

Board Endorses Connector, Seeks Business Route I.D.

BY SUSAN USHER

Shallotte aldermen voted unanimous support last Wednesday night for all but one point in a state Department of Transportation proposal for linking a town bypass with the business district.

Before reaching an agency decision, DOT had asked for the town's reaction. At Alderman Paul Wayne Reeves' suggestion, aldermen agreed to seek an endorsement from the planning board also, at its Monday night meeting.

There was a general consensus among aldermen that Smith Avenue is the "natural" connector for the bypass. Alderman Sarah Tripp was absent.

Board members also agreed with Alderman Paul Wayne Reeves' suggestion to name the new route the N.C. 130 Bypass, while designating the existing route through town from Bridgers Road to N.C. 130 East as N.C. 130 Business.

That is in contrast to DOT's initial proposal to rename the segment of

N.C. 130 from Bridgers Road west to the south end U.S. 17 stoplight as N.C. 179.

"We don't need tractors and trailers (in Shallotte), but we need some of that traffic," said Reeves. He said businessmen on the south end of town had concerns about losing traffic in the business district.

DOT saw no major problem with Reeves' proposal, he said. "It's just a matter of erecting signs and directing traffic."

Wednesday's vote came on the

heels of a four-hour, walk-in hearing held by DOT Jan. 6 at the town hall. About 30 to 40 area residents attended, many of them property owners along the routes in question. While some opposition was expressed to individual points of the plan, sentiments generally appeared favorable.

DOT had first suggested that bypass traffic exit into downtown at Mulberry Street, but later agreed with Mayor Jerry Jones and other town leaders that the exit should be

relocated to Smith Avenue. DOT has recommended that Mulberry Street then dead-end on both the south and north sides of where it would otherwise intersect the bypass. A secondary road connector would link the area north of the bypass to a Smith Avenue extension.

At the Jan. 6 hearing, a DOT representative fielded Alderman Reeves' concerns that the plan might not lead to opening up areas west of town for orderly development by saying that connecting roads between

Mulberry Street and Smith Avenue could be developed in the future either by the state or by the town as development occurs. Reeves is an ex-officio member of the town planning board, which has been studying possible traffic grids for that area.

The Mulberry Street intersection is considered inadequate as a bypass exit. As Alderman Wilton put it, "It's ridiculous to make an access from the bypass through two brick walls 20 feet apart and no place to get out on (See BOARD, Page 2-A)

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STAFF PHOTO BY ETTA SMITH

DET. LINDSEY WALTON inventories stolen goods recovered Sunday by the county sheriff's deputies from a car. Their search yielded several stereos,

fishing poles, a microwave oven and other items. Three men were arrested for breaking, entering and larceny.

Annexation Renews Interest In Incorporating North Holden Beach

BY SUSAN USHER

Steps begun by Holden Beach to annex the causeway area to its north has revived efforts to create a new town in the area.

Many of the approximately 35 residents of the area who met last Friday night at The Seafood Barn Restaurant have begun circulating petitions that call for local legislators to help get the new town incorporated. "They're circulating them door to door," said Robert Robinson, who with Seafood Barn owner Cletis Clemmons was among the six persons who first sought incorporation of North Holden Beach last June.

A second meeting planned today (Thursday) at 7 p.m. at the restaurant is open to all interested citizens.

Rep. David Redwine was invited to attend Friday's meeting, but did not return from Raleigh until Saturday, he said Monday.

Sen. R.C. Soles Jr. of Tabor City has been invited to tonight's meeting.

Redwine told The Brunswick Beacon that Soles, as a member of the Municipal Incorporations Committee, would be a logical choice for introducing any incorporation legislation. "Before incorporating, communities are supposed to bring their proposal and supporting information to this committee for a recommendation to the General Assembly," he said. However, he added, the Assembly is not bound by law to follow that recommendation.

At the request of Clemmons,

Robinson and four others, on June 13, Rep. Redwine introduced H.B. 1689 to incorporate North Holden Beach. But after the bill sparked opposition from other residents of the proposed community, Holden Beach officials and others, he withdrew it.

"The problem before was that it was a hurry up and rush thing," Robinson recalled, with several petitioners unaware of the deadline for introducing local bills. As a result, a number of residents of the area proposed for incorporation were unaware of the bill until after it had been introduced.

