

Inspection Program Could Boost Building At Holden Beach

BY DOUG RUTTER

Plans to organize a group that would supervise the operation of waste-treatment systems on Holden Beach could pave the way for more development on the island where town officials and landowners have battled state rules that have limited building in recent years.

Holden Beach officials plan to set up a "management entity" that would oversee the inspection and maintenance of septic tanks and other systems used to treat wastewater.

Formation of the entity will allow the use of more alternative treatment systems on the island and will be required by the middle of this year for the county to issue permits for conventional septic tanks and low-pressure pipe systems, said Gary McDonald, a supervisor with the Brunswick County Health Department Environmental Section.

At a joint meeting of the town Board of Commissioners and Planning Board Monday night, commissioners informally agreed that a policy supporting the management entity concept be included in the town's 1990 CAMA Land Use Plan Update.

In doing so, commissioners accepted the recommendation of the Holden Beach Planning and Zoning Board, which voted last Thursday to recommend the management entity approach after discussion with county health officials.

McDonald said setting up a management entity would help the town in two ways: First, it would allow the county Health Department to continue permitting conventional septic tanks and the less-popular low-pressure pipe systems after July 1.

Although the N.C. Health Services Commission may delay the requirement, McDonald said existing rules will prevent the most common treatment systems used in the county from being permitted after June, unless a local management entity is in place.

"This is the most economical thing short of doing nothing."

—Bill Burnett, planner
Henry Von Oesen and Associates

Second, McDonald said having a management entity in place would allow the county to permit more alternative systems on Holden Beach, such as aerobic systems and holding tanks. He said the management group would be required to oversee semi-annual inspections of all systems on the island and would have to provide annual reports to the county.

A policy supporting the management entity was one of four wastewater treatment alternatives presented last week by a consultant helping the town update its land use plan — a document containing data and policies that will help guide future growth of the town over the next 10 years.

Bill Burnett, environmental planner with Henry Von Oesen and Associates of Wilmington, also said the town could adopt a policy supporting a central sewer system that would serve the entire island, a sewer system to serve just the canal subdivisions or the existing methods of treating and disposing of waste.

Addressing town commissioners and Planning Board members Monday, Burnett said a management entity would "open the doors" for the permitting of wastewater treatment systems that will work on Holden Beach when septic tanks cannot be used.

"It will help to alleviate the problem that you've been trying to alleviate for several years now," Burnett said.

State wastewater-treatment regulations have slowed development at Holden Beach since late 1987, when the county Health Department reinterpreted state rules and started requiring there be at least one foot of naturally occurring soil above the water table for a septic tank permit to be issued. Those rules affected more than 200 lots along the canals at Holden Beach.

Since that time, new septic tank regulations have gone into effect, which would allow more canal lots to be developed but still leave many lots unbuildable, because of setbacks and minimum size restrictions.

Currently, neither the town nor the county inspects septic tanks and other waste-treatment systems on a regular basis. Once the systems are placed in the ground, Burnett said, they are often forgotten until there is a problem.

Management entities are used all over the country, he said, and can help prevent problems from occurring.

While the town board would most likely serve as the management entity, Burnett said the town could hire another employee or a private firm to inspect waste systems and ensure they are properly maintained. Through the management entity, the town could require that septic tanks be pumped out every three years to five years, as recommended by health officials.

Burnett estimated last week that an inspection and maintenance program would cost each homeowner between \$5 and \$7 per month. The program is about \$15 per month cheaper than a sewer system serving the canals, he said, and \$40 per month cheaper than a central sewer system. "This is the most economical thing short of doing nothing," he said.

The consultant said a central sewer system would cost the town about \$4 million and would take at least five to 10 years to plan, design and build.

A smaller system serving only the canals would cost less if land could be found on the island to dispose of

the waste. But he said there aren't many suitable large tracts on the island that the town could afford to purchase.

Turning its back on the wastewater-treatment problems now could cost the town a lot of money in the long run if Holden Beach were required to build a central sewer system, Burnett said.

After hearing the four alternatives Monday, Commissioner Bob Buck said the town has no choice but to set up a management entity. "This is the only workable alternative that the town has got," he said. "You can get rid of the other three."

