

Sunset Beach Keeps Moving On Annexations, Sewer

BY SUSAN USHER

Sunset Beach took two more small steps toward additional growth Monday night.

Council members set a public hearing on June 10 regarding the proposed annexation of two developments and took another step in its quest for a public sewer system.

Annexation Hearing Set

The town is renewing its previous move to annex Oyster Bay Colony and Sugar Sands I and II in a friendly take-over.

A previous effort stalled when calculations regarding costs versus benefits were found to be inaccurate. Since then the lines have been slightly redrawn and figures recalculated.

The hearing will start at 7:30 p.m. at town hall. After the hearing the council must wait at least 10 days before taking a vote.

In advance of the hearing, at its May 6 meeting, the council is scheduled to approve the formal annexation report that details the town's plans for serving the areas once they are annexed.

Service requirement summaries reviewed at Monday night's meeting suggest that the areas qualify for annexation by the town and that the costs of providing services to them would be less than the revenues received.

No additional officers would be required with the annexation of these areas, but the police department notes that any additional annexations

will require additional officers.

Sugar Sands I and II, a patio home development with 66 of 110 lots developed, receive town water. The 1.1 miles of streets would be taken over the town for maintenance and included in the street lighting program. The projected cost of contracting sanitation services would be \$4,752; mosquito control, \$690; and stop signs, \$276. These costs of \$6,268 compare to projected receipts of \$15,737, for excess revenues of \$9,469.

The town proposes not to take over Oyster Bay Colony one mile of roadway, which loops through buildings that house 99 units.

Estimating conservatively, the town expects to collect at least \$44,876 if the property is annexed, including \$15,588 in ad valorem taxes and at least \$25,000 in accommodations taxes since many of the units are rentals. It expects to spend about \$982 for sanitation service and mosquito control. Mayor pro tem Ed Gore questioned the town not taking in the road, or at least giving the owners the opportunity to dedicate the road to the town.

To Seek Funds

Council members followed through on earlier discussions and directed Town Administrator Linda Fluegel Monday to send letters seeking the maximum amount of money available from state and federal sources, the first step in getting considered for various grant and loan programs.

They also set another workshop

meeting on the sewer project for Tuesday, April 16, at 7:30 p.m. at the town hall.

The town can choose to pursue a gravity system, a type of pressure system or flat grade system.

Engineer Phil Norris of Andrew & Kuske agreed with Councilman Bud Scramton that a flat grade system or some variation of it might be most suitable for Sunset Beach. But he said a feasibility study would be needed to make the final determination.

A flat grade would require use of septic tanks and a town treatment plant that handles liquid waste rather than solid waste. Such a plant should be less costly over time, Norris suggested. The town is considering a possible tie-in with a golf course irrigation system or waste treatment plant, but the systems would have to be compatible.

At the workshop council members will meet with area businessmen who have an interest in a cooperative project.

Second Chance

Mayor Mason Barber reported that the Seaside intersection of N.C. 179 and N.C. 904 may yet qualify for a traffic signal.

He said Douglas Bowers, division engineer for the state Department of Transportation, inspected the intersection while on a tour of the town's streets.

"He said he thought we had a legitimate concern and that he would have it rechecked," said Barber. The state had earlier said it would install a turn lane but that the intersection

traffic did not justify a light.

The mayor said he asked the state to install a caution light and sign asking motorists not to block the N.C. 179 turn-off just north of the bridge and gave notice the town may not continue to pay police officers to direct traffic at the bridge.

However, Bowers indicated DOT had no plans to provide personnel for the task. "So if any traffic is to be directed it will have to be the same way it has been," said Barber.

DOT wants to replace the existing swing bridge with a high-rise fixed span. The project is on hold pending appeal of a court decision that the state needs to make a more complete environmental study of the project's impact on the island and obtain new permits before work continues.

DOT does plan to repair steep drop-offs along the shoulders and to mark its right-of-way to designate appropriate parking areas along the mainland business area approaching the bridge. Barber said large delivery trucks are parking too close to the roadway and blocking motorists' visibility on N.C. 179.

Other Business

In other business the council: Approved job descriptions and performance standards for the town's general accounting and water accounting clerks.

Voted to transfer unappropriated funds into the street fund to pave both 29th and 30th streets with the town and property owners sharing the cost equally, and accepted peti-

tions for paving signed by property owners.

Received the building inspector's report, which reflects issuance of permits for one single-family house, one duplex, two bulkheads, two storage buildings, four additions and one sign. Fees of \$608 were collected on construction valued at \$249,913.

Noted receipt of a certificate of appreciation from the Brunswick County Agricultural Extension Service for cooperation in its dune stabilization project. The certificate will be displayed at the public works office, since its employees were the ones involved in the project.

Approved a house numbering ordinance so that the town can make certain all houses have numbers posted, a necessity with the 911 emergency system that goes into operation in 1992 countywide.

Noted that groups that obtain Sea Trail Plantation's permission to use a tract at the Seaside intersection for special events still must have a special use permit from the town. This includes the South Brunswick Islands Chamber of Commerce, which

holds its annual N.C. Oyster Festival on the site.

