

Shallotte Board Endorses In-Town Nursing Home Plan

BY SUSAN USHER
Shallotte officials are backing a Rocky Mount company's efforts to build a 110-bed nursing home within the town limits.

They endorsed Autumn Care Corp.'s plans Wednesday night and also resolved a zoning question involving one of two possible sites for the home.

Autumn Care Corp. of Rocky Mount is one of six companies competing for state approval to build a nursing home in Brunswick County. While two firms have said they would build in the Shallotte area, Autumn Care won the board's endorsement because it is the only one of the six that proposes to build within the Shallotte city limits.

The other firms interested in the Shallotte area are Health Care and Retirement Corp. of America, and Britthaven Inc., which has an option on property one-half mile outside the town on Holden Beach Road.

Aldermen pledged their support and agreed to send a delegation to an upcoming public hearing to speak on Autumn Care's behalf after hearing a presentation from Douglas Suddreth, a health care planner for Autumn

Care and administrator of Autumn Care of Drexel.

"Community support will be a strong determining factor," Suddreth said as he urged the board to mobilize local support for the project. "If Shallotte wants it in Shallotte, Shallotte has got to go up there and say it. That may make it too political, but that's a fact of life."

"From what we hear," Suddreth continued, "all the support is coming from Supply. Supply's got themselves organized. The hospital's been doing some organizing," a reference to the Brunswick Hospital governing board's endorsement of Beverly Enterprises' proposal to build a nursing home and senior villas complex adjacent to the hospital in Supply. An group of about 20 citizens told county commissioners at a recent meeting they want the nursing home located near the hospital.

Suddreth said Autumn Care wants to build in Shallotte because it is the hub of the Lockwood Folly-Shallotte-Waccamaw area where most of the county's growing elderly population is located.

According to the 1980 census, he said, 40 percent of county residents

age 65 and older lived in this area; he estimates that figure may have increased to 50 percent.

Mayor Beamon Hewett spoke for the board when he told Suddreth, "I totally agree with what you say. It should be in Shallotte."

Autumn Care proposes to build a 33,000 square foot facility on one of two Shallotte sites on which it holds options. One at the corners of Mulberry and White streets lies completely within the town limits, the other on River Road lies almost entirely outside town limits. Both are eligible for town sewer and water service, a factor Suddreth said was important.

Autumn Care would build 50 skilled nursing beds, 50 intermediate care beds and 10 home for the aged (rest home) beds in a "state-of-the-art" \$17.5 million facility in the shape of a spoke wheel. Support services and common areas would be housed in the center, with bed wings extending from the side.

It would have an estimated payroll of \$40,000 every two weeks, Suddreth said, and would hire the equivalent of 70 to 80 full-time employees, or as many as 100 to 110 full- and part-time workers. Training would be coordinated with Brunswick Technical College, he indicated.

Autumn Care has 10 nursing homes, six in North Carolina and four in the Tidewater section of Virginia.

White Investments, in which R.D. (Deedy) White III is a principal, owns both tracts optioned by Autumn Care.

In December the Shallotte Planning Board recommended to the town the portion of the Mulberry Street tract—which town officials thought was zoned R-10 (residential) be rezoned commercial, but only if the nursing home was to be built there.

But Mayor Hewett, checking with town attorney Mason Anderson, found that couldn't be done—and he also found out it didn't need to be done.

While the town cannot zone by contract—for a specific type of development—it turns out that according to a zoning map adopted earlier by the town board, the area in question was already zoned commercial.

Previously, at the planning board's recommendation the town had decided to zone a 200-foot area on each side of that section of Mulberry Street as commercial in recognition of the mixed development along the street.

But when the map was drawn, a 400-foot swath on each side of the street was colored in as commercial. It was approved as drawn.

"What it presents is this: if we stay with the 400 feet we don't need to rezone it," explained the mayor.

Given a choice of repeating the earlier steps in approving the map (including seeking a planning board recommendation and holding a new public hearing) or letting the map stand as is, aldermen chose the latter.

Alderman Bobby Ray Russ first advocated taking it back to the planning board, but remaining board members persuaded him to leave it as is.

"We won't get it rezoned that way again," noted Aldermen Paul Wayne Reeves.