Although the Planning Board unanimously recommended the management entity approach, two members said last week they think the town eventually will have to go with a sewer system serving all or part of the island.

"I think the longer we put it off, the more it's going to cost us," board member Jim Shafor said of a central sewer system.

Ted Rivenbark said setting up a management entity is the least the town can do right now; a community sewer system serving the canals may be needed in the near future.

However, Planning Board Chairman Charlotte Nolte pointed out that 70 percent of the property owners and residents who responded to a recent citizen survey favor an inspection program. The same respondents were split over the need for a central sewer system.

Other land-use policies discussed Monday night included those dealing with resource protection, inlet stabilization and the development of estuarine islands.

A draft of the policies is expected to be available for public inspection at town hall Wednesday, May 2. The land-use plan update is expected to go to the N.C. Coastal Resources Commission for review following a local public hearing in June.

Holden To Pick Up Bulky Trash Items

Holden Beach's semi-annual pickup of debris, appliances and other bulky trash items will take place next week, even though the town's 1978 dump truck is out of commission.

At an emergency meeting Tuesday morning, town commissioners voted to buy a 1988 Ford dump truck for \$16,500, with delivery expected within the week. The town had budgeted \$12,500 this fiscal year to purchase a dump truck. The additional \$4,000 needed to buy the truck will come from the \$15,000 remaining in a capital-outlay fund.

Excluding construction materials, town employees plan to pick up and dispose of a variety of trash items left by property owners in the street right-of-way, according to Town Manager Gus Ulrich. A similar clean-up is planned for early October.

The town was scheduled to pick up the trash last week, but the old dump truck broke down, Ulrich said. He said he plans to take bids and sell the vehicle.



STAFF PHOTO BY DOUG RUTTER

Welcome Back To The Beach

A wooden sign welcoming people to Holden Beach was back in business last Thursday, just in time for the Easter weekend, after several years in cold storage. The sign, last seen at the intersection of Ocean Boulevard and Jordan Street when the old drawbridge was removed nearly four years ago, was placed at the foot of the high-rise bridge. Building Inspector Dwight Carroll and Commissioner Judy Bryan headed up restoration efforts, making and painting new letters for the sign and repairing the sea gull. Pictured erecting the sign are Public Works Director Henry Thompson on the backhoe and employees Charles Zenzer, left, and Edward Hewett.

GOP Jamboree Set

A GOP May Primary Jamboree slated Saturday by the Brunswick County Republican Party will feature barbecued chicken, dancing to music by Crossroads Band and mixing with party candidates.

Party spokesman Bill Dunn said all Republican candidates have been asked to attend the jamboree, which begins at 5 p.m. Saturday at the Brunswick County Republican Headquarters on U.S. 17 north of Supply. Dancing will start at 8 p.m.

Door prizes and a cake walk are also planned at the party fund-raising event. Admission will be charged.

Democrats Set BBQ

Three precincts are joining together Saturday to sponsor a meet-the-candidates barbecue featuring all Democratic candidates.

The barbecue will be held from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Lockwood Folly Community Building on Stanbury Road, said Marion Davis, Democratic chairman for Secession I precinct. "This will be an opportunity for everybody to meet the candidates and ask them questions."

All Democratic candidates have been invited and are expected to attend the barbecue, which is sponsored by Secession I, Secession II and Frying Pan precincts.

FEMA To Show New Flood Map To Holden Beach Residents

Proposed changes in federal flood insurance maps that could result in higher costs for people who build new homes along the coast will be the topic of a public meeting next week at Holden Beach.

Dwight Carroll, building inspector and code enforcement officer at Holden Beach, said officials with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) regional office in Atlanta will discuss amendments to the maps at a meeting Wednesday, May 2, at 11 a.m. in town hall.

FEMA administers the National Flood Insurance Program, a federal program that makes flood insurance available in communities that enforce regulations designed to reduce flood damage, such as elevating houses on pilings.

The flood maps are used to determine flood insurance rates. Carroll said the new Holden

Beach map is generally more restrictive than the existing one. The new map has minimum house elevations ranging from zero to 23 feet above sea level at different locations on the island.

