

Shopping Center Site Approved

Town Council Okays One Rezoning Request; Nixes A Second

By JACK GROVE

An Edenton property owner got half a loaf in her bid to have portions of two parcels of land rezoned for business use during a town council meeting Tuesday night. Both sites for which rezoning was requested are owned by Judy Earnhardt Adams and consist of about 20 acres each.

Council denied the request to rezone the property located at the southwest corner of the highway intersection of U.S. 17 Bypass and N.C. 32 from residential to highway commercial. Edenton United Methodist Church is next to the acreage.

After town attorney Chris Bean told the council that it could proceed with a decision despite an error in the landowner's initial request, Mrs. Adams was given a

brief opportunity to express her wish for council's support. Councilman Willis Privott also submitted for the record a 43 page petition favoring the request.

Councilman Herbert Hollowell made a motion to deny the rezoning with Councilman Steve Hampton seconding. Hampton observed, "I have a problem with highway commercial," pointing out the strip development in Elizabeth City. Councilman E.N. (Pete) Manning added, "I share those thoughts."

The rezoning was defeated on a show of hands with Councilwoman Marina Crummey and Mayor John Dowd not voting. (Dowd had turned the gavel over to Mayor Pro Tem Willis Privott due to a stated conflict of interest. He said that his real estate company had

business with developer Bob Thomas who has an already approved shopping center and motel site on the west side of U.S. 17 Bypass at the N.C. 32 intersection.)

Following the meeting, Mrs. Adams said that she expected to submit a revised rezoning request to the town for the property adjacent to the church.

Mrs. Adam's half a loaf came when council approved the rezoning of 20 acres across Virginia Road from the first parcel, and which lies behind McDonald's and the Golden Corral. The rezoning changes the designation of that acreage from residential to CS (shopping center).

After a motion to approve by Hampton, and seconded by Mrs.

Crummey, a general discussion among council members took place. Councilman Harless reminded the board of two petitions urging disapproval presented at the hearing on February 10. "After last night, I have received other petitions in support. Due to that, I have to change my feelings and I think I have to support Mrs. Adams' request."

Harless told of a recent visit to a neighborhood flanking a shopping center at Zebulon while on a trip to Raleigh. In talking to two of the residents, he said that they had no objections to the center's proximity and in fact found it "convenient." While one felt that her property value had not decreased, the other felt that his property's value had increased.

Hampton reminded the council that he had asked for the public's input to individual council members after the Feb. 10 period for public response at the hearing was officially closed. "The public input (since then) has been great. I hope we make the best decision for the whole town."

Manning drew smiles from the others with the wry statement, "To be honest, if I'd known it would be a controversial issue every month, I'm not sure I would have wanted to be on the council."

Naming some of those controversial issues, such as the defunct waterfront inn proposal, Mrs. Crummey said, "We do appreciate hearing from the people."

On the vote, Councilman Privott's was the only no, with

Mayor Dowd again abstaining.

In other business, the council:

- Approved the purchase of two Chevrolet Caprice vehicles on state contract for \$10,401.05 each for use as police cruisers;

- Approved the purchase of another Caprice at \$10,380.15 to replace the fire chief's car;

- Awarded a bid for a diagnostic testing machine for the town garage to Sun Electric Corp. in the amount of \$18,624; and

- Approved a grant agreement with the N.C. Dept. of Transportation for a \$15,500 grant to be used to upgrade airfield lighting at the Edenton Municipal Airport.

No informal public comment period was held as the council went into executive session to discuss applicants for the vacant town manager position.

The Public Parade

Out of Deep Freeze

By the time this is in print, the town council may already have resolved the rezoning project on Virginia Road at the intersection of US 17 for better or for worse.

We merely want to say that, if we were a member of the town council, we would favor taking whatever action is necessary to remove these two large tracts of inside property from the economic deep freeze.

Insofar as the tract lying north of Virginia Road is concerned, we feel the ice was broken when Golden Corral and McDonald's were permitted to locate there; and we can see no reasonable objection to permitting the development of a large shopping center to the rear of them.

