

## Sandy Point plans beached for now

Copeland expects permit hold to be temporary

BY SEAN JACKSON  
*The Chowan Herald*

The Sandy Point project is on hold while its developer grapples with environmental problems at the waterfront site.

Steven J. Levitas, the attorney for Sam Young and The Fund for Sandy Point, sent a recent letter to a state official asking for a permit for the large subdivision be put on hold. The recent discovery of protected aquatic plants near the shores of the Albemarle

Sound caused the state Division of Coastal Management to express concerns about dredging plans for the project.

"We expect to have these issues resolved in the near future," Levitas wrote in his Aug. 9 letter to DCM permit official Doug Huggett.

Levitas said his client would notify Huggett when he is ready to have the permit clock begin ticking again.

Young told *The Chowan Herald* last week he would not be seeking a hold on the permit application.

"I can't get into the details of what Steve Levitas is doing for me," Young said.

Chowan County Manager Cliff Copeland said the hold should be temporary. He said

he expects the application to go back on active status — and be approved — next week.

"It was a technical thing," Copeland said. "That was not a substantive move."

Young agreed. "That's procedural stuff," he said.

The 930-acre project includes hundreds of homes and some businesses just south of Edenton.

Copeland and Young both said the project has been put on hold due to the fact that state and federal agencies reviewing the application have deadlines set to expire soon.

Young said he initially had expected to have his permits in hand last month and



*"The regulators apparently can't make an exception, even if they wanted to."*

Developer Sam Young

wanted to break ground in November.

"Everybody anticipated that," he said.

But in mid-July at least three types of protected plants were found along the shores of the Albemarle Sound. Young said his project — which encompasses 8,400 feet of shoreline — is impacted by just 200 feet of the plant bloom.

State law prohibits the dis-

turbance of the plants, which have bloomed heavily this year, state officials have said.

"It's everywhere," Young said.

Meanwhile, Sandy Point is on a holding pattern.

"The regulators apparently can't make an exception," Young added, "even if they wanted to."

Young said Tuesday that the delay has cost him time

and money.

Copeland also said the county has spent "hardly any" money assisting with the project.

"That's been mostly the developer, obviously," the county manager said.

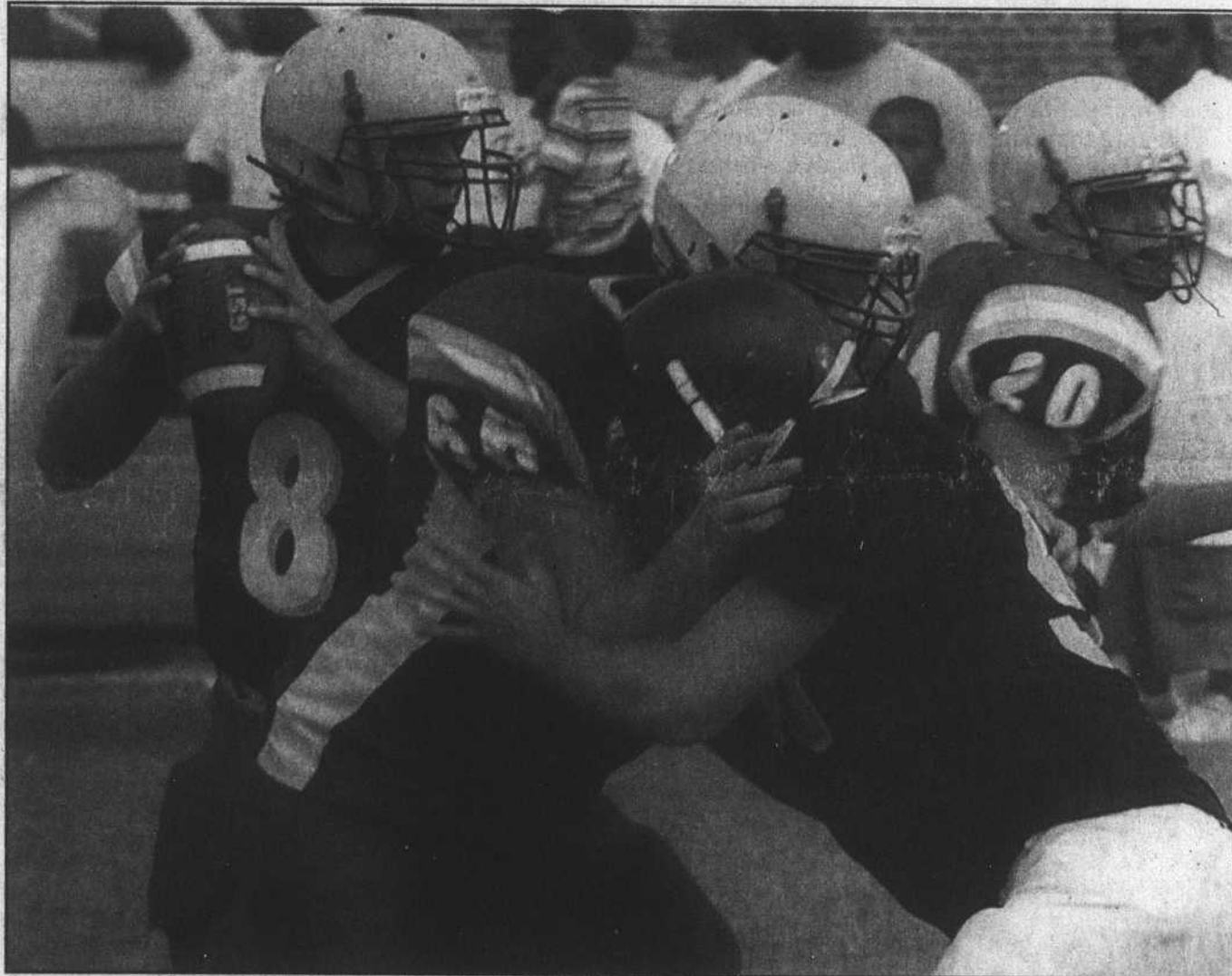
In addition, Copeland said county staff has not spent much time on the project.

