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Expansion of historic district is considered

Low-income families may feel the pinch as requirements for upkeep tighten

BY REBECCA BUNCH
The Chowan Herald

The Town of Edenton is considering a proposal that would allow the addition of several hundred homes and businesses to those currently contained within the National Register Historic District.

According to a presentation made at Monday night's Town Council committee meeting, Michelle A. Michael of Fayetteville, NC, project consultant, said that buildings within the proposed boundaries, which would encompass about 200 to 300 additional homes, must be 50 years old or older to qualify for the designation. Tax credits would be available to owners of eligible properties.

Michael noted that the areas under consideration would include neighborhoods including such buildings as John A. Holmes High School, the old Armory, and the Boy Scout Hut. The western boundary of the proposed plan would extend to Filberts Creek. Vine Oak and Beaver Hill cemeteries would be included too.

Michael said the areas in question would have to be researched and that a first draft of the proposed nomination should be ready by mid-March. She said the entire process would take about 12 to 18 months for completion.

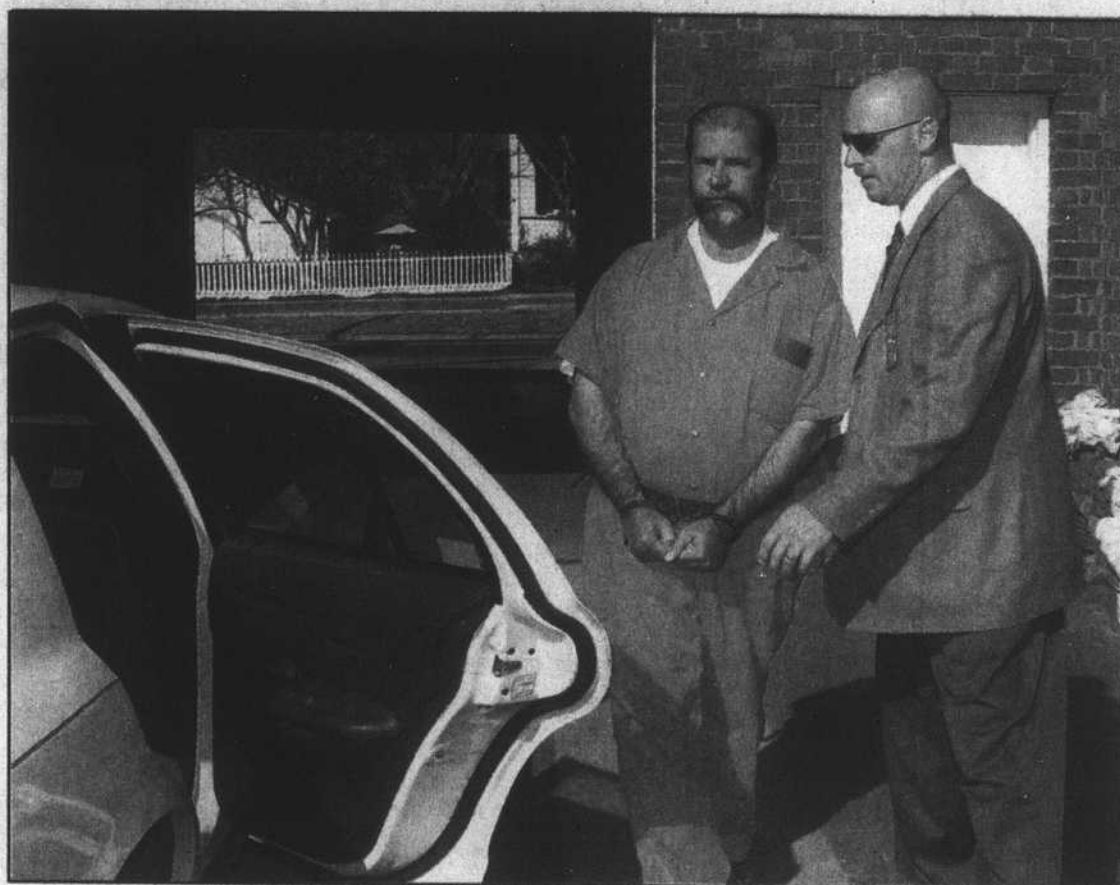
The areas being consideration would not become a part of the local historic district, Michael said.

Councilman Jerry Parks expressed concern about the ability of some low-income property owners that would be in the proposed district to meet necessary standards. He pointed out that they will already be facing higher property taxes next year.

Detailed information about the proposal, and drawings of the area in question, will be published in next week's *Chowan Herald*.

Suspect faces justice in the 2004 stabbing death of Pam Virzi

Moore pleads guilty



Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

William Moore is shackled as he is escorted by Investigator Dwayne Goodwin into a transport to carry him back to the North Carolina State Prison in Raleigh. Moore pleaded guilty in the presence of Judge J. Richard Parker in Chowan County Superior Court on Monday.

BY SEAN JACKSON
The Chowan Herald

The Perquimans County man charged with the brutal daylight slaying of his ex-girlfriend in Edenton in August 2004 pleaded guilty to first-degree murder Monday.

William Joseph "Bill" Moore, 47, entered his plea in Chowan County Administrative Court before Judge J. Richard Parker. Dressed in an orange prison jumpsuit, Moore appeared calm as Parker re-read the plea in open court.

"I am," Moore said when Parker asked him if he was guilty of fatally stabbing Pamela Joye Virzi in front of her Twiddy Avenue home.

