

Holden Beach Asked To Withdraw Petition Against Septic Tank Laws

BY DOUG RUTTER

In light of rule changes now being proposed by the N.C. Division of Health Services, Holden Beach Commissioners have been asked to withdraw a petition they approved last week that seeks revisions in state septic tank laws.

The rule changes proposed by the state, which are presently in rough draft form, are expected to go to public hearings the first half of next year and could be adopted by the N.C. Health Services Commission in May.

Although the regulations could be changed or rejected by the staff or commission along the way, one staff member said this week the revisions would likely free up more local land

for development.

The Holden Beach petition approved Nov. 7 seeks a change in the state law that requires at least one foot of "naturally-occurring" soil above the water table in order for the site to be approved for a septic tank permit. It also seeks amendment to the rule that prohibits placement of a septic tank or its components under an impervious surface such as a driveway.

Holden Beach Commissioner Georgia Langley, who worked on the petition and has served as the town's link with the state concerning the sewage treatment problems on the island, said Monday she would make a recommendation on the petition during a special town meeting set for Monday, Nov. 28, at 10 a.m. In the

meantime, she said she would review the proposed rule changes and discuss them with Jay Houston, consulting engineer for the town's wastewater treatment needs study.

Chris Hoke, head of the legal office with Health Services, said Tuesday the division suggested withdrawal of the petition because rules proposed by the staff and supported by the public at hearings will be given more consideration than a town petition alone.

"We have proposed rules that address the problems in Brunswick County with the fill dirt," he said, noting that the rules would affect development throughout the state. "That's going to carry an awful lot of weight."

The division staff, he added, has

been working on the proposed rule changes for on-site sewage treatment for more than a year. He said the draft rules will be available for public review and comment after Dec. 1.

Although he would not provide any detailed information on the proposed rule changes, Hoke said, "I think it's quite possible this will enable more lots to be developed appropriately."

According to Commissioner Langley, the revised rules would allow more fill dirt to be added to lots to make them suitable for on-site sewage treatment. This, she added, would solve most of the problems on the canal lots at Holden Beach.

"This won't solve all of the problems on the island, but it will allow

workable solutions in many cases," she said.

Some property owners at Holden Beach, especially those who own lots in the island's three canal subdivisions, have had trouble over the past year obtaining septic tank permits. Last year the local health department changed its interpretation of state regulations concerning the placement of tanks in areas built up with fill dirt, saying that before the rules not been followed properly.

Hoke said once the draft rules are made public next month, the state will accept comments for one month before reviewing those comments and making any necessary revisions.

"We want the best rules possible so we want the largest amount of input

possible," said Hoke.

The state Division of Health Services will then begin the formal rule-making process by publishing those proposed rules in the N.C. Registry. Public hearings will follow, and the rules will eventually go before the Health Services Commission for action.

"Our aim is to have sewage systems for any person who owns a lot and wants to develop it," added Hoke. "Our goal is to find a system that will work on that lot. But our goal is also to make sure the system can function properly on that lot."

Any rule changes, he concluded, will have to be beneficial for land developers while still protecting the environment.

Lawmen Probe Two Dwelling Fires; Third Blaze Destroys Rabbit Farm

BY RAHN ADAMS

Local and state authorities Monday continued their investigations of two suspicious residential fires at Seaside and Calabash, while an accidental blaze last week in Ash destroyed a barn containing at least 1,500 rabbits.

No arrests had been reported as of Tuesday in either suspicious fire, both of which were under investigation by the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department and the SBI.

Besides the animals that were killed in the burned barn, no injuries were reported in any of the fires.

The first blaze occurred early Friday morning at a mobile home owned and occupied by Mary L. Trammell on Davis Drive in the Seaside community, according to Sheriff's Captain Phil Perry.

Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan said Sunset Beach volunteer firemen responded to the fire Friday around 5 a.m. No one was home at the time of the fire.

Firefighters were able to extinguish the blaze after only about a third of the dwelling was extensively damaged, Logan said. Fire damage, which was estimated at \$25,000 to \$30,000, was confined to the kitchen, where the fire started, and to the living room. However, the rest of the mobile home sustained heat and smoke damage.

Logan noted Monday that the blaze was "definitely a set fire," but he

said the exact cause of the fire had not been determined. Several suspects were under investigation by authorities, he added.

Both Logan and Sheriff's Detective Nancy Simpson said another mobile home owned by Trammell burned in the same location in a possible arson several years ago.

Another suspicious fire occurred Monday morning at an unoccupied house on N.C. 179 located between Eastside Calabash Restaurant and Callahan's Nautical Gifts in Calabash. According to Town Clerk Janet Thomas, owner of the house is Cuma Odell of Eden.

Although the fire's cause also was under investigation Monday, Logan said the blaze possibly was started by a vagrant, since it began in a utility room on the small wood-frame house's carport. No electrical service was connected to the utility room.

