

Accepts Planning Board Recommendation

Council Denies Subsidy Housing Request

Around Town

BY SAM C. MORRIS

The weather over the past weekend was on the hot part of the thermometer. The temperature on Saturday and Sunday reached 90 degrees. There was a little breeze and that made it somewhat better than it had been still and humid.

The forecast this week is for some rain and for the temperature to be in the 80s.

The rain last week was needed and the crops look a 100 percent better than the week before. I don't know how much rain we had in May, but it should be reported elsewhere in the paper if the weatherman is in town.

The Raeford City Council by a 3-1 vote Monday night supported the Planning Board's recommendation that a request for variance in zoning for construction of four-family apartment units be denied.

The vote was greeted with applause by many of the approximately 60 people, most of whom were North Fulton Street area property owners opposing the variance.

John Loving of Brown, Loving Co. of High Point, the developer, said before the council acted, however, that the apartments for low-income people will be built just the same, in duplexes, allowed under the zoning of the area, if not in the four-family two-story buildings. The buildings will contain 30 units.

The apartments will be in the

rent-subsidy program of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program, for low-income families, has federal funds making up the difference between what the tenant can afford to pay and the rent on the apartment.

Loving informed the council, as he had the City Planning Board at the April 30 hearing, that his company has an option to buy 3.7 acres on U.S. 401 between North Fulton and North Streets from Avery Connell.

Referring to one objection regarding increase in traffic congestion and accompanying hazard on North Fulton Street, he said Brown, Loving after the hearing changed the plan to eliminate a proposed entry-exit road way on Fulton and make the second entry

to the property, like the first, on U.S. 401.

He also said building duplexes would mean moving the development into the open area of the property, where the four-family units would allow the developer to screen the buildings from Fulton behind pine trees which would be left standing.

At the Planning Board hearing, Loving said that eight buildings would be erected on the northernmost end of the property, if the variance were granted; but that 15 would have to be built if the request for the variance were denied and the company had to build two-family duplexes the present zoning allows.

Loving said Monday night he and his partner preferred the four-family units because they

could do a better job with that plan and spend more on landscaping.

Nevertheless, by a show of hands the property owners indicated they still opposed the granting of the variance. Councilman Bob Gentry had asked how many still were opposed.

Ralph Barnhart presented the council with a petition signed by 32 property owners on North Fulton asking the council to accept the Planning Board recommendation.

In reference to the stated advantages of the four-family units over the two-family duplexes he said the property owners are in "bad shape" either way and were willing to take their chances.

In reference to the 30-foot-wide screen of trees Loving had described, Lauchlin MacDonald said he could spit 30 feet, that too much

was being made over the screening.

Early in the meeting, after Loving had reported the Fulton Street entry-exit had been cut out of the plan, Earl McDuffie of Covington asked Loving whether eliminating that entrance would eliminate the "problem" of public housing. Thereupon Loving asked Mayor John K. McNeill, Jr., whether it would be proper for him to answer questions from the audience. McNeill didn't answer the question but informed McDuffie, "We are not here to discuss public housing. We are here to discuss whether four-family or two-family buildings should be built."

Ken Witherspoon was one of the few supporters of the variance request who appeared at the meeting. He told the council that more housing was needed and we would like the council to act so the project could be built. Witherspoon is director of the Hoke County Department of Social Services but did not identify himself by his professional position.

Buddy Blue, chairman of the countywide Raeford Housing Authority, said the Authority supported the Loving, Brown program because the company had agreed to Housing Authority participation in the site development and design of the buildings, and responsibility for managing the project after it was completed. He said the site already had been selected when the present Housing Authority was appointed, but that because of Brown, Loving agreement on the design and management points, he supported the plan.

He also said that the company had changed its plan on suggestion of the Authority, to concentrate its buildings in the northernmost section of the tract.

Councilman Vardell Hedgpeth, Jr., cast the dissenting vote and Councilman Benny McLeod abstained from voting on the motion to accept the Planning Board's recommendation that the variance request be denied. The Planning Board vote to deny the request was 6-0.

The motion was made by Councilman Sam Morris and seconded by Councilman Bob Gentry.

In another action on zoning, the council accepted a Planning Board recommendation that approval be given Jack Ellis's request to rezone his property from R-8 residential to C-2 commercial, so it can be used by the U.S. Farmers Home Administration for an office. The property

(See COUNCIL, page 12)

Against 11 Wilkes County People

Marijuana Trafficking Charges Dropped

Eleven Wilkes County people were cleared May 26 of trafficking charges in connection with a Hoke County marijuana raid because sheriff's officers burned seized marijuana.

Assistant District Attorney Jean Powell of Raeford said last week she is appealing to the State Court of Appeals.

Superior Court Judge Anthony M. Brannon dismissed the charges in Fayetteville, ruling that the defendants were deprived of their

right to inspection of the marijuana and form their defense, by the officers' burning the 2,700 pounds of material.

The 11 were arrested last September after the sheriff's department was notified that three to five acres of marijuana was being harvested in the Bowmore community. Deputies confiscated 2,200 pounds of harvested marijuana on the site and cut an estimated 500 more pounds growing in a field.

