

'State Park' Property Rezoned For Multifamily Development

BY SUSAN USHER

After a 33-month delay, town commissioners quietly rezoned the old "State Park" property at Holden Beach from single family (R-1) to multifamily (R-2) last Thursday morning with a unanimous vote.

The item, tabled since fall 1982, was added to the agenda of the called meeting of the board through a standard procedure that requires the unanimous consent of all members present. The board had met to consider two other rezoning matters and

a funding request.

The park issue was brought up at the request of Commissioner Jim Griffin, who was excused from the rezoning vote since he has an interest in the tract owned by Holden Beach Realty.

Holden Beach Realty proposes to develop a multifamily project on the property which would have no greater density, Griffin said, than created by duplexes in the same general area.

The tract, owned by the realty firm

since the mid 1960s, was at one time offered to the state for a park. It lies west of the pavilion. It is 423 feet wide at the oceanfront and extends back to the Intracoastal Waterway. It is bounded by commercial property at two points.

Following an August 2, 1982, public hearing, commissioners had been poised to act on Ordinance 82, the rezoning, but postponed it at Griffin's request until the Sept. 2 meeting. The planning board had recommended in favor of the rezoning by a 4-1 vote.

At the 2 meeting, the item was tabled "until the next regular meeting." Then, on Oct. 4, it was deleted from the agenda. The realty firm was undergoing a reorganization at the time for tax purposes, Griffin later said.

Town Attorney Doug Ledgett of Southport had advised, in a memo to the board made available last Thursday, that it would be within the board's legal rights to act on the issue after a delay of nearly three years.

State law, he said, does not require a local governing board to act on a recommendation from the planning board within a set period of time.

It also does not specifically require the scheduling of a new public hearing when a considerable amount of time as elapsed as in this instance, he noted.

At the 1982 hearing, several residents had questioned the density of the proposed development and its relationship to a "family" beach. The following day, resident John M.

Clarke presented the town a petition with 52 signatures of property owners who opposed the rezoning. At the hearing, he had proposed allowing planned unit developments (PUDs) in areas zoned R-1, so that the town would exercise greater control over density of development while allowing more flexible use of the land available.

The proposed rezoning also was taken up for discussion by the Holden Beach Property Owners Association.

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Rape Suspect Moved

A Shallotte man charged with the Saturday morning rape of a Shallotte convenience store clerk has been moved from the Brunswick County Jail for his personal protection.

"I've sent him away for safekeeping," Brunswick County Sheriff John Carr Davis said Tuesday morning, noting that threats had been received from "several" groups, including one telephone caller Monday night who identified himself as a member of the White Patriots Party. The white supremacy organization, previously called the Confederate Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, held a march in Whiteville Saturday.

Charged with first degree rape and held under \$50,000 bond is Elwood Pigott, 22, of Mulberry Street, Shallotte. His first appearance in court was tentatively slated Tuesday.

Shallotte Police Sgt. Rodney Gause said he arrested Pigott about 6:30 p.m. Saturday at his place of work, Hill's Food City in Shallotte, after obtaining medical and other evidence.

Pigott allegedly entered the Oasis Food Mart on N.C. 130 in Shallotte between 6 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Saturday and raped the clerk on duty, a white female in her mid-20s.

"He grabbed her and held a knife to her throat and dragged her to the storage room near the cooler and raped her," said Gause.

The man had been loitering in the store, he added, and was seen by three people as they were leaving the store. One person who knew Pigott jokingly warned the clerk to "watch him," Gause said. The clerk didn't know her assailant, he added.

When the loiterer was out of sight, Gause said, the clerk had secretly called the sheriff's department.

Following the incident, she was taken to Brunswick Hospital in Supply, where she was treated and released.