In February, local building inspectors said FEMA had proposed average rises of two feet in the flood elevations on the area's barrier islands. Also, they said changes had been proposed in some flood zone boundaries.

Carroll and Drued Roberson, building inspector at Ocean Isle Beach, said at the time that the higher flood elevations wouldn't necessarily mean that beach homes will have to be built higher off the ground.

However, they said, homeowners who choose not to build according to the new minimums probably won't be eligible for insurance discounts that are available to people who do build above the minimum

elevation.

As an example, Carroll said a home built three feet above the current flood elevation in a certain zone would receive approximately a \$500 discount on flood insurance. An identical house built when the new maps are in effect might get only a \$200 discount, since it would be only one foot above the new elevation.

PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL SERVICES

- Counseling and Consultation
- Behavior Therapy
- Psychoeducational Testing
- Learning & Motivational Problems
- Stress Management

Dr. Robert C. Peterson, Ph.D.
Calabash • 579-5473

Winnabow Man Killed In Fiery Truck Crash

A Winnabow man was killed Monday morning in Columbus County when the gasoline tanker truck he was driving crashed into another vehicle and exploded.

The victim was identified as Michael Wayne King, 32, of Route 1, Winnabow, according to the North Carolina Highway Patrol office in Elizabethtown. The fatal accident happened Monday at 7:55 a.m., two-tenths of a mile west of Brunswick County on U.S. 74-76.

Volunteer firefighters and rescue squads from the Leland and Acme-Delco-Riegelwood departments responded to the accident, said Brunswick County Emergency Management Coordinator Cecil Logan, who also went to the wreck scene.

According to Logan and the Highway Patrol, King's tanker was headed west on U.S. 74-76 when it slammed into a gravel truck that was stopped for another traffic accident in the roadway. At least three

other motorists were injured in the collision, Logan said.

He indicated that reduced visibility on the highway Monday morning contributed to the accident. "It was real foggy," he said. "They could hardly see."

As a result of the wreck and explosion, U.S. 74-76 was closed Monday until around 2:30 p.m., Logan said. He added that traffic was detoured onto N.C. 87 and other side roads in the Delco area.

**AT GRISSETTOWN
BRING HOME
THE BEACON**

On Sale At
GRISSETTOWN SERVICE STATION
RANDY'S PORK CENTER
WENDELL SMITH'S

**GET \$150 ON
A NEW
ELECTRIC
WATER
HEATER**



To replace your old water heater or when constructing a new home.
LIMITED TIME OFFER


For Details Contact
Glenda Stanaland
1-800-682-5309
OR
(919) 754-4391



**Brunswick Electric
Membership Corporation**

Come and Meet
Award Winning Artist
Robert R. Clark
who will personally sign
for you his new limited
edition prints of
Coastal Scenes
on
April 28, 2-5 P.M.
at
Art Plus Gallery
Post Office Complex, Hwy. 179
Calabash, N.C.
(919) 579-9929

L. Bookworm
Causeway Plaza • Holden Beach • 842-7380
Sun-Thurs 10-6 • Fri & Sat. 10-9



**PAPERBACK
BESTSELLERS**

- 'The Negotiator' by Frederick Forsyth
- 'Rivals' by Janet Daily
- 'Rules of Prey' by John Sanford
- 'Almost Heaven' by Judith McKnight
- 'Stranger in Savannah' by Eugenia Price

Vote David L. Gause
★★ Republican Candidate ★★
Brunswick County Sheriff



- ★ Thirty Years Experience In Law Enforcement
- ★ Retired Wildlife Officer
- ★ Certified Law Enforcement Officer
- ★ Shallotte Alderman For 6 Years

**FREE
Pig Pickin'**
Sat., April 28, 6-8 p.m.
Shallotte Municipal Park
(Behind Chamber of Commerce)

Harrelson's Your Landscape Professional
NC Landscape Contractor #877

Farm & Garden Center
Hwy. 17 S., Shallotte, 754-6373

Bedding Plants & Seeds, Lawn Seed, Fertilizers & Supplies, Trees, Shrubs & Much Much More!



Visit Us In Booth #A16
Brunswick Living Home Show