The defendants for whom the charges were dropped were: Randy Keith Byrd, 20, Donnie Ray Anderson, 23, Barry Dean Barker, 22, and William A. Cody Durham, all of Roaring River; Ronnie Anderson, 26, of Traphill; and Atha Louise Bates, 24, Larry Boyd Crouse, 30, James C. Rhodes, 24, Edward Smoot, 17, Randell E. Smoot, 21, and Warren Grady Wood, 30, all of Elkin.

They were charged with traffick-

ing marijuana by possession, conspiracy to traffic by possession, trafficking by manufacture, and conspiracy to traffic by manufacture.

Nine of the defendants were reported arrested less than half a mile from the alleged marijuana field between 6 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. September 13, and the others -- Byrd and Randell S. Smoot -- were arrested September 23 in Wilkes County.

Of Hoke School Board

Changes on Vocational Action Asked

The Hoke County Board of Education Tuesday night received recommendations earlier in the meeting from Harold Gillis, county vocational education supervisor, that Arthur Kemp be reinstated and that after the funding picture is clearer the three other vocational instructors whose positions were terminated with the end of the current school year be offered positions where enrollments warrant them.

Kemp is an electronics instructor but is certified to teach industrial arts and could teach vocational education to the socio-economically and educationally disadvantaged if state money is provided. Gillis said Kemp is a college graduate with a master's degree.

The three other instructors are Thomas Sawyer in carpentry, Linwood Simpson, bricklaying, and James Baxley, electricity.

Gillis said the latter three could instruct disadvantaged if the instructors became certified.

The four positions were terminated by the school board at its emergency meeting of May 7 in a budget-cutting move. The savings total about \$16,000 in salaries. Gillis said the recommendations to terminate these positions were based on declines in enrollments in preregistrations for the courses for the next school year from current year enrollments: electricity preregistration is 29 for 1981-82, and 46 were enrolled this year; electronics, 52 preregistered for the new year,

58 enrolled the past year; carpentry 45 preregistered, and 68 enrolled the past year; and bricklaying, 31 preregistered, and 53 enrolled the past year.

Gillis said 24 people including him are on the vocational staff, with two in special areas, 18 at Hoke County High School and four at Upchurch Junior High School.

Hoke County Schools Supt. Raz Autry said in reference to the termination of the vocational positions that it was hard to justify spending \$20,000 on 28 students. He referred to salaries and fringe benefits of the instructors.

The state pays 76 per cent and the county-school board 24 per cent of a vocational teacher's salary. What state funds will be

available isn't known yet.

The board took no action on Gillis's recommendations during the meeting. Board Chairman Bill Cameron advised Gillis the board would have to wait for the final school budget before it could make a decision on the recommendations.

Autry is to work with County Manager James Martin to recommend cuts of the school budget to Martin's recommended \$773,627 in current expenses from county tax revenue. The school board at its May 5 regular meeting approved a revised current-expense budget of \$799,697; and a federal revenue-sharing budget of \$100,000, a reduction from \$242,330. The

(See SCHOOL BOARD, page 11)

For Hoke County In 1981-82

\$4 Million Budget, No Tax Hike Advised

The Hoke County commissioners Monday received a proposed 1981-82 budget of \$3,453,424 for the general fund, \$175,582 greater than the current fiscal year's fund but no increases in the present tax rate of \$1.01 per \$100 property valuation is proposed.

Besides the general fund the total proposed budget is composed of an estimated \$556,500 the county expects to receive in federal revenue - sharing money; and the \$60,000 in the armory reserve the commissioners have set aside the past three fiscal years at the rate of \$20,000 per year. The armory reserve is the county's share of the cost of the new National Guard Armory scheduled for construction in the next year. The federal National Guard Bureau is putting up the \$712,000 balance of the cost. The county reserve has been invested till needed. No appropriation for the reserve is recommended in the proposed budget.

A reappraisal reserve fund of \$23,000 annually to pay the costs of the countywide property value reappraisal required every eight years by the state is contributed by the general fund to assure efficient money to pay for the service, scheduled to be completed for 1982 and for the reappraisal of 1990.

The budget also recommends \$773,627 for the county school system's current - expenses, compared with \$750,969 for the 1980-81 fiscal year, which includes \$49,000 additional appropriated in April by the commissioners for fuel expenses. The County Board of Education had asked originally for \$895,000 in county tax funds. The schools get \$105,000 more from court fines and forfeitures.

The school board on the commissioners' request trimmed the total to \$799,297 in county tax funds. This is about \$98,000 more than the schools' 1980-81 current - expense total.

County Manager James Martin, who recommended the proposed budget to the commissioners, pointed out that the commissioners could change the figures before adopting a budget officially.

The budget contains a recommended cost - of - living raise for county employees -- 4 per cent if the raise becomes effective next October 1, and 3 per cent if it starts July 1.

Martin in a memorandum to the commissioners in the book of the proposed budget advises that increases in the cost of county services because of rising costs of supplies, equipment, fuel, programs and employing and keeping qualified staff people are reflected to some degree in the proposed budget.