Now, consider the property on the south side of Virginia Road. It is true that whatever goes in there will have a church and a hospital as neighbors and this would limit somewhat the appropriateness of a wide range of uses. But the presence of the church and the hospital should not be permitted so to restrict usage as to devalue the property to the point that it becomes a tax burden.

We would vote to upgrade this property so as to protect it against such things as warehouses and wayside stands, etc. which as we understand it, are now permissible. But we would grant the owner such zoning as would allow the construction of medical office buildings, health clinics, and if properly located, motels, restaurants and other similar structures. Under such an arrangement, the town council would remain in control of the direction this development took.

Run of Bad Newsprint

We want to apologize to our readers for the mottled appearance of the Chowan Herald during the past two or three issues. We found it difficult to read

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Committee Appointments Made

Following his reelection to an unprecedented fourth term as Speaker of the House in the state General Assembly, Liston B. Ramsey of Marshall announced committee appointments and chairmanships during the week of



Rep. Vernon James

Feb. 9. Rep. Vernon James of the First District from Pasquotank was appointed as chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, vice-chairman of the public Utilities Committee and vice-chairman of the Constitutional Amendments Committee.

He was also appointed to serve on the following committees: Appropriations Base Budget on Natural and Economic Resources, Appropriations Expansion Budget Committee on Natural and Economic Resources; Economic Growth, Marine Fisheries, Natural and Economic Resources, Small Business and Transportation.

In commenting on his appointments, Representative James stated: "I am real pleased with all my committee assignments. I will also be working on other bills dealing with financing of school

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Relocation Proposal Draws Praise, Criticism From Community

By JEANETTE WHITE

The possibility of moving the visitor's center from the waterfront Barker House to the Ziegler House near the post office is contested by those who say the move is not a good one.

Proponents of the move say it would preserve the 1782 Barker

House and bring extra operating funds from the state. Those against the move say it would negate maximum use of one of the town's best features - the waterfront.

Linda Eure, site manager at the Barker House, says the move would bring additional funds to

the town through special legislation. The Ziegler House was purchased in 1980 by the Edenton Historical Commission for resale to the state in 1981.

The Barker House serves as a welcome center and state and commission offices share space in the house.

Ms. Eure said, "The view is beautiful, that's indisputable. But our audio-visual room will not hold a busload of people and the restrooms are on the second floor. We have no access for the handicapped. The wear and tear on the building is excessive. We have a valuable historic resource that

can't be replaced."

She added that since the Ziegler House is adjacent to the Iredell House, the parking lot would serve both houses and an entrance could be added to the rear of the new site.

Estimates for the refurbishing are \$200,000. Efforts to get state funding have been underway since 1981 through either the regular budget process or by the governor's budget through the district level. No funds were allocated in the governor's budget for renovation this year, so Senator Marc Basnight of Manteo has agreed to introduce a special bill this session of the General Assembly.

Since the property is state-owned, the state would pick up bills for operating expenses if the move is made. At present, the state pays a share of salaries at the Barker House, but not expenses.

Historic Edenton has five full-time employees (four paid by the state) and 13 part-time employees, whose salaries are shared by local and state funds.

If the Barker House is closed as a visitor center, it would be added as part of the town's tour. Acting as the center, the house had 26,431 visitors in 1986 and 23,594 in 1985.

George A. Byrum, chairman of the finance committee for the historic commission, says that without in-depth research, there is no way to ascertain the amount of state funds the move would generate.

