

Shallotte Planners Progressing With Town House Numbering System

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte residents fed up with address changes every few years may not have to put up with it much longer.

If all goes well with a proposed house numbering system, there will only be one more address alteration in their future.

Developed by the town planning board in cooperation with the Brunswick County Planning Department, the numbering system is 95 percent complete. It is expected to be introduced to aldermen at their Feb. 17 meeting.

The main benefit of house numbering, according to planning board members, is that it will help emergency personnel locate houses. It is also expected to simplify mail delivery.

The town house numbering system, developed primarily by county planner Don Eggert and town planning board member Art Clawson, is based on a previously-

adopted countywide grid.

Although Brunswick County has no current plans to implement the system, numbers which have been proposed for Shallotte properties will remain intact if the county ever decides to make the changes.

Eggert said the many hours of work involved and high cost of implementation are two main reasons for the county's delay in implementing the system. The Town of Shallotte first discussed house numbering in June 1986.

"I think everyone agrees house numbering or property numbering is a good idea," said Eggert. "But the expense is more than the county is willing to address at this time."

The proposed numbering will be implemented within the town limits of Shallotte, with additional numbers going into effect as the town annexes more property. Through the use of a grid, a number will be assigned to each lot, whether it currently has a building on it or not.

Town planners considered using the system as a means of establishing city mail delivery.

But according to Jimmy Eubanks, officer in charge at Shallotte Post Office, implementing city delivery would cost twice as much as the current system of rural delivery and would not provide any additional services. With the federal postal cutbacks, he said it would be difficult to introduce city delivery.

Under the current system, Eubanks said all persons residing outside a 1/4-mile radius of the post office can receive home delivery.

House numbering will still aid in mail delivery, however, since addresses will not have to be changed as the town continues to grow. Packets of address change forms are available from the post office at no charge.

Due to its unique, loop design, a slightly different system has been proposed for Brierwood Estates. The subdivision does not conform with the countywide grid

system used with the rest of town, but has been proposed as part of the overall scheme.

The planning board has proposed a letter to inform landowners of the change and to instruct them to install house numbers within a six-month period.

The board is also considering various ordinances which will require property owners to follow the system. According to Ken Lewis, address information systems manager at the Fayetteville regional office of the U.S. Postal Service, "You're not going to have any resistance to it."

Lewis, who developed the basic county grid, said the system has already been implemented and proven effective in Scotland County.

Town Building Inspector Albert Hughes, who said he has had to change his address four or five times in the last eight years, said, "If I knew I could keep this address, I would be tickled."

Town To Examine Fire Truck Market

The town of Shallotte may be in the market for another fire truck. Following a report from Fire Chief Tim Carter during last Wednesday's town meeting, board members Jody Simmons and Paul Wayne Reeves agreed to assist the department in determining figures and alternatives for acquiring additional firefighting equipment.

In a letter to the board, Carter cited the age of two existing pumps and the rapid commercial and residential growth within the fire district as reasons for the request.

He also said that a new pumper would lower the fire rating and ultimately result in lower fire insurance rates.

Firefighter David Moore said the fire rating would likely drop from a six to a five or four if the town acquired a new truck.

Carter estimated that a new pumper, with standard features, would cost between \$83,000 and \$100,000. He added that the department would be interested in a used truck not more than five years old.

Reeves explained that the town may want to consider a truck which can protect multi-story structures. He said several businesses in the area were limited to 35-foot high buildings in keeping with the town's firefighting capabilities.

The town did not rule out the possibility of a ladder truck, similar to the one purchased last year at Ocean Isle Beach. Carter, however, said a high-rise truck could cost as much as \$200,000 and might only be used once or twice a year.

In other business relating to the fire department last week, Carter was named fire chief until the departmental elections in July.

He had been appointed acting chief in September when the majority of firefighters walked out following a dispute between the town and the department.

Aldermen also approved the purchase of two metal bay doors to replace the two wooden doors currently used at the fire station.

Crawford Door Company of Wilmington will replace the doors at an approximate cost of \$1,325.

Man Charged With Thefts Audit Report Released On Court Clerk

A Kernersville man was arrested Friday by the Brunswick County Sheriff's Department in connection with thefts from two Calabash businesses.

Stephen Allen Jones, 19, was charged with three counts of misdemeanor larceny, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of marijuana, according to records on file at the Brunswick County Jail.

Jailer Linwood Gray said Jones was released from custody Friday on a \$1,950 bond.

According to Sheriff's Capt. Phil Perry, Jones was charged with the theft of fertilizer and potting soil worth about \$25 from Calabash True Value Hardware, and with the thefts of signs from World Famous Calabash Cafe in Victoria's Ragpatch Row and Pirate's Cove in North Myrtle Beach, S.C. The thefts occurred sometime last Thursday night.

Perry said Jones was arrested after his vehicle was stopped by Ocean Isle Beach Police on the Ocean Isle Beach causeway. A search of the vehicle revealed the stolen property.

The Horry County, S.C., Sheriff's Department also is involved in the case, Perry said.

No discrepancies were reported in a recent financial audit of the Brunswick County Clerk of Superior Court for the past two fiscal years.

According to the N.C. Office of the State Auditor, the audit "did not disclose any significant deficiencies in internal accounting controls, compliance, or accounting records of the clerk."

The audit report was released last week by State Auditor Edward Renfrow. It covered the fiscal years which ended June 30, 1986, and June 30, 1987.