Residents of the area had earlier raised objections to proposed development of an apartment complex on the site, prompting developers to seek another location on N.C. 130.

Calendar Of Events

Thursday, Jan. 10

REGISTRATION DEADLINE for a first responder course sponsored by Brunswick Technical College and county emergency medical services. Sunset Beach Fire Department, 7 p.m.

N.C. MARINE FISHERIES public hearing at the public assembly building, county complex in Bolivia, 7:30 p.m.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS and Brunswick County Public Library Board of Trustees meet jointly in commissioners' chambers, 7 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 11

GAME NIGHT at the American Legion Building one mile south of Shallotte on U.S. 17, 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jan. 12

GAME NIGHT at the Calabash Volunteer Fire Department, Calabash, 8 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 14

OCEAN ISLE BEACH COMMISSIONERS meet at town hall, 4 p.m.
CALABASH TOWN COUNCIL meets at town hall for a scheduled public hearing on proposed satellite annexation, 4:30 p.m.

HOLDEN BEACH SENIOR CITIZENS meet at the Tri-Beach Volunteer Fire Department, 7:30 p.m.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION meets at the commission office at the government complex in Bolivia, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 15

CLASSES BEGIN for a first responder course at the Sunset Beach Volunteer Fire Department, 7 p.m.

RED CROSS BLOODMOBILE in the lobby of the Brunswick Hospital, accepting blood donations from 11 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 16

BRUNSWICK TOASTMASTERS, CLUB 5095 meets at the Ship's Chandler Restaurant, Southport, 7 a.m.-8 a.m. Guests welcome. Call Donald Andrews, 278-9578 or 845-2203.

CALABASH CHAPTER 3640 of the American Association of Retired Persons will hold a meeting for officers, directors, and committee members, Calabash Volunteer Fire Department, 10 a.m.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY ASSOCIATION For Education of Young Children workshop at Brunswick County Teacher's Center, Bolivia, with Ms. Stephanna Tewey speaking on "Child Abuse: The Role of the Teacher in Management." From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., open to the public.

Nursing Home Hearing Relocated To Southport

BY SUSAN USHER
A Jan. 16 public hearing on proposals to provide 100 long term nursing home beds in Brunswick County will be held in Southport rather than in Bolivia.

Craig Smith, health systems analyst for project review with Cardinal Health Systems Agency of Lumberton, said Thursday that the hearing will begin at 1 p.m. in the second floor meeting room of Southport City Hall, the old county courthouse.

The change of location was a matter of logistics and cost, he said, noting that the county health department handled the arrangements. The public assembly building at the county complex was not available on that date. To use Bolivia Elementary School as first planned would have involved payment of an hourly fee, while there is no charge for use of the Southport facility.

Also, members of the evaluation committee that will conduct the hear-

ing come from across the agency's 15-county service area. Smith said the meeting needed to be held where members could obtain meals and possibly lodging.

He estimated the meeting could last until 9 p.m. or later. The committee is scheduled to complete its review of the proposals that night and possibly make a recommendation to Cardinal's board of directors.

Cardinal is the health planning agency for 15 southeastern North Carolina counties. The committee's recommendation can be either supported or overturned by the full board of directors, which meets Jan. 23 in Lumberton to act on the Brunswick County nursing home proposals. In either case, the board's recommendation is forwarded to the state, which makes the final decision on what firm or firms receive a certificate of need.

A state moratorium on nursing home construction lifted on July sparked a flood of applications to the N.C. Division of Facility Services for certificates of need.

At present six companies are seeking approval of Brunswick County projects that range from expansion of an existing facility to an extended retirement community:

- Triad Medical Services wants to expand its existing 106-bed Ocean Trails Convalescent Center in Southport, the county's only nursing home, by adding 40 skilled and 16 intermediate care beds.

- Britthaven Inc. of Hookerton, N.C., wants to build a 130-bed facility on six acres just outside Shallotte on N.C. 130, including 70 skilled, 30 intermediate and 30 rest home beds. It would offer respite care and long-range plans include retirement apartments and an adult day activity program.

