

# Holden Boards To Study Town's Sign Ordinance

BY TERRY POPE

While the county is concerned with a growing number of billboards, Holden Beach is struggling with signs.

Town officials admit some town ordinances haven't been strictly enforced. Among those is the town's sign ordinance.

"Signs and parking are the two major problems on the island," said Planning and Zoning Board Chairman Alan Holden.

"The problem is inconsistency with enforcement," Holden said. "We need to get a group with some teeth that will go out with some enforcement and correct the problem."

At a commissioners' meeting last week, Mayor John Tandy said he has received a number of complaints from residents about the placement of real estate and directional signs within street rights-of-way on the island.

"If you're coming from the bridge and turn right," Tandy said, "you'll see a row of real estate signs at houses for rent or sale that have some people upset. I would like to have a look at this thing, too."

Tandy appointed Commissioners Graham King and Hal Stanley to work with planning and zoning board

members to review the town ordinances "that are not being enforced" or are outmoded. "Some ordinances, he said, are outdated and no longer apply to the town and need to be removed from the books."

Tandy noted how inconsistency in enforcing the town's sign ordinance may be unfair to some businesses on the island. One business has been allowed to keep an off-premise sign in place throughout the summer.

The off-premise, or remote, sign for Independent Seafood at Holden Beach is along Ocean Boulevard East. The board noted it is apparently an unintentional violation of the town's sign ordinance, but owner Ray Kirby said his sign is not in violation of town ordinances.

The sign directs motorists on Ocean Boulevard East to the seafood business on Ferry Road.

"It's a cute little sign," Tandy said. "It's not hurting anyone."

However, the town's sign ordinance prohibits remote signs in R-1 (residential districts) for businesses on the island. Restrictions are also placed on remote signs in commercial districts.

According to the ordinance, a remote sign indicating "the location



REMOTE SIGNS IN residential neighborhoods has some Holden Beach residents upset. The owner of this directional sign said it falls under a grandfather clause and is not in violation of the town's ordinance. A com-

mittee of planning and zoning board members and commissioners have agreed to review the town's sign ordinance.

of a church, park, scenic, historic, or other place of general interest" may be placed off-premises in R-1 districts provided it is no more than four square feet and that the top is not more than three feet above the ground.

The ordinance does not list a business as an acceptable use for remote signs in residential areas.

A remote advertising sign, the or-

dinence states, is one "directing attention to a business, service, commodity, entertainment, or profession not conducted or offered where such sign is located."

Kirby said his new remote sign is not in violation of the sign ordinance since it is covered under a grandfather clause. However, he said someone has taken his sign down twice and both times he has replaced it.

Kirby said his sign uses the original posts which were placed there over 30 years ago by a former seafood business at the same location, before the town was incorporated and adopted a sign ordinance. The sign is the same size as the previous one, he added.

"When I assumed his business, I assumed his sign," Kirby said. "If I had changed it to a clothing store, it

would have been different."

Kirby said businesses should be allowed to place remote signs on the island if the stores cannot be seen from the main streets.

"Why promote tourism when once you get the people down here they don't have any directions to follow and don't know where to go," Kirby said.

He added that there are a number of businesses on the island that exceed the 32-foot limit in on-premise advertising signs.

"What's the point in making sign ordinances if you're going to change them every time someone gets upset," Kirby said.

The town's sign ordinance also addresses the placement of real estate signs advertising rental cottages or tourist homes. It states that only one sign can be placed on the property provided it is not more than four square feet in area and "shall be attached to the building or set back at least ten feet from any property line."

Holden used an example to show how inconsistency in enforcing the sign ordinance can be unfair to businesses on the island. If the laws are not enforced properly, he said, then "someone could place a lighted, neon sign in the right-of-way, four foot high" and not get cited by the town while another business could be cited for placing an "unlighted, one-sided, three-foot" sign on the island.

In May, the Holden Beach Property Owners Association adopted a resolution asking the town to "enforce the laws that are on the books," including the town's speed limits, the placement of real estate signs and the ordinance requiring house numbers be posted on all homes.

## Holden Beach Sets Hurricane Program

Al Hinn, meteorologist for the National Weather Service in Wilmington, will be the guest speaker at a hurricane awareness program Tuesday, July 28, at 7 p.m., at the Holden Beach Town Hall.

Town Administrator Bob Buck said Hinn will present an hour-long program for residents who would like to learn more about hurricane preparedness.

Last Wednesday, July 15, members of the Holden Beach "evacuation team" met to review updated hurricane evacuation procedures for the island.

If a hurricane threatens the coast, Holden Beach will be divided into six sections to insure a more orderly evacuation.

Team leaders have been chosen for each section to help warn residents in

case of an emergency evacuation. Leaders and their helpers would go door-to-door in the neighborhoods to advise residents to leave the island and where to find shelter.

The 1987 team leaders and their assigned areas on the island are:

- Armand Vasco—from Quinton Street to east end;
- Allen Dameron—from High Point Street to Quinton Street;
- Bob Rohde—from Greensboro Street to High Point Street;
- Martin Feldt—from Dream Harbor Beach Access to Greensboro Street;
- Jim Collins—from Sailfish Drive East to Dream Harbor Access; and
- Horace Barrett and Sid Swarts—from west end to Sailfish Drive.

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### CAN CROSSED EYES BE BEAUTIFUL?

Among the ancient Mayans, it was a sign of beauty to be cross-eyed. Mayan mothers would hang beads in front of their children's eyes to make them permanently cross-eyed and consequently "more beautiful." Needless to say, tastes have changed significantly since then. Modern parents are concerned about correcting this condition, not inflicting it.

What does it mean to be "cross-eyed?" To begin with, the technical term is strabismus, and it applies to all abnormalities in coordination of the movements of the two eyes, not only those which are deviated inward (convergent).

It can assume many forms: one eye turned up or down, in or out, a combination of the two. It may be constant or occasional. But even if your child only exhibits this symptom rarely, it is unwise to ignore it because it might lead to amblyopia (lazy eye) where early detection is crucial for successful treatment.

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