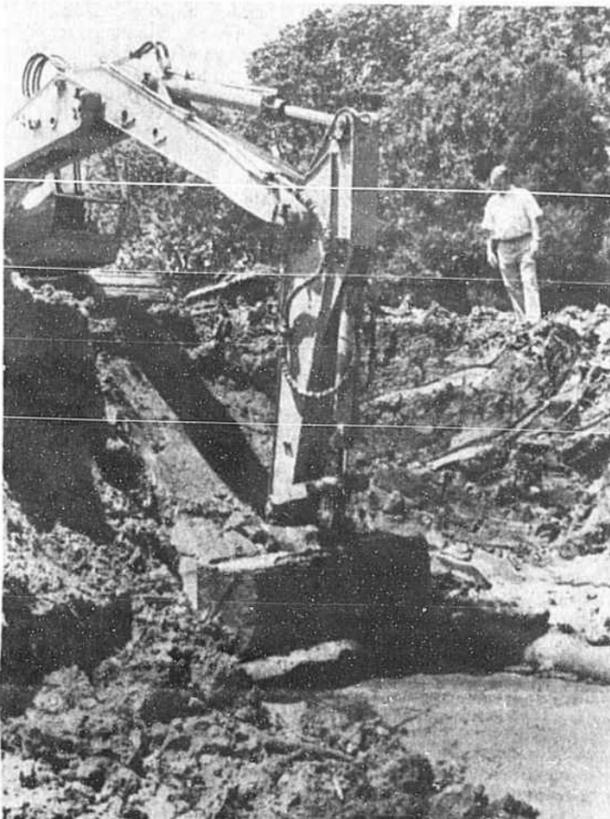
Man Indicted For Role In 'Hurricane David' Case

A man facing drug conspiracy charges in Brunswick County Superior Court last week was indicted by the Brunswick County Grand Jury for his involvement in the September 1979 "Hurricane David" case.

Peter White appeared on the court docket for unrelated charges of conspiracy to possess marijuana, felonious attempted possession of marijuana and felonious possession of marijuana from a 1981 arrest.

When the Grand Jury returned last week, White was indicted on four counts of conspiracy and trafficking of marijuana stemming from the 1979 "Hurricane David" incident.

In that drug conspiracy, a shrimp trawler ran aground in the Lockwood Folly Inlet with about 4,000 pounds of marijuana aboard. The drug operation was given the name "Hurricane David" because the vessel ran aground while Hurricane David was centered off the North Carolina coast.



COUNTY CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISOR Darryl Sommerset watches as backhoe operator William Earl Todd uncovers a 12-inch county water main that broke Thursday when an embankment collapsed behind United Carolina Bank's main office in Shallotte. The towns of Shallotte and Sunset Beach switched to their own wells for water until service was restored late Friday evening.

State Seeks More Views On Sunset Beach Bridge

BY SUSAN USHER

If you've got an opinion on the proposed replacement of the pontoon swing bridge over Sunset Beach, the N.C. Department of Transportation wants to hear it.

A public hearing on the bridge has been scheduled Tuesday, June 25, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sunset Beach Fire Station. It will follow the same format as a similar hearing held two years ago, at which the majority of the 80 to 100 individuals present spoke out against a proposed high rise bridge.

Hearing Officer William A. Garrett Jr. will explain the location and design of five alternatives, right of way requirements and procedures, relocation advisory assistance and the roles of state and federal government in the project. The alternatives consist of two high level fixed span bridges and three drawbridges varying from 14 feet to 40 feet clearance in the closed position. Two, Nos. 2 and 4, are on the east side, while Nos. 1, 3 and 5 are on the west side of the existing bridge.

Those attending the hearing can comment or submit materials for inclusion in the hearing record, he said.

Since the May 27, 1982, two of the five bridge alternatives have been revised, Garrett said maps, including revisions for Alternates 1 and 2, and copies of the environmental assessment were to be available for review at the Sunset Beach Town Hall as of Wednesday.

Alternate 1, DOT's recommended choice, is a high level fixed span bridge with 65-foot vertical clearance that would pass to the west of the existing bridge. From the beach side, the bridge would cross over the waterway then N.C. 179 near the fire station, curving back into it on the straight approach leading toward the town.

As revised, Garrett said, Alternate 1 is shorter and at an estimated \$5.25 million, would cost about \$1 million less than the span first proposed.

The new bridge span would be 10 feet shorter, at 2,440 feet, and the approach would also be shorter.

The approach "turns into 179 a little faster," but is still well within acceptable design, Garrett said. A shortened route was necessary to avoid the Sea Trails Links golf course now under construction.

Garrett said the golf course was not deliberately built in the path of the bridge.

"We never did have an approved location," he said. "We didn't finish the environmental work or anything after the first hearing. It was basically put on the shelf."

But the state wants to get an approved plan on file, he added, so that right-of-way acquisition can begin and future development in the area can be worked around the bridge route.

When initially proposed, Alternate 1 required no relocating of homes or (See BRIDGE, Page 2-A)

Towns Started Pumping When Water Line Broke

BY SUSAN USHER

Two southwest Brunswick County towns temporarily resumed pumping their own water last Thursday after a break in the county's main disrupted service from Shallotte to Calabash for more than 24 hours.