Redwine has since said he would not introduce any future incorporation legislation without a vote of residents of the area proposed for the town.

In June, a letter from officials of the island-locked town of Holden Beach advised Redwine the town had no plans at that time to annex the causeway area. At a special town board meeting called to draft the letter, Mayor John Tandy summed up the town's position as that any role taken by Holden Beach should be by request only. "As I understand it," he said, "if they ever want to be taken in, our arms would be open over here."

Board members also suggested that at some future time, both the town and causeway area would view annexation as mutually beneficial.

But Seafood Barn owner Cletis Clemmons said the Holden Beach board had always intended annexing.

"They just wrote that to Redwine to stop our incorporation," he said. "Notice they're annexing only the portion of the causeway where people already have services and roads are maintained."

"Their lines are drawn in and around to exclude roads that need work and people needing water," he continued. "They just want our taxes and won't have to spend a dime."

Clemmons estimated the causeway area would generate additional taxes to the town of about \$200,000 a year.

Another participant in the petition drive is Jesse Chavis, a resident of the causeway for 35 years. Chavis said he lives on a fixed income and cannot afford to pay taxes.

"I think they just want extra tax money," he said. "We don't want the town to take us in. We wouldn't benefit from it at all."

Clemmons said he'd much rather keep things just like they are, but added there's no chance of that.

"If they would take in the entire area and put in roads for people who can't get out and water, then you won't hear a word from Cletis Clemmons."

"But the way they're doing it, with no services to offer us, I'll fight it to the bitter end."

Clemmons also said he'd accept the annexation effort if it required a vote of causeway residents, which is no longer a requirement under state law.

"We just want a voice in this," she said.

Three Arrested For Larceny After One Flees

BY ETTA SMITH

Three men were arrested and thousands of dollars in stolen goods were recovered Sunday after a man jumped from a car and fled into the woods when he discovered sheriff's deputies were following him.

Pete Hunt of Fairmont, 18, John Dial, 16, and Roland K. Hunt, 17, both of Lumberton, were arrested and charged with felonious breaking, entering and larceny by Brunswick County Sheriff's deputies.

According to Det. Lindsey Walton, Officers Greg Wood, Doug Todd and Billy Hughes were on routine patrol when they spotted a car matching the description of one that had been seen in an area at Ocean Isle Beach where about ten break-ins had recently occurred.

Officers followed the 1980 Oldsmobile Cutlass, and when it entered the driveway of a residence one of the men jumped out of the car and fled into the woods, said Walton.

He was apprehended and arrested with the other two.

Walton and Det. Nancy Simpson were called to the scene where they searched the car and discovered the stolen property, said Walton.

The stolen items included a microwave oven, television, fishing poles, several stereos, jewelry and Atari video games.

Bond information was unavailable at press time.

Calabash Citizens Demand Water Action

BY MARJORIE MEGIVERN

Eight Calabash residents showed up for Monday's meeting of the Calabash Town Council to make a forceful bid for action on a town water system.

Half of them live on Ivey High Road where many of the town's restaurants are located, the other four on Riverview Drive, parallel to Ivey High Road.

Elneda Bottomley, who owns an apartment building under construction on Riverview, opened the discussion by asking, "What are your plans for water?"

Mayor Doug Simmons explained, "We're in the process of borrowing money from Farmers Home Administration." He added that an engineering report estimated a town water system would cost \$160,000.

"Is there any money in the kitty for that now?" she persisted.

"We earmarked one penny of the tax rate for it, and we have \$1,820," he replied.

She wanted to know how much it would cost to take water to the river, down Ivey High Road, and Town Clerk Janet Thomas said her estimate was about \$21,000. "It costs about \$13.21 per foot for a six-inch line," she said.

For water lines to include Riverview Drive, the cost would be a little over \$31,000. "This includes

hydrants, labor, engineering fee, everything except individual meters," Thomas said.

Marie Brown, a former council member, wanted to know exactly how much available money the town has. Thomas said there is about \$41,000 in various savings funds that could be used for a water project. This includes part of a SMART account, two certificates of deposit and a portion of revenue sharing money.