After the fire was spotted Monday around 3:45 a.m. by a Calabash volunteer fireman who was passing by on his way to work, Calabash and Sunset Beach firefighters answered the call and knocked down the blaze in about 30 minutes, but were on the scene until around 9:30 a.m., Logan said.

Estimated at \$30,000, fire damage was confined to the utility room, as well as to part of the kitchen and attic due to an LP gas line running into the kitchen from the carport area, he said.

In another fire, about 25

firefighters from four departments were called to Nelson's Pine Straw Feed and Nursery on Ash-Little River Road Friday at 12:10 p.m., according to Logan and Waccamaw VFD Chief Gregg Warren. The business is owned by David Nelson.

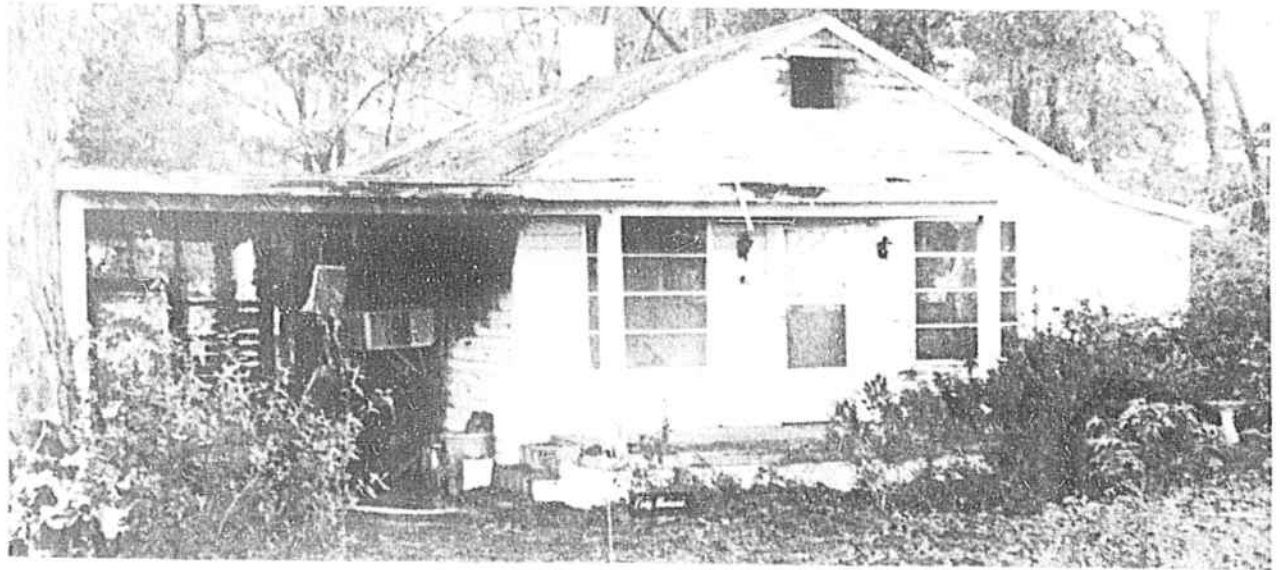
Both officials said the fire started while employees were burning peat bags behind the barn. Part of a burning bag apparently blew into the second story of the structure where hay and straw were being stored.

By the time firemen arrived, the 40-foot by 100-foot barn, which contained 1,500 to 2,500 rabbits, was fully involved in flames, Warren said. He added that Waccamaw VFD Assistant Chief Glenda Smith, who was the first firefighter on the scene, told him that as she arrived she saw flames coming out of both sides of the wood-frame and sheet metal structure.

Logan said personnel from Waccamaw, Sunset Beach, Calabash and Grissetown-Longwood VFDs were there for about 4½ hours. With the barn and animals already destroyed, the firemen's main task was to protect other nearby structures including hog pens and a mobile home, Warren said.

He said several compressed gas containers ruptured inside the barn during the fire, but no firemen or bystanders were hurt.

The fire resulted in from \$80,000 to \$100,000 in damage, Warren said. He added that Nelson raised the rabbits for sale to a processing plant in South Carolina.



DAMAGE WAS CONFINED to the utility room, car port, kitchen and attic in a suspicious fire Monday morning at this unoccupied house on N.C. 179 in Calabash. STAFF PHOTO BY RAHN ADAMS

Manufacturing Firm Eyes Facility In Leland Area

BY RAHN ADAMS

An unidentified company is involved in the final stages of buying a building in the Leland area to house a small manufacturing operation, according to a local industrial development official.

Brunswick County Resources Development Commission Executive Director Michael de Sherbinin said the pending purchase was one of four prospective industrial projects discussed at the RDC's monthly meeting Monday in Bolivia.

Although de Sherbinin would reveal few details about the company or where it plans to locate, he said the facility is located in the county's "industrial corridor" near Leland.

The building's current owner has agreed to a counter-offer made by the firm, de Sherbinin said. An environmental assessment of the building and grounds is being done before the sale is finalized.