"The assessed valuation of property," he adds, "has increased only 3.5 per cent since last year and one of the county's greatest needs continues to be additional economic and industrial development. Martin also says, "We believe the proposed budget is fiscally sound and that the present level of services can be maintained with the present tax rate ... The current year tax revenue for 1981 - 82 is computed on an estimated assessed value of \$204 million and an estimated 92 per cent collection rate."

Revenue from the property tax for the new fiscal year is estimated at \$1,895,568, which would be

\$65,568 more than is estimated for the entire current year, which runs through June 30.

The other funds which will make up the total estimated \$3,453,424 general fund income for the new year will come from fees, the county sales tax of one per cent, county taxes on beer and wine, ABC store net revenues, and state and federal aid for health, education and welfare programs.

The commissioners received the budget recommendations during their regular monthly first - Monday meeting. They scheduled a public hearing on the proposed budget for revenue - sharing and other funds for June 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Courthouse courtroom.

In other business, the commissioners adopted motions:

--Strongly opposing an Air Force proposal to lower to 300 feet from 500 feet the minimum altitude for training flights over Hoke County. The motion accepts the Raeford - Hoke County Chamber of Commerce recommendation opposing the lowering of the altitude. Agriculture - related businesses contacted by chamber executive director Earl Fowler said planes flying at such a low altitude would be dangerous to crop - dusting pilots and damaging to poultry production. The motion opposes lowering the altitude for any kind of flight.

--Granting another year's lease on the South Hoke Community

Center to Lumbee River Development Association to continue operating its day care center there; and raised the rent to \$300 per month from \$200, the action on the lease and rent subject to approval of the South Hoke Community Center Board of Trustees.

--Accepting the low bid of \$7,103 of Raeford Motor Co. to supply a pickup truck for Hoke County Health Department sanitarian. The truck approved for purchase is a 1981 Ford Courier. The other bidder was Hoke Auto Co., whose bid, \$6,913.47, was lower than Raeford Auto's but whose total bid rose to \$7,138.47 when the extended three - year warranty was included. Raeford Auto's low bid includes the extended three - year warranty.

AIR FORCE PLAN

Fowler informed the commissioners he had written a letter to be mailed later Monday to Maj. Fred Martin of the 317th Tactical Air Lift Wing at Pope Air Force Base, asking that the Air Force weigh the damages and danger of the lowered altitude against the value to training the Air Force would derive from the change.

Fowler read the letter, written for the chamber of commerce on behalf of the county commissioners. He also read letters he received from Tar Heel Turkey

(See COMMISSIONERS, page 12)

City Got 5.1 Inches Of Rain

Last week's rainfall in Raeford ranged from 1.75 to 2.1 inches, in time to boost the total for May to 5.1 inches, Robert Gatlin, Raeford Observer for the National Weather Service, reported this week.

Last heavy rain of the month fell Wednesday and Thursday, and .02 inch dropped on Sunday.

The rains came in time to give

field crops and gardens a badly needed boost, though too late to do the first spring crop of grain help.

The week before, the city received an inch of rain also.

The rainfall for May 1980 in Raeford totaled 2.6 inches. 1979, the total was 4.8; the year before that 7.7; and in May 1977 it was 6 inches.

The news article elsewhere in this paper about the acceptance of the job for principal of Red Springs School by W.K. Morgan came as a surprise. I had heard rumors that he was upset at not being promoted in the local school system, but this kind of thing comes through the office every day.

W.K. will be missed in the schools, but he will also be missed by the Hoke County Recreation Department. He was chairman of the commission and had been one of the main people to drive for the establishment of this commission in Hoke County.

Of course our loss is a gain for Red Springs. Let's hope that we don't lose any more of our top educators to other school systems. Congratulations on your promotion, W.K. and we hope the best for you and your family in the years to come.

Don't forget the Hoke High School commencement exercises at the school stadium on Friday, June 5th, beginning at 8:00 p.m.

The article about the commencement is on the front page of the graduation section. This section is an annual thing for the paper, so take time to look at the pictures of the seniors and the merchants who sponsored the section.

May the years ahead be bright for all seniors.

It seems that a battle has developed over where the legislature should get money for the highway department to keep up the roads.

If you don't know what I am talking about, then you haven't been looking at television lately. It seems almost like the political season is with us again.

The money must come from somewhere, but from where, is what keeps the ads running.

The baseball players haven't called their strike as this is being written. We can't be too much in sympathy for the players after seeing what their salaries are at this time. We know that they have only a few years to play, but the high pay and good pension plans should make their jobs as good as other employees of the nation.

One thing that doesn't look exactly kosher to me, is the players wanting to check the books of management. This is taking things a little too far as far as I am concerned. It is bad when management can not manage. But then things seem to change every year.

In March, 1944 in Gilmer, Texas I served as best man for my brother at his wedding. Then on Saturday, May 23 I served as best man for my son at his wedding.

There hasn't been a change in the wedding vows as far as I can remember. The ceremony at both events was about the same.

The thing that was different was that at the wedding in 1943, most everything was meeting folks before and after the wedding. At the wedding in 1981 most of the

(See AROUND TOWN, page 12)