



**Glorious Elliott** has been named to the Board of Directors of the NC School Boards Association. — 6A

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## Multi-family housing regs headed to council

■ Planning board backs limits on multi-family dwellings; proposal based on Holland Consulting Planners study

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Edenton Planning Board unanimously approved Monday a proposal that would sharply limit where multi-family housing could be located within the town.

The proposed text amendment to the town's Unified Development Ordinance will go before the Edenton Town Council for final consideration.

The proposed amendment removes multi-family dwelling as a permitted use in most

of the town's residential zoning districts. It would remove the use in the R-40, R-20, R-14 and R-10 districts and also prohibit multi-family units of three or more in the Historic District.

Duplexes and single-family rental houses would still be allowed in the Historic District under this proposal.

The amendment would allow multi-family housing in the R-5 residential district and in the medical arts and commercial districts.

Town Planner Sam Barrow presented the proposed text amendment to the plan-

ning board at its meeting Monday night. The amendment got the planning panel's unanimous backing and could be voted on by the town council as early as the council's meeting on Dec. 9.

The proposed amendment is a response to a study conducted by Holland Consulting Planners. The study found, among other things, that the town's population is not increasing; that the town has an above-average percentage of multi-family housing — 27.5 percent in Edenton, compared with an average of 20.7 percent; 18 percent of the

town's housing is public housing or housing receiving program support; 20.9 percent of the population has an income below the poverty level; and 56.4 percent of the town is zoned for residential use, compared with 25-35 percent in most eastern North Carolina towns.

Barrow also noted a concern among town officials regarding a relatively high number of empty houses and the potential for blight as a result of empty houses.

Barrow noted that the proposed amendment limits multi-family housing but still allows multi-family developments in some areas.

"You can't zone them out completely," Barrow said.

## Nonprofits bristle at new tax

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

Rep. Bob Steinburg is meeting this week with representatives of local nonprofits to discuss their concerns about an amusement tax that takes effect Jan. 1.

The Chowan County Republican told the *Chowan Herald* he understands that nonprofits have concerns about the tax, but he said it needed to be understood in the larger context of tax reform and the eventual elimination of the state income tax.

E.C. Toppin, president of the Chowan County Regional Fair Association, mailed a letter to Steinburg last week expressing frustration about the tax — and especially about the failure of the legislation to exempt nonprofits.

Representatives of American Legion Post 40, which benefits from the regional fair, planned to meet this week with Steinburg. A number of other nonprofits also were invited to the meeting.

Toppin's letter estimated that based on this year's fair revenues, the tax would have cost the fair at least \$4,374.

The letter also indicated that a bill would be introduced in the upcoming legislative session to exempt nonprofit-operated agricultural fairs from the amusement tax.

Toppin's frustration is at times evident in the letter.

"Maybe it's time the 'original' Edenton Tea Party reactivates," Toppin said in the letter.

Steinburg defended the tax,

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## HOLIDAY SHOPPING OFF TO STRONG START

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

Local merchants expressed excitement over strong sales on Black Friday and Small Business Saturday.

"It went really good," Karla Eure, manager of Soundfeet Shoes in downtown Edenton, said of the store's Black Friday sale. "It was calm-busy. That's the perfect way to describe it. It wasn't chaos. Everyone was happy."

Eure said the store's Black Friday sales volume was better than last year's. She said Small Business Saturday also went well, with lots of shoppers asking for receipts to carry to the Chamber of Commerce office.

The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a Shop Small/Shop Local/Shop Chowan promotion that offers shoppers who submit \$100 in receipts for qualifying purchases from local businesses an opportunity to be entered into a drawing to win Downtown Dollars and Chamber gift certificates. Most purchases qualify for the contest, with gasoline, pharmaceuticals and groceries being excluded.

The Shop Small/Shop Local/Shop Chowan promotion continues through Saturday. The drawing will be held Dec. 9.

Eure said Shop Small/Shop Local/Shop Chowan has been a good promotion.

Two downtown businesses got a jump on Black Friday by opening Thanksgiving Day. Peebles opened at 4 p.m. and Sears



STAFF PHOTO BY REBECCA BUNCH

Peebles Manager Jadelle Wagner opens the door and welcomes the first in a long line of shoppers who showed up Thanksgiving afternoon to get some Christmas shopping done.



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Terri Britton of W.E. Nixon Hardware waits on customers during the Black Friday sale.

edge off the Black Friday early morning opening, she said. But it didn't take long for the Black Friday throngs to make it to the store.

Thursday's sales volume was about the same as last year's, Wagner said.

"Black Friday was better, though," Wagner said. "We had a bigger Black Friday than last year."

Wagner also thanked the Edenton Police Department for its help with downtown security during the big sales days.

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at 6 p.m. The first wave of the big retail push began at Peebles, which opened at 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day and remained open until 1 a.m. Friday before reopening

at 6 a.m. Friday. "It was crazy 'til about 7:30, then it was just steady," said Jadell Wagner, manager of Peebles. Traffic remained steady all the way to 1 a.m., Wag-

ner said. Peebles had eight 32-inch televisions available at \$100 and 20 seven-inch tablets at \$50. The Thursday opening probably took a bit of the

## Smith elected chairman of board of commissioners

■ Alex Kehayes is board's vice chairman

BY REGGIE PONDER  
 Editor

The Chowan County Board of Commissioners elected Jeff Smith as the board's chairman during the annual organizational meeting Monday night.

The board also elected Commissioner Alex Kehayes as vice chairman.

The election of the chairman and vice chairman fol-

lowed the administration of the oath of office to newly re-elected Commissioners Smith, John Mitchener and Ellis Lawrence.

Both Smith and Kehayes were elected unanimously to their leadership positions on the board.

Smith, 57, is starting his second term on the board. He represents the 1st District in the northern part of the county.

Smith, a Democrat, was re-elected Nov. 4. He faced a challenge from Republican Ron Cummings.

Commissioner Keith Nixon, who has served as chairman the past two years, nominated Smith for



STAFF PHOTO BY REGGIE PONDER

Chowan Board of Commissioners Chairman Jeff Smith (left) asks for nominations for vice chairman shortly after being elected chairman Monday during the board's annual organizational meeting. At right is Commissioner Greg Bonner.

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**ROCKY HOCK Opry**
 FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 7:00 PM
 
**E.A. SWAIN AUDITORIUM**
 Tickets \$10.00
 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup>, 7:00 PM
 EDENTON, NC
 Sponsored by the Rocky Hock Ruritan's Relay for Life Team
 Tickets Available at various locations or call 252-221-4875 or 252-340-3438. Email rockyhockopry@live.com