He added that if the assessment is satisfactory, the sale should be com-

pleted by year's end. The company plans to start a small manufacturing operation in early 1988. It would employ up to 30 workers, de Sherbinin said.

In his director's report Monday, de Sherbinin also brought the RDC up to date on three other industrial projects that his office has been working on during the past month.

He said all three projects involve manufacturing firms that are considering locating in Brunswick County. He added that the projects involve a French company, a joint venture between a German company and an American company, and another domestic firm.

Also at Monday's meeting, the commission heard a presentation on desktop publishing from Glenda Kitchish, representing a local computer firm.

De Sherbinin said the commission took no action after reviewing three separate computer systems, but asked the RDC staff to study the matter

further and make a recommendation to the board at a later meeting.

If cost effective, the RDC would publish its own statistical abstract and other brochures including its guide to local tourist attractions, de Sherbinin said.

He noted that the abstract, which has grown from 20 pages to 50 pages over the past few years, could be simplified and shortened through the use of computer graphics instead of just raw statistics. The quarterly abstract is published in-house.

In other business, the RDC's 1987-88 audit was presented. De Sherbinin said the audit, which was completed last month by the local accounting firm of Brock, Berry and Padgett, shows that "every account was in order" and that the commission's funds balanced "to the penny."

De Sherbinin said the commission took no action after reviewing three separate computer systems, but asked the RDC staff to study the matter

Holden Beach Hires New Town Administrator

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mitting payback of the investment in less than three years.

In managing a growing town with a population of 16,000, his responsibilities have included overseeing six department heads and an assistant manager as well as preparing and presenting the annual budget.

Prior to assuming his position at Garner, Ulrich worked for the City of Winston-Salem for 16 months as deputy director for staff of the Model City Commission.

He also has four years experience as town manager at Kernersville, three years as administrative assistant to the city manager of Greensboro and one year in the Greensboro city planning department.

In addition to his work in municipal government, Ulrich served briefly as an analog computer programmer at the Institute for Atomic Energy in Kjeller, Norway, and as an engineer trainee with the Tennessee Valley

Authority in Chattanooga. He also spent five years in the U.S. Air Force, where he served as an analog computer programmer, a pilot and an electronic engineer.

Following his work in Norway, Ulrich earned a master's degree in public administration from Syracuse University, N.Y. In 1954, he had received a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering from N.C. State University.

The decision to hire Ulrich came about three weeks after the board voted to hire Les Roark as interim town administrator. Roark will serve by contract through the end of December, and Mayor Tandy said Roark will probably be available until Ulrich arrives the second week in January.

The search for a permanent administrator began in early September when Tom Birmingham resigned to take a position with the Brunswick County Planning Department.

Normal Temps, Rain Forecast

After experiencing warmer than normal temperatures and below average rainfall last week, the Shallotte area should see a return to seasonable weather conditions over the next several days.

According to Shallotte Point meteorologist Jackson Canady, temperatures through the weekend should range from the mid 40s at night into the mid 60s during the day. The area should receive about one-half inch of rain.

During the period of Nov. 8 through 14, the average daily temperature in the Shallotte area was 60 degrees, which Canady said was four degrees above normal.

The average daily high temperature was 73 degrees, and the average daily low temperature was 47 degrees.

The maximum high temperature during the period was 77 degrees, occurring on Nov. 10. The minimum low temperature was 37 degrees, occurring on Nov. 8.

Canady measured no precipitation during the seven-day period.

GOP
Appreciation Party

The Republican Party and the candidates would like to express our grateful appreciation to the volunteers who helped make this election a huge success.

You are invited to an Appreciation Party on Saturday, Nov. 19, at the Shrine Club building in Bolivia at 7:30 p.m. Semi-formal attire.

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Wine Vote Invalid?

(Continued From Page 1-A)

"Once I found that out, we just dropped it," Fowler said.

Piggly Wiggly Manager Gerald Long, who supported earlier efforts to make unfortified wine sales legal here, expressed more frustration than disappointment. "I've been through so much with it that I'm not disappointed any more."

Just In Case

If the election turns out to be valid, Hester said his office will have to receive certified referendum results from the county and state boards of elections before any unfortified wines can be sold in town stores.

Once the election is confirmed, he said store managers must then apply for an unfortified wine permit which

costs \$100. The store will be investigated by the N.C. Alcohol Law Enforcement Division out of Wilmington before a permit is issued.

Hester said it commonly takes between two and three weeks for all of this to happen once the referendum is confirmed. As of Tuesday his office had not been notified of the results of the referendum.

Fall Fashion and Make-Up Show

at **Betty's Waterfront Restaurant** Holden Beach

7 PM, Thurs., Nov. 17

Fashions by **Jo's of Holden Beach**

Make-Up/Make Overs by **Pam Harrelson of Myrtle Beach**

Menu supper available prior to show

EVERYONE IS INVITED

Prizes to be given away

For more information call **MARTHA STANLEY**

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