After locating the break behind United Carolina Bank's main office in Shallotte about 3:30 p.m. Thursday, a crew began work immediately. Service was restored about 7 p.m. Friday, but not before Sunset Beach Town Clerk had heard from water customers from Sea Trail to Bonaparte's Retreat subdivisions.

Most other water users between Shallotte and Calabash noticed little change in their water pressure.

It was the first break of the line at that location, Brunswick County Water System Director Kenneth Hewett said. About four months ago, a break was repaired at Sassapan Creek near Brick Landing.

Thursday's break temporarily stopped the flow of county water to all points west of the bank, including the towns of Shallotte and Sunset Beach, Hewett said. Ocean Isle Beach is pumping its own water.

Based on his experience during Hurricane Diana last September, when the water system was down about 12 hours, Hewett had anticipated no problems in maintaining service to customers. If any occurred, he predicted, it would be "at Sunset Beach."

The 12-inch main, which runs along N.C. 130 from Holden Beach to Shallotte and on to Calabash along N.C. 179, normally transports about 500 gallons of water per minute. The break was found after employees monitoring flow at the county water plant noticed a sharp plunge in pressure at the elevated tank in Shallotte and lesser drops at the Holden Beach and Sunset Beach tanks.

An entire embankment of heavy pipe clay had collapsed, taking with it a section of the asbestos concrete pipeline that runs almost parallel with N.C. 130 East behind UCB.

Fifty-two feet of asbestos piping was replaced with 50 feet of ductile iron piping and a "pad adapter" that fit the two kinds of pipe together. To prevent a similar collapse in the future, Hewett said he proposed to build a bulkhead along the embankment.

He estimated the cost of repairs at about \$2,000.

Shallotte switched over to its own wells and pumps as soon as the loss of flow was reported—before the break was located and before all water was emptied from the elevated water tank. Both pumps were working at full capacity Thursday evening to bring water pressure back to normal, employees said. The town's customers use approximately 125,000 gallons of water daily.

Town Clerk Cynthia Long and her

assistant, Mary Etta Hewett, called schools, laundromats, beauty parlors, restaurants and other volume water users of town water Thursday afternoon to warn them of the loss of pressure.

Residents visiting the town hall were asked to cut back on watering of lawns, washing cars and doing loads of laundry.

The "only people that noticed," said Mrs. Hewett, were those who live along N.C. 130 west or east of Shallotte and are on county, not city water.

Not so at Sunset Beach, where approximately 1,100 households are on city water.

"I'll bet I heard from just about every one of them this morning," said Town Clerk Linda Fluegel Friday afternoon.

Anticipating only a brief outage, Sunset Beach had cut on only a portion of its five wells Thursday evening, restarting the remaining pumps Friday morning.

At that point the water level in the Sunset Beach tank had dropped to six feet, about 10 pounds of pressure. That gradually built to about 50 pounds by mid-day, in time for restaurants to use equipment such as dishwashing machines.

Shallotte has restarted its pumps on a weekly basis, Mayor Beamon Hewett said recently, so that it would have no problem providing water from its own wells in an emergency.

Sunset Beach had not restarted its wells in the year since it began buying county water, Ms. Fluegel said.

And while Ms. Fluegel asked a local radio station to announce that a water emergency existed, she said property owners continued to run sprinklers and use water for other non-essentials.

Town Manager Wallace Martin could not be reached for comment.

Good Turnout Reported For Roads Hearing

Local officials came away from a regional transportation hearing last Thursday impressed with the county's good showing.

"A majority of the people there were from Brunswick County," reported Jim Poole, vice chairman of the Brunswick County Board of Commissioners. A number of individuals in the delegation spoke, he added, all in support of the county's 26-item list of road priorities he presented at the District 3 hearing in Jacksonville.

The hearing is an early step in the annual revision of the N.C. Board of Transportation's long-range improvement plan.

"We were unified," he said. At the top of the county's list are the Shallotte bypass and the four-laning of U.S. 17 from Bell Swamp to the South Carolina line, followed by improvements to an interchange area at Ieland and to N.C. 133 from N.C. 211 to the Oak Island Bridge.

Karen Moshoures, director of operations for the South Brunswick (See TURNOUT, Page 2-A)



Miss Teen Crowned

Teen Miss Brunswick County 1985, Kristi Maloney, left, took time following her crowning Saturday night to have her picture taken with another Brunswick County queen, Natalyn Shipp, Miss N.C. Oyster Festival 1985. Shipp served as mistress of ceremonies for the annual pageant. The story and more pictures are on the inside of this issue.