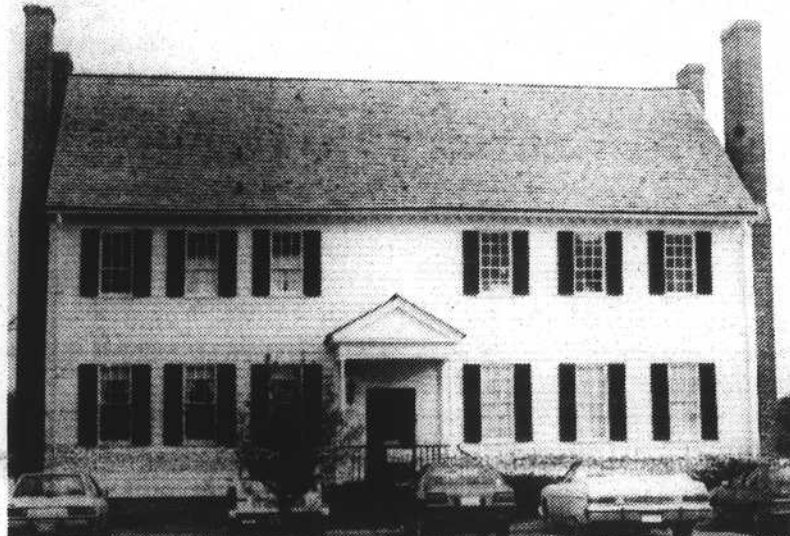
He feels the difference would be somewhere between \$25,000 and \$30,000 annually, but says he does not like to guess amounts because it may not be a true figure.

If the move is made, it would take two years to secure the funds and renovate the Ziegler House.

Those who oppose the move say it should not all be decided on figures.

Miss Elizabeth Moore, local

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THE BARKER HOUSE—Visitors to Edenton are steered toward the Barker House for information on the town and area. The waterfront setting affords good surroundings for browsing or waiting.



THE 1897 ZIEGLER HOUSE—This will be the new location of the visitor center if those who favor the move follow through on proposals.

Local Opposition To Animal Research Lab Continues

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Members of the Edenton-Chowan SPCA were among those attending a Gates County meeting Saturday concerning a proposed animal research lab there. The following article reflects the SPCA's concerns on the issue.)

By MARY NEFEDOV

Tom Currin of the N.C. Network for Animals presented information on animals in research at a meeting Feb. 21 at the Gates County Community Center.

The meeting drew a crowd of about fifty, including county commissioners from Gates and Currituck and members of animal welfare groups from Chowan, Pasquotank, Currituck and Camden in North Carolina and from the Norfolk area.

Currin focused attention on the

group that has purchased land south of Corapeake describing them as a "Class B Registered Research Dealer" under the federal classification contained in the Federal Animal Welfare Act. This act is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

A Class B Dealer is authorized to perform research on animals and to sell animals to other laboratories for the same purpose. The Corapeake group formerly operated in Suffolk, Virginia.

According to reports obtained from the Department of Agriculture under the Freedom of Information Act, the Suffolk operation used 65-80 dogs and 55-65 cats per year in 1984 and 1985 for research performed on their premises and during this same two year period sold more than 2000 dogs. Dogs sold for research are usually priced at about \$150 each.

Class B Dealers are not involved in the breeding of animals for

research. They can obtain them by purchase. Purchase may be from pounds and shelters. This is a business sanctioned by federal law.

If a person has reason to believe that his or her pet has been taken to a given lab, only an authorized law enforcement officer can gain access to the lab and search for the described animal.

If the animal is already in use

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McClenney, 20, Killed In Traffic Accident

A young Bertie County man was fatally injured in a traffic accident early Sunday morning on N.C. 45 between Colerain and Merry Hill.

Carl Preston McClenney, 20, Merry Hill, was killed just before 1 a.m. when his truck ran off the right side of the road and overturned about 11 miles south of Colerain.

McClenney, a native of Chowan County, was an employee of John Groff Construction Company and the son of Thomas Preston McClenney of Edenton and Barbara McClenney Miller of Montgomery, Ala.

The victim was not wearing a seat belt when the accident occurred.

In other accidents in the area, highway patrolmen were kept busy when last week's storm caused vehicles to bang into each other, ditches and bridges covered with ice.

One accident on Chowan River Bridge Wednesday left the driver uninjured after his tractor-trailer broke through the concrete guard rail and came to rest with its wheels hanging off the bridge.

