

STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

VARNAMTOWN OFFICIALS received this proposed site plan for the town park Monday. It includes a picnic shelter, playground area, restrooms and regulation softball field.

## Varnamtown Hires Contractor To Prepare Boat Ramp Parking Lot

BY DOUG RUTTER

Varnamtown officials have hired a local contractor to clear, fill and place marl on town property off Fisherman Road so it can be used as a boat ramp parking lot.

Aldermen voted unanimously Monday night to hire Major White of Ash after he submitted the low bid of \$8,600. Two other area contractors also bid on the project.

Alderman Will Mumford said the project will require placement about 650 cubic yards of fill material, including 450 yards of dirt and 200 yards of marl on top.

About half of the money for the work will come from the town's \$10,233 community projects fund. The town also has approximately \$4,300 remaining from a \$25,000 state grant awarded last year for the ramp on Lockwood Folly River.

In a related matter, aldermen voted Monday to enter into an informal "land use agreement" with Terrence and Sue Galloway, who own land next to the parking lot property.

Town officials and the Galloways plan to exchange some land in order

to improve the layout of the parking lot.

Mumford said Monday the town will need to install about 90 feet of fence between the new parking lot the Galloways' home. He estimated the cost between \$250 and \$350.

### Land Use Plan

Aldermen moved closer to approving the town's first land use plan Monday when they reviewed several minor changes made by planning consultant Howard Capps of Wilmington.

Capps will briefly summarize the plan for the public at the town board's next meeting on Sept. 12. Afterwards, the document will be submitted to the state for its review and recommendations.

Capps said a formal public hearing on the plan will be held late this year or early next year before it is finalized.

### Town Park

Also Monday, Capps submitted a proposed site plan for the town park to the board of aldermen.

The plan for the three-acre property off Sabbath Home Road in-

cludes 29 parking spaces, a playground area, picnic shelter, restrooms and regulation softball field with bleachers.

Once the town makes the final payment on the property in 1995, officials indicated they will apply for a state grant to develop the park.

Capps said the state has \$1 million available this year for parks and could have as much as \$15 million next year.

### Dangerous Intersection

Town officials talked briefly Monday about the need to improve safety at the intersection of Sabbath Home and Stone Chimney roads.

Alderman Ada McDonald said people traveling Stone Chimney Road often run the stop sign at the intersection, and many people exceed the 45 mph speed limit on Stone Chimney.

Aldermen said they plan to check with N.C. Department of Transportation officials about lowering the speed limit to 35 mph. They also said they would like to see law enforcement officers patrol the area more often.

## Varnamtown Or Varnumtown?

BY DOUG RUTTER

The longest-running controversy in Varnamtown reared its not-so-ugly head Monday night. How should the name of the town be spelled?

Some residents say it's fine just the way it is, while others think it should be changed to Varnumtown.

One letter—an A or a U between the N and the M—may not seem like much to outsiders, but it means a great deal to some of the natives.

After all, the community is named after the original settlers, the Varnams or the Varnums. Roland D. Varnam or Roland D. Varnum to be exact.

Town board member Ada McDonald raised the humorous yet sticky issue at Monday night's board meeting. She said some residents want to officially change the town's name to Varnumtown.

McDonald cited several historical facts in making an argument to change the spelling. She discussed documents dating back to 1635 that spell the name Varnum, and talked about a man named Carl Varnum who reportedly served in George Washington's army.

"Everything that's been shown to me has suggested the Varnum spelling is U-M," McDonald said.

Mayor Pro Tem Ennis Swain served on the committee that helped incorporate Varnamtown in 1988. That same committee also settled on the spelling.

Swain said the incorporation committee was told an old family Bible of the original Roland D. Varnam used the A-M spelling.

"I didn't do the research," Swain explained. "They said the old family Bible was A-M and I didn't go no further."

Alderman John David Dawson, who was also in on the incorporation effort from the start, said Monday he didn't remember anything about a family Bible.

"We decided to pick the first letter in the alphabet if I remember right," he said.

Swain and Dawson both said they don't want to change the spelling now. All of the town maps spell it Varnamtown, although some of the town street signs spell it Varnumtown.

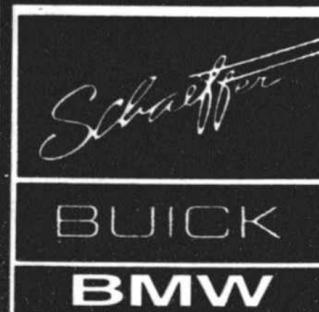
"If you're a Varnam you're a Varnum, whether it's A-M or U-M," Mayor Judy Galloway said.

Indeed, the spelling of the name seems to be a matter of personal preference for many Varnams and Varnums in Varnamtown.

O'Neal Varnam spells his name with an A and has a brother who spells his name with a U. "I got four children and two of them's U and two of them's A," Varnam said.

In Atlantic Telephone Membership Corp.'s June 1994 phone book, there are 35 listings for Varnam and 17 listings for Varnum.

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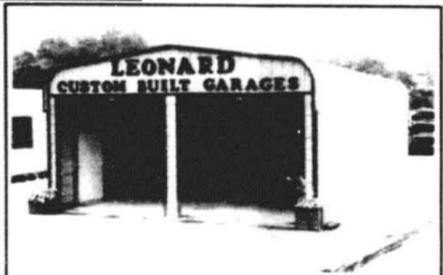
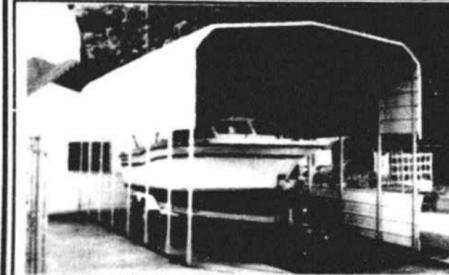
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