

Calabash Chooses Land Use Engineer

BY DOUG RUTTER

Calabash Council Monday hired Talbert, Cox & Associates of Wilmington to develop the town's first land use plan.

Council members made the decision following a presentation from engineering representative Ken Weeden and a brief executive session.

Mayor Doug Simmons said the council chose the firm because of Weeden's previous and present planning work at Sunset Beach and his interest in the job as revealed through his attendance and presentations at two separate town meetings.

Calabash chose from six engineering firms interested in the project, which will be funded by a \$10,000 state planning grant.

According to Town Clerk Janet Thomas, the decision needs to be certified by Coastal Area Management Association's Land Use Department before any contract can be signed.

Contract Discussed
Council also continued a discussion

with Little River Trash Service manager Bill Jordan concerning a contract extension.

Council members authorized town attorney Mike Ramos to draw up a five-year contract under which payment could be renegotiated after trash service increased by 25 residential and six commercial pickups.

Currently, Jordan has 49 residential stops and 36 commercial and is paid approximately \$2,000 per month.

Funds Transferred

In other business Monday, council authorized Simmons and Thomas to sign any documents necessary to transfer \$30,698 from a passbook savings account to a money market account.

Thomas had received a letter from the Department of State Treasurer recommending the transfer in order for the town to benefit from higher interest rates while still maintaining a high degree of liquidity.

U.S. Judge To Rule Soon On Resort Plaza Motion

BY SUSAN USHER

A federal district judge is expected to rule within the week on whether to allow a motion to dismiss the seizure of Resort Plaza shopping center in Shallotte by U.S. marshals on Sept. 3.

In a document filed Thursday in federal court in Wilmington, U.S. Magistrate Wallace Dixon recommended to U.S. District Judge James C. Fox that the court deny the motion filed by Elizabeth Willis.

Judge Fox has 10 days from the filing in which to decide on the motion. As of Tuesday afternoon, no decision had been filed, according to the U.S. District Clerk of Court's office.

If the motion is allowed, and Mrs. Willis prevails in civil court, the government would return the business to her.

The \$1.5 million center on U.S. 17 was previously owned by her son, Alvin Bryan Willis III of Shallotte. He was indicted in June by a special Brunswick County Grand Jury on charges of trafficking and conspiracy to traffic in cocaine.

Shortly before his indictment, on May 21, a deed dated Jan. 15 transferring ownership of the plaza from Willis to his mother, Elizabeth L. Willis, was recorded in the Brunswick County Register of Deeds office.

Investigators have said Mrs. Willis is not considered party to any of the illegal activity her son has been accused of and was not aware of the transfer.

The center was seized under a civil "forfeiture in rem" procedure that

allows the federal government to "arrest" property obtained through or used to facilitate illegal drug trade.

In his recommendation, Magistrate Dixon wrote that the motion "was filed in clear violation of the Local Rules of Practice and Procedure." Those rules, he added, say that all motions other than ones made during a trial or hearing must be accompanied when filed with a memorandum of law. Such a memorandum would detail provisions of the law that support the motion.

Without it, wrote Dixon, the court

has "not the slightest ground upon which to grant defendant's motion."

While the original complaint for forfeiture in rem was served on Mrs. Willis as the owner of record, Dixon said the complaint will also be served on her son, A.B. Willis III, and her husband, A.B. Willis II, to give each an opportunity to file whatever claims they may have on the property. Mrs. Willis' motion to dismiss the seizure was based on the fact that those parties had not been served with the complaint.

In addition to Mrs. Willis, North Carolina National Bank (NCNB) has also filed a claim.

Ceremony Marks Start Of Beach Road Project

Ground was broken Friday to initiate the widening of N.C. 133, Beach Road, between N.C. 211 and the Oak Island Bridge.

State Secretary of Transportation James Harrington and his deputy, Tommy Harrelson, both with Brunswick County ties, participated in the 5:30 p.m. ceremony.

It was held at the Moose Lodge, on the section of the highway to be widened.

First scheduled to be completed in 1987, the project is now expected to be finished by spring 1988. Construction, expected to begin this winter, will involve the addition of a center turn lane to the two-mile stretch of highway that provides the only access to the Oak Island beaches from the mainland. The project ranked near the top of the county's 1986 list of needed transportation improvements.

Harrington is mayor of Bald Head Island and Harrelson has business interests in Southport, where is previously owned and operated Harrelson's IGA.

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