"I've probably been the only staff member that's been involved," Copeland added.

Young said he hopes state officials will plow through the history of the plants in the Albemarle Sound.

"This summer there's an extra growth throughout the entire Albemarle Sound," he said. "The question is why?"

### Aces take aim at stellar season



Jordan Eure/*The Chowan Herald*

Edenton quarterback Joseph Westbrook (No. 8) drops back to pass during a scrimmage jamboree while Aces teammates Perry Owens (No. 60) and Scott Daniel (No. 20) join in the action. See pages B2 and B3 of this edition for full rosters and game schedules for the Aces' varsity and junior varsity football teams.

## Councilors grant permit for Farm Fresh

BY SEAN JACKSON  
*The Chowan Herald*

Top town officials approved the arrival of a Farm Fresh supermarket to Edenton last week, paving the way for the development of a large-scale shopping center.

Tom Retnauer, of Retnauer Design Associates, said the supermarket should be open by next April. He said Farm Fresh can build a store in five months.

Council unanimously approved a permit for the proposed Edenton Commons Shopping Center on Aug. 8, following a hearing lasting nearly two hours. Councilman Sambo Dixon was absent from the meeting.

Town planner Elizabeth Bryant said the project has met all the standards required by the town's Unified Development Ordinance.

"We feel like it's a wonderful opportunity to blend the new

with the old," Retnauer's Sandra Baynes said.

The anchor supermarket, which would include a fuel station, is slated to be 56,000 square feet.

Developers have also said that four smaller anchor stores — from 6,000 to 21,000 square feet — would join a number of other retail businesses at the center, located next to Hampton Inn off of the N.C. Highway 32 exit from U.S. Highway 17.

Retnauer said the primary developer, Norfolk, Va.-based Wheeler Development, plans to match the town's current residential and retail harmony.

"They expect quality out of their products," Retnauer said of Wheeler Development.

Retnauer said traffic assessments of the area along N.C. 32 have anticipated residential and business growth.

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## Hwy. 32 businesses upset over road boundaries

BY EARLINE WHITE  
*The Chowan Herald*

Business owners along N.C. Highway 32 South are expressing discontent over the upcoming road-widening project in the Frog Crossing area.

The project to widen the road to include a turn lane received state funding three years after being placed on the books initially.

Surveys of the area were taken last month and stakes placed where new property lines are projected.

But several shop owners wonder if taking land to the east of the road (where the area is dense with industry) is the right thing.

"I know that the road needs to be widened," Richard Blanchard, owner of Cherry Welding said, "but I'm going to lose 25 foot of property. The trucks (bringing loads of steel) barely have enough room to turn around now. I know it's a dangerous curve but I just don't understand their (NCDOT) thinking."

### Timeline

- Plans for the U.S. 32 widening began 3 years ago
- State funds released last year
- Widening the highway's northern end began in June
- Widening Frog Crossing area may begin this summer

To prepare for the project, Blanchard is in negotiations for vacant acreage behind his shop. The additional land will help to make up the difference of space lost.

"I'm all for widening the road as long as it's favorable to everyone," Blanchard added.

Others do not have the option of extending property lines behind current businesses.

And Joe Lee in particular, proprietor of Frog Crossing, does not see the situation as favorable for anyone involved.

Frog Crossing will lose 15 parking spaces, room for the Greyhound bus to turn around, and may force him to shut the doors of his laundromat due to lack of space for parking.

"And what about those little old ladies," he said as he pointed to the small brick houses on the same side as his enterprise. "The State ain't going to help them when it comes time to take their property."

Leonard Small, owner of V.A. Fork Produce, like Blanchard, doesn't understand the reasoning behind the project.

"They're going to come in and three lane it but in five years they're going to have to come back in and four lane it. Why not build an alternate route, completely bypassing the area through the woods behind the shopping center or Albemarle Motors and join up further down 32?"

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Earline White/*The Chowan Herald*

The pumps at Frog Crossing are just feet away from a yellow line showing where the Hwy. 32 widening project will leave property lines.

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