Brown asked, "Why can't this extra money be put into water and get started? No Calabash resident would approve of dead money lying in the bank."

Simmons pointed out, "If we do it for you, we'd have to do it for everybody else."

Another former council member, Sam Bierworth, declared, "If you have that attitude, we'll never get any water."

Thomas pointed out, "The council would have to take a lot of flak in June if it added to the taxes to run water lines. And if the town can't complete a system, the lines would be turned over to the county, and the town wouldn't get any revenue from it."

Bierworth said, "Get the restaurants first. Thousands of people come here in the summer, wanting good drinking water, and they don't always get it."

Council Member Pati Lewellyn noted, "We could get water if we're ready to assess people and enforce it. With some, we'd have to go to foreclosure, because they're that stubborn."

Responded Bierworth, "Well, let's get off dead center and do it. 'Are we agreed there is money available to do this in phases?' and when Simmons answered, 'Yes,' he went on, "Then could we get some figures together in the next couple of weeks?"

He added, "If we have to go a half-mile to the river to get water to fight a fire, there's a problem."

Council Member Suzy Moore said pointedly, "We should have had water a long time ago; previous boards should have done something about it, and some of those members are in this room."

Brown told the council, "If you wait for progress to happen and look at the negative side of it, it will never happen," and in a slightly veiled threat, she went on, "If you look at the minutes of a Southport Town Council meeting back in the 1950s, you'll see that a citizens' group sued the council because they wanted water."

The discussion, principally involving Bierworth, Bottomley and Brown, took on an accusatory tone, particularly when Bierworth con-

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State Dismisses Complaint After Erosion Control Steps Are Begun

BY SUSAN USHER

An erosion control enforcement action begun by the N.C. Department of Natural Resources and Community Development has been dropped against the developers of River Hills Subdivision.

In early December, NRCD had filed a complaint and motion for preliminary injunction against D.C.B. & F. Corp. to enforce compliance with the state's Sedimentation Pollution Control Act at the subdivision off Tar Landing Road on the Shallotte River.

On Jan. 8, a notice of voluntary dismissal was filed with the Brunswick County Clerk of Court.

County Commissioner Chris Chappell, a principal in and agent for the company, said parties in the case met before Christmas and worked out their differences, with some corrective action taken by the developers.

"We went back and put up four runs of silt screening in front of our rip-rap," he said, as well as spreading grass seed and fertilizer under a temporary mulch-like covering of terry-jute.

Dan Sams, regional engineer with NRCD's land quality section, said the development company is in provisional compliance with the law until

a permanent vegetative ground cover can be established.

"We're still going to be looking to see they get it vegetated by spring," he said. "That will be end-all to that site for our agency."

The enforcement action was initiated when silt began accumulating along a half-dozen drainage areas that enter a tributary of the Shallotte River, he said.

The high hills and steep slopes of the subdivision, he continued, are more typical of the Piedmont area than the coast, and required slightly different treatment, such as the terry-jute which is used on more severe slopes to hold the soil until a vegetative cover can be established.

While Chappell has said several times D.C.B. & F. is the first local firm to be required to do some of the steps required of it, Sams disagreed, saying it was simply Chappell's first education in the requirements of the sedimentation control act.

In areas where developers are generally older and have been doing their job in essentially what he called "a good old boy style," the state has been slow in educating people to the system, which requires sedimentation and erosion control plans to be approved by the state.

The act's goals are simple: to

make sure a developer keeps silt and runoff from his property from hurting property owners downstream or wetlands.

"That's why we're here—to make sure everybody's doing what's right," he said. "It's mostly just good common sense."

At present there are approximately six or seven enforcement actions in one stage or another in Brunswick County, Sams said. Penalties will most likely be levied against some, while others will bring their projects into compliance quickly.

An injunction is the state's ultimate enforcement step, he said, used when nothing else works.

"I still disagree with it," Chappell said Monday. "But they got our attention."

According to the original complaint, D.C.B. & F. allegedly began land-disturbing activity on its project site before an erosion control plan was submitted to and approved by the state; continued work after the plan and its first revision were rejected; and then did not bring the site into compliance after initial notification of the violations and allowed erosion to accelerate.

In addition to Chappell, principals in the company are Bill Benton, Paul Floyd, Paul and Connie Dennis.