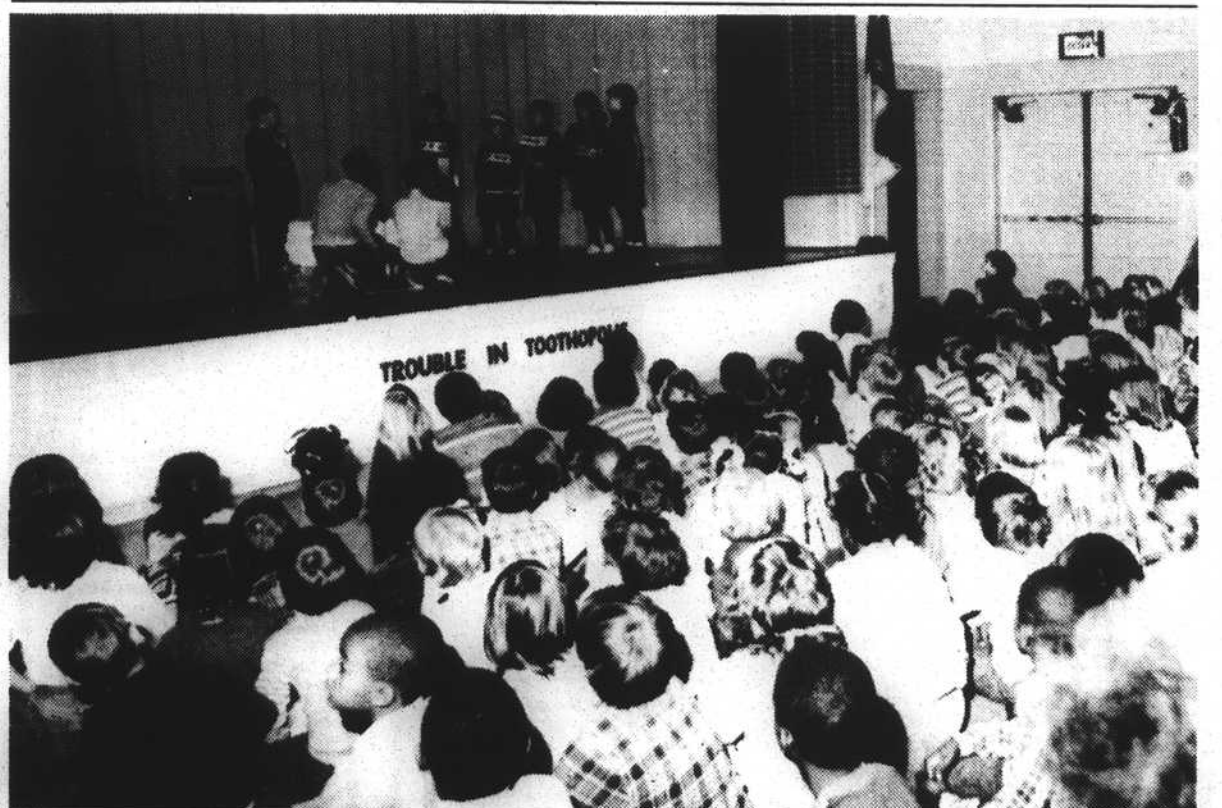
Willie Bradley Lassiter, 25, Sunbury, was driving a 1978 White truck along the bridge at 4:55 a.m.

when the truck skidded on ice and wheels on one side of the truck went over the railing and slid along the top of the barrier.

The truck, owned by Otis G.

Williams of Sunbury, received \$1,800 damage and \$5,000 damage was reported to the bridge railing. No charges were filed.

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FEBRUARY IS DENTAL MONTH—and students in Ms. Dorothy Bunch's fourth grade at White Oak School presented a play, Trouble in Toothopolis, Friday about good hygiene. Station DDS-TV newsmen told students what was good and bad about tooth care. (Staff photo by Jeanette White.)