- Autumn Care Corp. of Rocky Mount, N.C., wants to build 50 skilled, 50 intermediate care and 10 rest home beds on either of two locations inside Shallotte town limits, with the option of providing day care and respite service if interest warrants.

- Health Care and Retirement Corp. of America proposes to build 100 skilled and intermediate and 30 rest home beds somewhere in the Shallotte area.

- Beverly Enterprises of Rockville, Md., proposes to provide 50 skilled and 50 intermediate care beds on a tract it has optioned adjoining Brunswick Hospital, using the hospital's water and sewer systems. The nursing home would be part of a

"continuum of care" concept that also includes 32 senior apartments with residential or home health care and respite care.

The Brunswick Group and Unifour Medical Management Inc. of Hickory propose a joint continuous-care venture on 20 to 40 acres along U.S. 17 in the Bolivia-Shallotte area. The project would combine a Unifour-operated nursing center composed of 44 skilled or intermediate care beds and 49 rest home beds with a complete retirement community tentatively called Cypress Springs that would ultimately offer apartments, cottages or villas for another 150 persons.

Cardinal could recommend issuance of either one or two certificates of need. If Ocean Trail is recommended, then Cypress Springs could be also and vice versa, since together they propose to build no more than 100 long term (skilled or intermediate) care beds. But in all other instances, only one applicant could be favored because each proposes to build the full quota of nursing home beds.

The state has identified a need for 100 longterm nursing beds in Brunswick County and will issue a certificate of need to one or two companies to provide those beds. Without the certificate a nursing home cannot be licensed and cannot qualify for Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements.

At the public hearing time will be allotted to hear proposals from each of the firms and also to hear those speaking on behalf of a specific proposal and from the public at large, Smith indicated.

After the hearing the evaluation committee will move into its review session. The agency's staff will present its analysis of the projects and a recommendation "most likely favoring one home," said Smith.

Committee members will get to question the staff and both staff and the committee can ask questions of the applicants and the public.

Will Hear Britthaven Plan

A representative of Britthaven Inc., of Hookerton to meet Thursday with Shallotte Mayor Beamon Hewett to review that company's proposal to build a nursing home outside the town.

Glenn Potter was the spokesman scheduled to meet Hewett at 4 p.m.

Potter and another Britthaven employee, Cathy Matthews, told Brunswick County commissioners Monday night that they intend to seek annexation by the town if their proposal is approved.

Last Wednesday night, Shallotte aldermen endorsed Autumn Care Corp., with the understanding it was the only one of the six applicants that proposed to build inside the town. Two applicants had said they would

build "near" the town if approved.

Britthaven is seeking state approval to build a 130-bed combination nursing and rest home on N.C. 130 just south of Shallotte at an estimated cost of \$2.68 million. The project would include retirement apartments and a chapel.

If approved, Ms. Matthews said the firm would want the site annexed so that the facility could tap on to the town water and sewer systems.

Thursday will be the first time a company spokesman has met with anyone from the town, Hewett said Tuesday.

Autumn's proposed project would be located in town, with an estimated project cost of \$1.79 million.

gone out to Cardinal board members and media in a 15-county area.

Health board members also directed the environmental health staff to draft local private well legislation, choosing a "barebones" approach of two alternatives presented. The ordinance will address construction standards, site location standards and permitting procedures. After approving it, the health board will recommend the ordinance to county commissioners for their adoption.

State law allows counties to adopt a local ordinance regulating well placement, but this county has never done so.

Further discussion of a home health care issued brought up at the board's November meeting was tabled for the present.

Other Business

(Continued From Page 1-A)
Dr. Eugene Wallin and Thomas Dixie.

Other Business

In a related matter, the board asked Health Director Tom Blum to find out if the public assembly building at the county complex would be available for the Jan. 16 hearing slated by Cardinal to hear proposals from the six nursing home applicants.

The meeting, originally planned in the Bolivia area, was relocated to 1 p.m. at Southport City Hall when it was learned the complex was booked and that a fee would be charged to use Bolivia School. Chris Chappell, board of commissioners chairman, said Monday the assembly building was now available, but by then notices on the hearing had already

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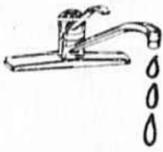
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