

**TIME LIMIT EXPIRED**

# Sunset Beach Must Wait Year Before Moving On Annexations

BY SUSAN USHER

It will be at least another year before Sunset Beach Town Council can move forward with one or more involuntary annexations it has been considering already for more than two years.

Backing up a step or two, council members took the first step in restarting the annexation move by adopting a new resolution of consideration for annexation.

Back in December 1987 a previous board had adopted a resolution to consider annexation all or part of a broad area that included the town limits and entire extraterritorial area. Monday's resolution went one step farther, including the business area east of N.C. 904 and west of N.C. 179 as well—the site of a new shopping center and related growth. The complex had earlier sought—and been denied—annexation by the town in order for a grocery store there to obtain permits to sell beer and wine. Since then county residents have voted to allow such sales in unincorporated areas.

Mayor Mason Barber told council members Monday that the new resolution was needed because the town had missed a window of opportunity. Once a resolution of consideration has been adopted, a town governing board has two years in which to complete a feasibility study and move to the next step, adoption of a resolution of intent to annex. Sunset Beach Council had delayed action on the planning board recommendations several times, most recently requesting a joint meeting to inform new members of the project.

A feasibility study prepared by consultant Ken Weeden identified three areas for possible annexation. After review, the town's planning and zoning board had recommended the town proceed with annexation of one area, Oyster Bay Colony, as being cost-effective to the town. It recommended restudy in the near future of another growing area, Sunset Sands.

However, the board also identified several calculations in the study needed updating either because of changes in town operations—such as the change to a private garbage collection firm, or because the wrong formula was used, as in determining income from Powell Bill revenues for roadway added to the town.

Data for the three areas will be updated by the town staff, with outside assistance as needed.

"We don't have to make a detailed study again," said Mayor Barber, "but 'We cannot do anything else

*"We cannot do anything else that first year."*

—Mason Barber  
Sunset Beach Mayor  
On annexation delay

that first year. Then we can adopt a resolution of intent."

**Town Will Move Road**

Saying the town has no choice in the matter, council members voted unanimously Monday to spend an estimated \$5,400 to relocate a section of North Shore Drive in the old campground area on the east back side of the island. A subcontractor error made years ago left the street and the water line that serves the area, situated three to four feet off the surveyed route as shown on the plat. Councilman Ed Gore, who owns the adjacent property, said that unless the road is relocated and his property reclaimed, he may not be able to develop all of the lots in the subdivision because of setback regulations that govern such things as location of septic tanks. "I need to sell the lots," he said.

At a future point in time, the town may have to address the relocation of the water line as well.

In making the motion to put the road in its proper place and to fill in the existing roadbed, Councilman Al Odom said, "I don't think this is an optional thing."

**Parking On Go**

After months of discussion, Sunset Beach Council members finalized plans Monday night for a Sunset Boulevard public parking area.

The proposal stems from a parking study completed more than a year that addressed the need for more parking in town, particularly on the island, to improve access for both residents and visitors.

At an earlier meeting, the previous town council had approved rough plans which were then informally reviewed by the N.C. Department of Transportation and revised. Monday night, after additional revisions, the council directed consulting engineer Phil Norris of Kuske & Associates to prepare the project for bid. The changes reflect concerns raised at earlier meetings.

As approved, the lot should cost approximately \$34,000. It will provide parking for an estimated 45 ve-

hicles while putting few limits on access to adjacent businesses. The lot will also be shorter than first proposed, extending from the top of a natural grade on Sunset Boulevard to Main Street. This will reduce some of the need for drainage work and also will provide council an opportunity to see how much use the lot will receive before it considers extending it even farther from the oceanfront.

Also, as a start in developing a town sidewalk system, the board also directed Norris to prepare plans and bid specifications for a sidewalk along Main Street's oceanside from 7th to 33rd streets.

**Needed: Sand Wheels**

All that's needed before the Sunset Beach Police Department can patrol the beach strand with its "new" four-wheel-drive Jimmy is sand wheels, Town Administrator Linda Fluegel announced. The town paid \$6,600 for the 1986 model, with 74,000 in mileage. With the addition, said Fluegel, "We will see a number of tickets for littering and dogs on the strand."

A second patrol vehicle should arrive in approximately two weeks, freeing the town to sell two aging vehicles. The board set minimum bids of \$500 for a 1983 Ford Crown Victoria and \$950 for a 1982 Chevrolet.

**More Ways To Pay**

After a lengthy debate, council members agreed to Ed Gore's motion on how to charge property owners their share of the cost of a town paving project. However, they'll get to take up the topic again at the next meeting.

Since every lot owner benefits equally from the paving, said Gore, sharing the cost equally was the fairest way to charge, if allowed by law. However, Town Attorney Michael Isenberg advised the town administrator Tuesday that Gore's proposal isn't one of the town's options under state law.

