

Lot Coverage Changes Favored At Holden Beach Public Hearing

BY EDDIE SWEAT

Proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance regulating lot coverage at Holden Beach were favored by most who spoke at a public hearing Monday night.

The hearing preceded the regular monthly meeting of the town commission.

The amendments, recommended by the town's planning and zoning board, are designed to tighten the 30 percent lot coverage provisions now in effect.

They call for increasing the side setback from five to seven feet, allowing construction on 30 percent of the dry lot area, and restricting the number of bedrooms to 40 percent of the heated area of the house.

The amendments define various rooms in a house in such a way to make it difficult to build a "den" in theory and convert it after construction to a bedroom.

The commission is expected to give its approval to the changes at its next meeting since the ordinance was drafted along the lines requested by commissioners.

Alan Holden, chairman of the planning board, said his group worked at

length to draft the plan, but he advised commissioners to take state regulations into consideration before passing the local ordinance.

Holden said a meeting of the board of governors of CAMA in Raleigh recently discussed restricting lot coverage to as little as 10 percent.

"If state regulations are passed in whole or in part they might render our 30 percent ineffective," he noted.

The vice chairman of planning and zoning, Jim Fournier, urged immediate passage of the ordinance to "show the state we are capable of governing ourselves."

Noting that 13 citizens at a public hearing held in February by the planning and zoning board were "violently opposed" to the changes, Fournier asked for a head count vote of the audience at Monday's public hearing.

The vote, however, was not taken.

Harry Yoder, a member of the planning board, reminded commissioners that the ordinance changes passed that board by a 3-2 margin.

An alternate planning board member, Don Pringle, described the ordinance as the best possible thing the board can come up with and urged commissioners to "Do what's right."

The only outspoken opposition came from S. D. Venable, who arrived after the meeting had started. After Mayor Kenner Amos told him the nature of the discussion, Venable said he would like lot coverage increased to 35 percent so he can build a porch on his house.

Former commissioner John Clarke, Sid Swarts, and Margaret Vasco spoke in favor of the changes.

Swarts said he thinks the new regulations may unnecessarily penalize some who do not live within 100 feet of the canal, waterway or marsh. He said he would "go along the way it is," however, and said he wants it passed.

Say No To Fireworks

Commissioners turned down a request from Seaside Resort Campground to have a controlled, professional fireworks display on the 4th of July.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hal Stanley and seconded by Commissioner Jim Griffin to allow the display, with the permission and supervision of the police department.

The motion and second were withdrawn after Doug Ledgett, town attorney, said the ordinance prohibiting fireworks on the island provided for no exceptions.

Bulkhead Discussed

After lengthy and technical discussion of the construction of a bulkhead at Surfside Pavilion and Ferry Road and Holden St., commissioners agreed to release \$8,800 budgeted for the project when it is completed, back-filled and the old bulkhead is removed.

The bulkhead is a joint project of Holden and the town. It covers Holden property and public rights of ways of the town.

Holden, who said the cost of the bulkheading will exceed \$50,000, said the town's appropriation "is the most expensive \$8,800 I ever had."

According to Holden, the town will have 182 feet of wall on its property while only 138 feet of wall will be on pavilion property.

Town administrator Bob Buck expressed some concern that construction of the bulkhead did not appear to him to be what the commission had agreed to and had been reluctant to release the appropriation without the commission's consent.

Commissioner Lyn Holden, Alan

Holden's brother, asked to be excused from voting on the matter, as did Commissioner Jim Griffin.

Property Rezoned

Commissioners voted to rezone property at 117 and 119 Ocean Boulevard West from R-1 residential to C-1 commercial, but held off setting a public hearing on two other requests for rezoning in the same area at the recommendation of the planning and zoning board.

The planning board recommends all property now zoned R-1 between Rothschild St. and the east right-of-way line of Cole St. extended to the strand be rezoned to C-1.

Commissioner Stanley wants the rezoning to include Quentin St., to put an end to "this piece-meal rezoning."

Other Business

In other business, commissioners: •Unanimously passed an ordinance providing a time limit to make improvements to structures after they are moved, a fine of \$50 per day for violations, and posting of a performance bond for the value of the work to be done, or \$25,000, whichever is greater.

The moratorium on moving houses remains in effect, however, commissioners noted.

•Authorized purchase of a radio for the strand patrol vehicle to be used this season and hiring of part-time person to drive it from now until a driver is needed full time.

•Passed a preliminary assessment resolution for paving of Sunshine Lane at an estimated cost of \$10,600, 60 percent of which will come from assessing property owners on the street.

Passed a resolution asking the

Department of Transportation to open the Holden Beach Bridge only on the hour from 6 a.m. until 8 p.m. "This old bridge has only so many openings left," Mayor Amos remarked.

Reports Heard

Seven permits were issued for new house construction valued at \$444,534.99, according to Dwight Carroll, building inspector. This compares with 15 permits issued in March of last year.

But building is still brisk since at the end of the month there were 67 houses and two condo units actively under construction.

During March 21 repair and bulkhead permits for construction valued at \$52,525, and 20 CAMA permits were issued.

Building permit fees collected amounted to \$1,208.

Public Safety Commissioner Gloria Barrett said police officers answered 64 service calls, conducted seven investigations, issued six citations and 19 warnings, and drove 7,117 miles.

She said of 606 houses checked by officers, 17 were unlocked. There were two break-ins during the month and she urged citizens to report anything suspicious.

Chairs For Audience Take A Back Seat

Commissioner Gloria Barrett tried to get to the bottom of the seating situation at Monday night's meeting of the Holden Beach town board.

But her motion for the town to spend \$890 on new padded chairs died for lack of a second.

Finance Commissioner Hal Stanley didn't like the idea because, he said, the town needs garbage cans more and the wooden chairs in the commission room are in fine shape.

What put the commissioners in the hot seat was an offer from the Holden Beach Property Owners Association to spend up to \$500 for new, more comfortable chairs for the commission room.

The room now has 23 folding type straight chairs for the audience at commission meetings, as well as for those who attend any number of other gatherings at the town hall, including meetings of the property owners' association.

The wooden seats are uncomfortable, some members of the audience said, but Commissioner Stanley said he would be glad to change his thickly-padded armchair at the commission table with someone in the audience.

No one took him up on the offer, however.

The proposal, presented by Mayor Kenner Amos, was for the town to buy 32 chairs with padded seats and

curved padded backrests and use the donation from the HBPOA to buy 18 more. Total cost would have been \$1,380, of which the town would pay \$890.

The 50 new chairs would provide regular seating in the room and the present 24 wooden chairs would be used only for overflow crowds. Large audiences now have to borrow chairs from the chapel across the street.

Commissioner Stanley said he was surprised at the request for matching money from the commission when the board had simply agreed in February to accept the donation of chairs from the HBPOA.

HBPOA secretary Daphne Fournier told the board the property owners did not make the request for the town to spend any of its own money on the project.

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You who solves all problems who lights all roads so that I can obtain my goals. You who give me the divine gift, to forgive and forget all evils against me and that in all instances of my life you are with me. I want in this short prayer to thank you for all things and to confirm once again that I never want to be separated from you in spite of all material illusions. I wish to be with you in eternal glory. Thank you for your mercy toward me and mine. Say for 3 consecutive days. After 3 days the favor requested will be granted even if it appears difficult. This prayer must be published immediately after favor is granted without mentioning the favor. Only your initials should appear at the bottom. Thank you Holy Spirit.

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