

Commentary

THE NEWS RECORD

Editorial

Proper Zoning Protects Property Value

Whether we like it or not, growth - and all the problems, opportunities and challenges it brings with it - are coming to Madison County. The current controversy regarding growth in the Weaverville area should serve as an early warning of what Madison County can expect in the years ahead.

Mars Hill is the first Madison County town to face the challenge of growth, but Marshall and Hot Springs will surely face similar situations in the near future as development moves northward from the Asheville area.

For decades now, development has spread from Asheville in all directions except the north. As the surrounding areas to the east, west and south of Asheville become increasingly developed, the areas to Asheville's north will become increasingly attractive to families relocating in Western North Carolina. As is inevitable, the influx of new families and new home construction will be followed closely by increased commercial development.

Because the development of the areas bordering Asheville has largely bypassed Madison County until now, we have a unique opportunity to learn from the mistakes made in other communities. Development is coming as surely as tomorrow's sunrise. We must be prepared to control it if we are to preserve the quality of life we enjoy in Madison County.

Carefully planned growth is essential if our area's natural beauty and resources are to be preserved. Increased development will mean increased demand for public services. Our local governments will face increasing demands for water and sewer services. Our school system will have to be able to meet the needs of more students as more families make Madison County their home and our roads will have to be improved to handle the extra traffic development brings with it.

Zoning is a key to carefully controlled growth and will play an increasingly important role in Madison County's future. As rural Madison County takes on a more suburban character, our planning and zoning boards will be forced to confront many difficult decisions.

Monday's public hearing in Mars Hill is a prime example of the challenges to come. The town has been asked to rezone ter-

ritory within its zoning jurisdiction on N.C. 213 in order to allow for commercial development in what is presently a sparsely populated residential area. Although only a single request for rezoning was considered at the hearing, other requests are forthcoming.

If Madison County is to attract the kind of development which brings with it good jobs, we must provide areas for business where highway access, water and sewer services and visibility are available. The N.C. 213 corridor linking Mars Hill and Marshall would seem to be just such an area.

While providing opportunity for business, however, planners must also protect the rights of homeowners. That will be one of the many challenges facing our planning boards in the years ahead.

Zoning regulations limit the uses of property within an area and such limitations have not been well received by many Madison Countians in the past. Many property owners here still resent being told what they can and cannot do with their land. They view such restrictions as government interference.

That point of view has caused many zoning restrictions to be overlooked in the past, but we can no longer afford to allow haphazard development. We must begin to look at zoning, not as unnecessary government interference, but as the best approach to safeguarding the quality of life we enjoy in Madison County.

Properly administered, zoning will protect property values and encourage controlled development. We would encourage the public to make their views regarding land use known to planners and public officials. Through careful planning and enforcement of land use ordinances, we can see Madison County grow and prosper in a way that will benefit us all.

The development which much of Western North Carolina has seen in recent decades has largely bypassed Madison County and northern Buncombe County until now. Let us examine the problems neighboring communities have faced in addressing development and learn from their mistakes. Careful land use planning can make Madison County a model for the entire mountain region.

Letters To The Editor

Lisenbee Explains Firing

Dear Sir:
I would like the citizens of Marshall to know the facts about my termination as a police officer for the town of Marshall.

Last summer I asked the mayor if she could get me laid off, explaining that I was being framed and could envision what might happen. However, she chose to let the matter run its course, then put the blame on me.

Two of the other police officers chose to go along with the mayor and board members Iverson Bradley and Jackie Davis. Bradley is related to the mayor and Davis was a board member who helped fire me when I ran for sheriff in 1982. Little things started happening after these board members were elected and the chief's position was taken away from me.

Someone would change the schedule and then call me asking if I wasn't coming to work. I could never find out who was doing it. I asked Jackie Davis to observe and learn for himself what was happening. I never got any cooperation from him.

To make a long story short, I had to pursue a vehicle which came through town at a very high rate of speed about two weeks ago shortly after 11 p.m. Guessing which way the vehicle went, I chose to go up Walnut Creek Dr. I saw taillights cross the bypass and go up Walnut Creek. Thinking it was the vehicle I was after, I turned my blue light on. After getting close enough to see it wasn't the right vehicle, I turned the blue light off and turned around, letting the vehicle go on. I lost the vehicle that was speeding. Two people saw me give chase to a black Mustang.

Last Monday night before the town meeting, Mr. Bradley called me aside wanting to know why I tried to stop a woman on Saturday night.

I explained to him what had happened, thinking that he would understand. Instead, he told me it had better not happen again. He told me the woman was a friend of his and had just left her house.

Yes, the mayor called a special meeting Thursday night. You guessed it, she, Bradley and Davis fired me.

Have they forgotten the condition the town was in - concerning thieves breaking cement blocks in buildings and taking things; dangerous drivers on the streets; people shooting street lights out and the mess on the bypass. That's the condition things were in when I went back to work for Marshall, and this is the thanks I get. Just ask yourself, what kind of law and order do you want?

I thank everyone who supported me in my efforts.