Moore faces a maximum sentence of death, and a mandatory minimum penalty of life in prison without parole. No sentencing date was set Monday. Assistant District Attorney Michael Johnson told *The Chowan Herald*. But a judge won't decide Moore's sentencing fate.

"A jury still has to make that determination," Johnson said of whether or not Moore will receive the death penalty, or life in prison, as punishment for the murder.

Virzi, 47, was stabbed to death in front of her home on Aug. 17, 2004. She had been mowing her

grass when Moore, of Winfall, attacked her. Virzi reportedly pleaded to Moore for him to stop stabbing her. He had appeared in court that morning and was found guilty of violating a domestic violence order taken out against him by Virzi.

After the murder, Moore fled to former site of Albemarle Boats on West Queen Street, where he was captured by authorities. He has been confined at Central Prison in Raleigh while awaiting trial.

He had been released from prison in 2002 after serving 12 years of a 20-year sentence for rape and kidnapping.

Virzi was the second of two domestic homicides that rocked Chowan County and Edenton in the summer of 2004. Cornelius Leary is awaiting extradition from New York state to face a first-degree murder charge. Leary, currently incarcerated in New York on weapons charges, has been charged with the murder of his wife, Anita Leary, who was found dead in her Chowan home on Aug. 11 2004.

An Edenton man charged with first-degree murder, Carl Milton Ober III, 20, did not appear in court Monday. Ober is charged with killing his grandmother, 64-year-old Joyce Smith Lee, in January 2005. Ober had his case continued.



Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

ECU Chancellor Steven Ballard (left) and Doug Byrd, Board of Visitors chairman (right), sport smiles as Edenton Mayor Roland Vaughan (standing) welcomes them to the community.

ECU Chancellor shares vision for school, region

Proposed school would serve to ease shortage of dental practices throughout eastern North Carolina

BY SEAN JACKSON
The Chowan Herald

East Carolina University Chancellor Steven Ballard predicted last week that ECU's Board of Trustees would seek to launch a dental school at the Greenville university.

Ballard, speaking to ECU's Board of Visitors in Edenton, said the dental school would well serve rural Eastern North Carolina.

"A dental school is the right thing for us," Ballard said during his address to the nearly 30 Board of Visitors members meeting in the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse on Feb. 22.

"And the time is right to do it," he added.

On Friday, Feb. 24, the school's Board of Trustees formally agreed to seek the dental school. Ballard noted during his stop in Edenton — the Board of Visitors' first-ever trip here — that North Carolina ranks 47th nationally in dentist-per-population ratio, and that this region is having a dental health crisis that a dental school could cure.

"We're the only school," Ballard said, "that can deal with the rural health crisis in rural areas."

The proposed dental school was just one of the priorities Ballard listed during the four-hour meeting in Edenton. He also said efforts need to be made to get lawmakers to approve reimbursements to ECU's Brody School of Medicine.

See BALLARD On Page A3

• Community
Garden Gurus
On Page C-1

INSIDE

Calendar C2
Church C6,7
Classifieds D1-4
Editorials A8
Obituaries C4
Society C3
Sports B1-4

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Warning signs can't be ignored

BY REBECCA BUNCH
The Chowan Herald

If you're been thinking that five dollars isn't much to pay for the privilege of being able to hold your downtown parking space for longer than the allotted two hours, well, enjoy it while you can.

Town officials, concerned that the small fine isn't serving as enough of a deterrent to

those hogging parking spaces in the business district, are considering a plan to double the fee to \$10 per offense.

"People just laugh about having to pay the five dollars," said Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton. "They don't take it seriously at all."

And, if you've been ignoring those attractive signs advising that left turns that allow motorists to swing across in the

middle of the street in downtown Edenton to grab a desirable parking space on the other side are illegal, well, the town has a plan to get your attention there too. They are looking at raising the fine for that offense from the current \$5 to a much stiffer penalty of \$25 per offense.

The Town Council will consider the proposed increase in fines at its March meeting.



Sean Jackson/The Chowan Herald

Since motorists have continued to ignore recently posted signs in the downtown business district warning that swinging across the middle of the street to grab a parking space on the other side is illegal, town officials are considering imposing a \$25 fine on offenders to get their attention.

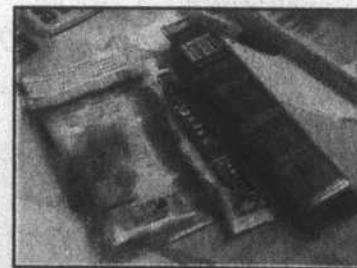
Mom is charged with bringing pot to prisoner

Relatives facing felony charges after supplying drugs to inmate

BY EARLINE WHITE
The Chowan Herald

A seemingly innocent-looking tube of Colgate toothpaste left for an inmate at the Chowan County Detention Center on February 5 held more than just a tartar control whitening formula; it was filled with marijuana.

The discovery came shortly after jailers received the item on behalf of inmate Robert Lee Hamilton, who is currently serving time for larceny of a motor vehicle and possession of stolen goods. Following a thorough search of the personal effects brought in by his mother, Joyce Dianne Hamilton, the tube was split open to reveal two small bags of



Contributed

A local inmate's mom and brother are facing felony charges after they allegedly hid two small bags of marijuana inside a tube of toothpaste delivered to him at the Chowan Detention Center.

marijuana inside.

Joyce Dianne Hamilton delivered the contraband along with other personal items following the Sunday visitation, law enforcement officials said. Hamilton's brother, Christopher Adam Griswold, allegedly supplied his mother with the drugs for this transaction.

Both Joyce Dianne Hamilton and Christopher

See CHARGED On Page A2