

'Spot-Zoning' Request Denied By Planning Board

BY TERRY POPE
Two vacant oceanfront lots at Holden Beach will remain residential rather than commercial, if town commissioners follow the advice of the Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board.

Planning board members voted unanimously Monday night to recommend that the town not rezone the two lots just west of Rothschild Street where the town hall is located. To change the lots from residential to commercial would create "spot-zoning" along the beach strand, Town Administrator Bob Buck said, since the lots are not already contiguous to a commercial zone.

The rezoning request was made at last Tuesday's meeting of the planning board in the form of a letter from Hazel L. and Jimmie T. Monroe. The two lots lie in the R.H. Holden Subdivision near 137 Ocean Blvd. West.

"I have been contacted by numerous people on the beach," said board member Harry Yoder. "Even though the lots are very close to a commercial area, it might as well be four miles down the beach as far as what we would open up."

What the board would "open up" by approving the rezoning request was a "Pandora's box," Yoder said, inviting others along the beach strand to ask for "spot-zoning."

Town commissioners will have the final vote on the request since the planning and zoning board only votes on recommendations to the town council.

"What bothers me is I am so close to where traffic will be coming off of

the new bridge," Ms. Monroe told the board Monday night. "Eighty percent of the commercial area will be east of the bridge. Since there is nothing on the lot now, I think it would be practical for commercial use."

Ms. Monroe said too many decisions are being made by the town based on the old traffic patterns on the island and the 1980 land use plan. However, Planning Board Vice-Chairman Jim Buffaloe stated the 1980 land use plan was prepared five years ago under the assumption that Holden Beach would be getting a new bridge.

In the 1980 plan, the two lots under discussion were listed for residential use, Buffaloe said.

In their letter to the board, the Monroes stated that by changing the area to commercial, a "very unique village could develop that would benefit all property owners of Holden Beach. In this way, spot-zoning could be eliminated."

"Before we start increasing the size of the commercial zone," added board member Don Pringle, "I'd like to see better use of what we've already got."

To grant the exception in this case would open the door to other requests, Pringle added.

"I for one am in sympathy with you," added member Bill Lovelace. "I don't feel we should come off the bridge and have to turn back to get to our commercial district."

However, Lovelace also stated he did not want to see spot-zoning started on the beach, and voted against the rezoning request.



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER
PAUL DENNISON of Henry von Oesen & Associates and Ocean Isle Beach Mayor LaDane Bullington concentrated on the numbers Thursday as bids were let for the town's \$5 million sewer system.

Sewer Bids In, OIB Reviews Its Options

BY SUSAN USHER

Bids on a proposed \$5 million sanitary sewerage system for the town of Ocean Isle Beach came in "in the ball park" last Thursday afternoon, but the apparent low bidders won't be announced until April 30.

Contractors and their suppliers filled the Ocean Isle Beach Town Hall last Thursday afternoon for the letting of the bids and left an hour later uncertain of where the companies stood in competition.

Tom Hawkins of Henry von Oesen & Associates opened the bids as engineer Paul Dennison, Mayor LaDane Bullington, Utilities Superintendent Odell Williamson and Commissioners Betty Williamson and Debbie Fox joined the bidders in jotting down numbers.

Sixteen firms bid on one or more portions of the system, with T.A. Loving of Goldsboro the only company bidding on the entire project.

The firms had been invited to bid on a basic design, with numerous cost-saving options built in since the town doesn't know yet how much money will be available for the project.

Only the base bid figures were announced at the letting.

Excluding alternates and deducts, the lowest base bids came in under \$4.5 million.

"I had hoped for \$4 million, said Utilities Superintendent Odell Williamson. "But we're in the ball park. These figures are going to come down (when the deducts are included)."

Mayor LaDane Bullington said she expected to announce the apparent low bidders at an April 30 budget workshop. The town has 60 days in which to award contracts.

Ocean Isle had delayed completion of a feasibility study on the sewer system until bids were let, giving itself as much flexibility as possible in determining the final design and cost. The estimated cost of the entire project is about \$5 million.