Gore had proposed dividing the number of affected lots, regardless of size, into the cost of a proposed street paving package to arrive at the charge per owner. In an earlier motion that failed for lack of a second, "Bud" Scrantom had proposed sticking with the method used by the town in the past, of charging per foot, with corner lot owners paying the fee for the longest side fronting the road.

The town is sending cost information and petitions

to property owners on Canal between Cobia and 6th streets; and First, Sixth and 27th streets between Main and North Shore, and North Shore to 40th Street. On any street where at least 50 percent of the property owners agree to split the cost of paving with the town 50-50, the town will proceed with the work, billing all property owners on the street for their share of the cost. If all the streets are paved, the property owners' share for grading and paving is estimated to total approximately \$72,020 at a cost of \$225 per 50-foot lot.

**Other Business**

In other business, the council:

—Unanimously rejected a request from the planning board to conduct a public hearing on a rezoning request from A. O. King. He asked that property be rezoned from residential to commercial so that it would be worth more when condemned by the state to make room for a high-rise bridge to the island. The lot would end up under the bridge. "Who pays for this property? All of us," said Councilman Al Odom in making the motion. "I don't think this is a reasonable request to be brought to the council." Councilman "Bud" Scrantom went one step farther, saying such a request was both "immoral" and "impossible."

—On a motion by Scrantom, agreed to follow "in general" a street light plan drafted by Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. at the town's request, but install every other light indicated on the plan.

—Unanimously voted against a proposal from the town administrator to charge the town's wholesale water rate to town residents who qualify for the county's income-level-based property tax exemption. While the policy would affect four persons, Councilman Al Odom said it would be difficult to justify the cost of administration as the number of exemptions grew. While the Sea Trail Property Owners Association is charged the wholesale rate for water used in maintaining three planted areas, Councilman Ed Gore noted that the group "is giving something back to the town; it's not a total gift."

—Adopted a resolution allowing Brunswick County to charge telephone subscribers residing in town a 50-cent monthly fee to help support installation and operation of a countywide expanded 911 system.

—Awarded the bid for paving the town hall parking lot to low bidder APAC of Supply, at \$6,900. MAC Construction had bid \$8,000.

## Ocean Isle Looking For Growth Input

Ocean Isle Beach residents and landowners will have their first chance to let town officials know how they want the community to grow in the future at a public participation meeting Tuesday, Feb. 13.

Town leaders are hoping for input on current issues facing the resort community and will review portions of the town's 1986 CAMA Land Use Plan, said Roger Briggs, a consultant with McKim & Creed Engineers of Wilmington. The meeting starts at 9 a.m. in town hall.

In January, town commissioners adopted a public participation plan they will follow in updating the land use plan, which sets development guidelines for the town. Next week's meeting is the first step in that plan.

"We will have nothing to present," said Briggs, who is assisting the town with the land use plan update. "We'll just be there to listen."

Officials will be looking for comments on issues ranging from future growth of the island to town services such as water and sewer and police protection. Good and bad points of the 1986 Land Use Plan will also be reviewed, and Briggs will highlight some of the current

policy statements. "More emphasis is being placed on policy statements these days than

land uses and maps," he said. The land use plan features policies on resource protection, production and management as well as the town's hurricane evacuation plan.

Within a few days after the meeting, Briggs said questionnaires seeking more input on land use issues will be mailed to permanent residents and a percentage of the property owners. Surveys will also be sent to some residents of the town's extraterritorial area on the mainland, which the town board is expected to formally establish at next week's meeting.

Public opinion gathered through the questionnaires will be presented at the town commissioners' March 13 meeting, said Briggs.

In the past, the state has encouraged local officials to invite public participation as part of the land use planning process. State administrative code now requires it.

Briggs said discussion of the land use plan update may be included on the agendas of the planning board and board of commissioners through the month of June. Public input on the plan will be welcome at

any of those meetings, he added. A public hearing on the completed land use plan has tentatively been scheduled May 8. The N.C. Coastal Resources Commission will have to certify the final plan.

## Vote Was Taken In Secret Session


An article in the Feb. 1 issue of *The Brunswick Beacon* incorrectly reported that the Calabash Commissioners voted unanimously to hire Edward Schaack as building inspector at the board's Jan. 30 meeting.

The actual vote was 3-2. Commissioners Ed Rice, Keith Hardee and George Taubel voted in favor of hiring Schaack, while board members Phyllis Manning and George Anderson voted against it, according to Anderson.

The vote was taken in closed session, while a reporter waited outside the board room for the commissioners to return to open session. The vote was apparently in violation of the N.C. Open Meetings Law, which requires that any vote to hire or fire be taken in open session.

There was no formal vote taken in open session, but there was no indication of opposition to the hiring.

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