Bill Lisenbee

Reader Opposes School Plan

To the Editor:
I would like to put forth my view on the consolidation of the elementary schools of Madison County. I oppose it.

My children live a long distance from the school at Mars Hill Elementary which they attend. They already have a nearly three-hour bus ride. This is simply enough, and to add more riding time onto this would be absolutely too much.

We have a good school at Mars Hill, so why not add a few classrooms as needed and leave it there? We have enough children in Mars Hill's district to maintain a good school. I know our children

should come first (especially their education), but to put this extra burden on them is simply too much.

My recommendation to the school board would be for them to build a couple of new schools in Madison County. One should be built in the Marshall-Walnut area, and another in the Hot Springs area. Then they should re-map the school areas.

Is this too much to ask for the sake of our children? I think not! Please consider this for the sake of our children.

Hayes Carver
Mars Hill

Thanks

Dear Editor,

Howard and Dorothy Payne would like to express their appreciation to all who took part in honoring us on our 50th wedding anniversary. To all who sent flowers, cards, and the many gifts, to all who attended our celebration, we appreciate your recognition. Thank you to all who gave to the Kirk Payne cemetery fund, and to the Gideons. Thanks again and may God Bless each of you.

Howard and Dorothy Payne

Faulty Hose Blamed In Death

To the Editor:

On July 1 at approximately 10 p.m. my father Larry G. Davis passed away.

Bowman Duckett Funeral Home arrived at the scene long before the Madison County rescue squad could come from Hot Springs to my parents' home in Bluff, approximately six miles away.

The reason? Once again, a water hose broke on the vehicle leaving it stranded approximately three miles out of Hot Springs.

It is my understanding this water hose problem has been occurring frequently for months. I was told it was the ambulance manufacturer's fault.

I am a nurse in a Haywood County Emergency Room. I work with the rescue squad and ambulance service every day. Why doesn't Haywood County have similar problems if it is the ambulance manufacturer's fault? If this is true then why are these ambulances not recalled by the factory?

My father died in my mother's arms at home waiting for the rescue squad. As a citizen and taxpayer I urge you to check into this.

I hope this malfunctioning hose can be replaced before someone else's loved one dies in their arms while the rescue squad is broken down with a faulty water hose.

Wanda Makhoyun
Waynesville

Letter Policy

The News Record invites its readers to share their views on subjects of public interest.

Letters, which are subject to editing, should be addressed to The Editor and mailed to The News Record at Post Office Box 369, Marshall, N.C. 28753.

Letters must include the writer's signature, address and telephone number in order to be published.

Community Issues

Solid Waste Solutions Needed Now

During the last 20 years or so, the problems of solid waste disposal have taken a back seat to more immediate and more threatening waste problems. Thanks to the Department of Energy, most of us learned a great deal about the dangers of nuclear waste disposal while the Chemtronics plant in Asheville focused our attention on Superfund sites. In the meantime, solid waste has been piling up around us, overloading our landfills and allowing toxic seepage to infiltrate our groundwater and drinking water. With Madison County's landfill almost full, it's past time to begin studying methods of dealing with a problem that is here to stay.

I came away from the conference with a new respect for the problem. For example:

*In 1988, every person in this country creates about 5 1/2 pounds of solid waste per day or almost 4 tons per year for a family of four. For Madison County this would amount to about 17,000 tons per year.

*If the amount of solid waste generated by the U.S. was spread end to end it would pave a highway one

foot deep from Boston to Los Angeles each year.

*The days dumping trash in an open pit and covering it with dirt are over. In the future, landfills will be required to meet state and federal requirements such as liners, collection of liquid and treatment systems to prevent groundwater contamination. Because of the hazardous nature of wastes often dumped in landfills, leachate can be highly toxic.

*The cost of building a new landfill will be enormous. Transylvania County for example, is currently designing a landfill to meet state and federal regulations. They estimate the cost to be from \$350,000 to \$500,000 per acre. With these kinds of costs, a number of plans to reduce the amount of solid waste landfilled are being studied.

*Many counties are requiring "tipping fees" to help offset the cost of the landfill. While an average tipping fee in North Carolina is \$3-\$5 per ton, landfills in some areas of the county where land is scarce and population

dense are charging over \$100 per ton.

Obviously the solid waste disposal situation in this county is in crisis. Quick-fix solutions are no longer the answer. Madison County is no different from most of the other counties in North Carolina, with its landfill closing in less than a year and a half. Fortunately, there are a variety of innovative and long-term solutions being investigated and implemented. It is time to become informed and act.

Ms. Tousey attended the conference as a representative of the Madison County Chapter of The League of Women Voters. She will offer possible solutions in a subsequent issue of The News Record. All persons interested in writing a Community Issue column should contact Cheryl Koenig, General Manager at 649-2741.



By BOBBI TOUSEY
Special to the News Record

Recently I had the opportunity of attending a two-day conference on solid waste in Asheville sponsored by Land of Sky Regional Council. Representatives of government, industry specialists and citizen advocates from throughout North Carolina and nearby states laid out the enormity of the problem and discussed state-of-the-art solutions.

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