With "no grant money per se" currently available to the project, Ocean Isle will finance the sewer system through a variety of sources, in-

cluding tap-on fees, front footage assessments, impact fees, user charges, accommodations tax revenues, ABC store profits and the town's capital reserve fund.

State and federal grant money as yet have not been secured, though the town is awaiting word on the status of a Federal Economic Development Administration grant of about \$1,000 it hopes to receive. Some commitment of federal funds is necessary if the town is to obtain up to \$400,566 available to it in state Clean Water Bond monies.

"It will take a pretty thorough analysis to see where we stand," said Paul Dennison, representing the engineering firm. "We had some flexibility built in. We won't know who the real low bidders are until after we've looked at the deducts."

"I have to emphasize the numbers can change and we expect them to change downward," he added.

Of the base bids announced at the letting, R.H. Moore Co. Inc. of Murrell's Inlet, S.C., submitted the lowest of 10 bids on sewers, force mains and precast concrete pump stations, \$2,635,548.50, while Don Moorhead Construction Co. of Anderson, S.C. submitted the high bid of \$5.8 million.

Moore's was the lowest bid for the sewers and force mains only at \$1,827,748.50, while Dellinger, Inc. of Monroe's \$692,500 was the low bid on the pump stations only.

Don Moorhead Construction Co. of Anderson submitted the highest combined bid of \$5.8 million.

Only three firms bid on construction of the wastewater treatment facility and main sewer lift station. Crowder Construction Co. of Charlotte submitted the lowest of three combined bids at \$1.6 million. T.A. Loving bid \$1,695,500 and CFW Construction Co. Inc. of Fayetteville, Tenn., bid the high, \$1,751,200.

Crowder's bid of \$1,270,100 was the lowest on the treatment facility itself, while Loving's \$186,000 was the lowest for the main sewer lift station.

Cape Fear Electric of Wilmington submitted the lowest of five electrical bids at \$205,900, followed by T.A. Loving Co.'s bid of \$208,500.

334 Can Vote On Beer, Wine

There's been no rush by would-be voters to register in advance of a May 14 beer and wine referendum in Shallotte, reports the Brunswick County Board of Elections.

Registration books for the election closed April 15 with 334 voters eligible to vote, she said Monday.

Ms. Britt said there had been no noticeable increase in registrations and no related activity that could be attributed to interest in the forthcoming referendum. A final review of registrations will be made during the week before the election.

In the election called by the town board of aldermen Shallotte voters will decide whether to allow diners to have a glass of wine or beer with their meal.

Specifically, they will determine three issues:

- Whether to allow the sale of beer or other malt beverages for consumption on the premises of Class A restaurants, hotels and motels;
- Whether to allow the sale of unfortified wines for on-premises consumption in eating places; and
- Whether to allow the sale of unfortified wines by licensed retail stores for off-premises consumption.

Unfortified wines had been sold at the Shallotte ABC Store, a practice that ended last year by state order. Fortified wines and wines produced in North Carolina are available at the ABC store.

Typically, turnout for the town's

ABC votes has been much lower than for municipal elections.

In the town's last alcoholic beverage control election, on Jan. 6, 1976, 68 of the town's 300-plus voters cast ballots, defeating beer and wine issues 2 to 1. Twenty-nine voted for the on-premises and off-premises sale of wine, while 46 voted against. Twenty-one voted for on-premises and off-premises sale of beer and 47 against. However, off-premises sales of beer and malt beverages continued because they had been approved in an earlier election.

In contrast to the ABC referendum turnout, 243 Shallotte voters cast ballots in the 1983 municipal election and 287 in the 1981 election.

Still Time To Sign Up For Pageant

A last call has been issued for contestants for the title of N.C. Fourth of July Queen. The deadline has been extended to Friday, April 26.

Connie Ledgett, chairman, says that there are four slots left for contestants, young ladies between the ages of 17-20 who are residents of Brunswick County.

The 1985 pageant will be held June 15 at Hatch Auditorium, Ft. Caswell. For more information call Cheryl Miller at UCB Southport or Connie Ledgett Southport-Oak Island Chamber of Commerce.

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