As of June 30, 1987, the clerk of court's balances of both assets and liabilities amounted to \$797,582.64, according to the report.

Kenneth "Greg" Bellamy served as Brunswick County Clerk of Court during the period covered by the audit.

Bellamy resigned on Aug. 31, 1987, after he was convicted of felonious possession of cocaine.

After serving as acting clerk of court for the month following his resignation, Diana Morgan was appointed as Bellamy's permanent replacement last October.

Shallotte Discusses Capital Reserve Fees

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte Aldermen hope to eliminate a loophole in town policy which allows some property owners to avoid paying fees aimed at ensuring the town's future growth.

Uncertain of the legal technicalities, however, the board delayed any action concerning the capital reserve fees after a lengthy discussion last Wednesday night.

Members expressed concerns that commercial and residential property owners were avoiding the fees by requesting annexation into the town only after completion of a structure. The fees are charged when any building permit is purchased through the town.

Mayor Jerry Jones said an attorney with the N.C. League of Municipalities informed him that the town could not charge capital reserve fees for structures already in existence, only for those that had not yet been built.

Board members wanted to study a written ruling from the U.S. Attorney General's Office before taking any action.

Expressing the opinion of the board, Alderman Wilton Harrelson said, "If they don't buy a ticket to get in the door, they shouldn't get to watch the game."

Jody Simmons, who manages a construction firm, told fellow board members that from his experiences, it had proven financially beneficial to purchase building and septic tank permits from the county, build the structure, and then request town annexation in order to avoid the payments.

The funds gathered through these capital fees are set aside for future sewer expansion. Jones said the current fund balance is about \$80,000 and with the town currently looking at land acquisition, it may need most of this.

For commercial properties within the town limits, \$120 is charged for each 1,000 square feet of space. The minimum fee is \$600.

Residential properties within the town are charged \$200 per bedroom, and a minimum of \$500.

Although the town does not offer building permits for properties outside the town, proposed fees would

double for those commercial and residential areas not within city limits.

According to Harrelson, although annexation helps both the town and the property owner, requests or voluntary annexation usually benefit the property owner and forced annexation usually favors the town.

Mayor Pro Tem Paul Wayne Reeves said the town may want to consider making capital reserve fee payments a condition of any request for annexation.

However, board members were not sure that type of discrimination would be considered legal.

Office Outlawed

In other business last Wednesday, aldermen authorized Building Inspector Albert Hughes to request the removal of a mobile trailer from the commercial property of Concrete Services Corporation.

The company had requested a zoning variance which would have permitted the trailer to serve as an office until a permanent structure could be built at the N.C. 179 business site.

At the Jan. 6 town meeting, the company's general manager, Lance Clark, said he would return to the next town meeting with definite plans for construction of a permanent facility. He was not present last week.

Mayor Jones and Hughes said they had received no word from the company prior to the meeting.

In addressing the board, Hughes said, "They didn't come back within the time frame. That's the only thing you can do."

Proposal Denied

Also last week, the town denied a vehicle purchase requested by Police Chief Don Stovall.

Stovall had asked the town to buy a 1985 state car for \$6,000 to replace the department's 1979 police cruiser.

He said there was nothing specifically wrong with the vehicle, only that it was "old and wore out."

Alderman Sarah Tripp voiced concerns that if the town bought the car now, it would only have \$586 remaining in the police department vehicle purchase fund.

She argued that if another police car was totaled between now and Ju-

ly, when the next fiscal year begins, the town may not be able to replace it. The town allots about \$3,000 each year for the police vehicle purchase fund.

Mrs. Tripp added that the department has purchased two cars over the past two years and that the town should wait until another purchase is an absolute necessity.

Decision Tabled

In other business, the town board tabled a decision concerning the request of an itinerant merchant wishing to set up shop in a mobile trailer along U.S. 17.

Following the motion of Alderman Harrelson, aldermen agreed to study ordinances governing mobile offices and consult with the town attorney before making a decision at the Feb. 3 meeting.

Merchant Bob Burgess said he wanted to establish a mobile trailer

for the purpose of selling sunglasses, either within the town limits or an area just outside the town. He said he would like to come back each year and operate from the end of March through September.

He said that his mainstay is Myrtle Beach, S.C., but added, "We were looking for other locations and thought we might come up this way."

Other Business

In other business, aldermen: •Adopted a flood damage prevention ordinance following a public hearing. The town had originally adopted the ordinance last March, but did not conduct a required public hearing at that time.

•Asked Hughes to work with board members Simmons and Harrelson in hiring a new maintenance department employee to replace Billy Eason, who resigned two weeks ago.

BCLC Offers Tutor Workshop

A tutor training workshop will be offered by the Brunswick County Literacy Council Feb. 19 and 20 through Brunswick Community College.

The 10-hour workshop is for adult volunteers interested in helping other adults learn to read. Students who complete the workshop will be certified as Laubach Literacy tutors qualified to teach one-on-one.

Rich Dixon of Shallotte will lead the workshop, which will be held on the college's old Supply campus on U.S. 17 just north of the N.C. 211 intersection. Hours are 6:30 p.m. to

9:30 p.m. Friday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, with participants to bring a bag lunch on Saturday.

Seniors age 65 or older are exempt from the \$15 registration fee. However, all participants are asked to pre-register. Registration, accompanied where appropriate by checks payable to Brunswick Community College, should be sent to Brunswick County Literacy Council, P.O. Box 2304, Shallotte, NC 28459.

For more information, call the literacy council office at 754-7323 during weekday business hours.

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