners said repeatedly they're not out to stop relocation of older homes, only to make sure the owners make an effort bring the appearance of the house up to neighborhood standards.

The moratorium isn't intended to block people with plans like Ken Kennedy's, a broker with Cooke Realty, commissioners told Kennedy.

He has bought a lot and plans to move onto it The Yali, a cottage located at the corner of Winnabow and First streets that was damaged in Hurricane Diana. Kennedy said he has allocated \$32,000 to "fix it up nice," but hasn't obtained a moving permit. Because of the extent of damage, he will bring the house up to current codes.

In defense of the proposed reloca-

tion he told the two boards, "I'm in real estate. I don't want anything ugly beside me. I have pride in ownership." Kennedy said he may eventually sell the house, but that his immediate plans are to use it for his residence.

Because of the cold, the joint meeting was moved from the uninsulated town hall across the causeway to Sloane Realty; Monday's 4 p.m. meeting may also be held there. Commissioners Virginia Gibson, Connor Cox, Marvin Stanley and Mayor LaDane Bullington crowded into Commissioner Debbie Fox's upstairs office along with planning board members Terry Barbee, Bill Bullington and Pat Hostetler, Town Clerk Alberta Tatum, Town Attorney Elva Jess, Building Inspector T.D. Roberson, two reporters and two citizens. Commissioner Betty Williamson was out with the flu.

Commissioners began studying the relocation of older homes and its regulation in December.

Monday's moratorium bought time for the two boards to search for ways to regulate appearance as well as safety and it put potential housemovers on notice.

"We don't want people investing with the idea of relocating and then find out they can't," observed Mayor LaDane Bullington. "Nor do we want to take the risk of people destroying what we have here."

"We might be misleading them if we don't take some action."

State statutes provide for relocated houses to meet state code, but Building Inspector T.D. Roberson said that's usually interpreted to mean the code in existence at the

time of construction. Towns can usually require houses be brought up to certain standards of safety, he said, adding, "but there's not much you can do for aesthetics."

In opening comments Monday, Mayor LaDane Bullington suggested that a failure to act quickly could result in a problem "in maintaining the quality of houses and development we have here at Ocean Isle."

A general concern among property owners for quality of development has resulted in continuous high property values, she said. "I call it pride of ownership. That's what is keeping this beach looking good."

"It's definitely in the best interests of this town to preserve the quality of housing we have here," she continued.

Relocation of older houses inland to make way for new construction on more expensive oceanfront property has increased in popularity at both Holden Beach and Ocean Isle Beach as property values have risen.

Concurrently, property owners along the canals at both beaches have complained that some of the houses already moved or scheduled to be moved could lower property values since they are not on a par with others in the neighborhood.

Roberson said people buy or build on the island assuming what will be next door will be of similar quality and newness; he suggested they have a right to expect this.

Planning Board Chairman Barbee voiced a related concern, saying, "We want to assure the persons who buy \$50,000 lots and build \$100,000 homes on them that a crackerbox that can't withstand 75 mph winds won't be moved in between them."

As of September 11, Holden Beach commissioners imposed a moratorium prohibiting the moving of houses on the island and have not yet worked out means for regulating

the moves. The moratorium does not prohibit moving houses off the island. One homeowner did just that last month, using a barge.

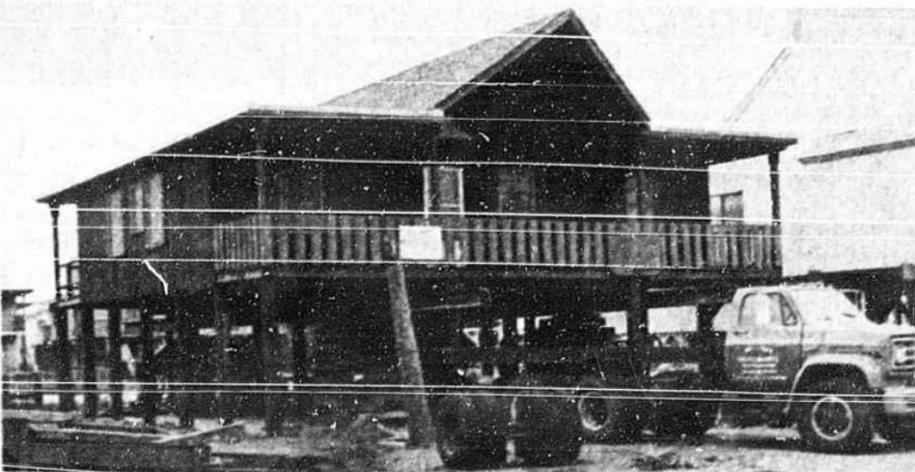
Because of the expense involved, "if relocated houses had to be brought up to the current (building) code," Roberson indicated, "that would almost preclude moving." Houses that require repairs equal to more than 50 percent of their value must be brought up to current codes anyway, he added.

The mayor noted it is generally considered cheaper to move a home off the island than to bring it up to standard because the owners are more likely to get a better return on their investment. That will be a lot easier to do when the new bridge is completed. Meanwhile, members of neither board liked the idea of houses being "stockpiled" somewhere on the island.

However, both commissioners and planning board members agreed that whatever regulations they adopted will not prevent the relocation of a house in an emergency, as when erosion threatens.

On Monday commissioners may consider a general ordinance regulating the actual moving of a home, including permit, route planning and posting of a bond to cover damages.

The board expects to take more time to investigate and develop regulations concerning aesthetics. These would have to be part of the zoning ordinance, Ms. Jess said, and would require a public hearing. Such regulations could be adopted no sooner than two or three months in the future.



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

MOVING THIS HOUSE on Richmond Street to a fourth row lot on the east end of Ocean Isle will allow its owners to build a new house without sacrificing a

desirable site. An increasingly popular option at local beaches, relocation poses new concerns for adjoining property owners and town boards.