Encouraged Ginny Barber, wife of the mayor, to continue exploring ideas for a community July Fourth project. A home decorating contest may be held.

Heard a request from one of the operators of the Sunset Beach Fishing Pier for "cooperation" from town police. He wants to make open containers illegal in the parking lot, but not at the pier itself, which has an ABC license and this season will sell "beer to go" only to ticketed fishermen. He said people bringing in beer from outside and allowing minors to drink it in the parking lot was his biggest problem last year. He wants officers to come and make an arrest when called. However, the town attorney said that while an officer can respond if the person has been asked to leave and refuses, the pier would still need someone who saw the person drinking and is willing to testify to that effect.

Other suggestions ranged from hiring off-duty police officers to patrol the lot to turning the lot over to the town as public property.



State Employees Gather

Legislators from Brunswick and New Hanover counties spoke Saturday to members of the State Employees Association District 89 at a breakfast in Wilmington. State Rep. E. David Redwine (center) discussed on pay raises, furloughs, the state health plan and a possible state lottery referendum in November. Attending the legislative update from Brunswick County were Bob Gore (left) an employee of the N.C. Department of Transportation, and Mazie Frink (right) administrator of the Brunswick County office of the N.C. Employment Security Commission.

ORDINANCES TAKE EFFECT APRIL 19

Calabash Commission Adopts New Zoning Rules

BY DOUG RUTTER

Calabash area residents will start living under a new set of rules April 19, when several key sections of the town's new zoning code take effect.

Town commissioners adopted new rules on signs, trash containers and other land use issues last Tuesday, following months of study and a public hearing that took two nights to complete.

Among other things, the new code establishes a dozen zoning districts in and around town. Regulations define permitted and conditional uses and the dimensional requirements for land in each district.

In the only major change made last week, commissioners agreed to allow homes in business districts.

The board approved 19 sections of the new code last week.

Zoning regulations apply in the town and its extraterritorial area (ETA), which includes most land within a mile of the town limits.

The new zoning map includes three residential, two manufactured home and two business districts, as well as industrial, conservation, agricultural, campground and planned unit development districts.

Applicable deed restrictions from each of the 14 subdivisions in the town and ETA have been incorporated into the zoning rules so the spirit of the deeds will be preserved.

Carolina Shores, for instance, is zoned R-15, DR-1. Churches are allowed in the R-15 zoning district, but churches will not be allowed in Carolina Shores because they are prohibited in the deed restrictions (DR-1).

Prior to adopting the zoning regulations, commissioners made a change that had been requested at a public hearing last month. Residences will be permitted in the Central Business and Highway Commercial districts.

Residences Allowed

As first presented at the public hearing, the zoning code would have prevented someone who owns a home in a business district from rebuilding if the house burned down or was substantially damaged.

Several homeowners voiced concern at the hearing about not being able to rebuild. They said their lots aren't big enough for a commercial building without a sewer system.

Commissioner Ray Card last week urged the town board to change the proposed zoning regulations so people who own homes in commercial areas could rebuild.

"It's pretty tough to tell somebody at this point in the game that they can't rebuild their house," Card said. "I don't think the town or anybody should take it away from them."

Sign Use Regulated

Probably the most controversial

"It's pretty tough to tell somebody at this point in the game that they can't rebuild their house. I don't think the town or anybody should take it away from them."

—Ray Card

Calabash Commissioner

ordinance adopted last week regulates the use of signs—an issue that has created friction between town officials and business owners in the past year.

The debate over signs heated up last year when town commissioners started enforcing a 1982 sign ordinance, and about 80 signs in and around Calabash were removed.

Some merchants have argued that the regulations will put them out of business because it restricts their use of signs as advertising. Four business owners have appealed their cases to the town board of adjustment so far, and one lawsuit filed by the town against a business owner is pending.

The new ordinance includes design standards for signs, regulates campaign signs and prohibits portable and off-premises signs as well as several other types.

Signs that don't conform with the code will be given anywhere from six months to three years to comply. The length of the grace period will depend on the value of the sign.

The new ordinance establishing the board of adjustment says the board will be made up of five town commissioners who appoint themselves. The board has the authority to grant variances from town code.

At last month's public hearing, residents had complained about the makeup of the board of adjustment. They said the panel should include members other than elected town officials.

Mayor Pro Tem George Anderson, who chairs the board of adjustment, said he would like to keep the makeup of the board the same for now. He said it could be changed in the future so other people could serve.

Although commissioners didn't change membership on the board, they did make one related revision in the proposed code. The fee for appearing before the board was dropped from \$50 to \$25.

Dumpster Pads Required

Another new zoning ordinance that will directly affect business owners relates to refuse containers. It requires dumpsters to be placed on concrete pads with guard posts. Dumpsters will have to be screened on three sides so they are not visible from the street.

Commissioners also adopted or-

dinances last week dealing with abandoned structures, travel trailer

parks, noise, light and glare and abandoned or junk vehicles.

Other sections of the new code address legal provisions, definitions, administration, enforcement and penalties, changes and amendments, general provisions, accessory uses, exceptions and modifications, non-conforming uses and conditional uses.

Town officials are still reviewing ordinances relating to landscaping and tree preservation, off-street parking and subdivisions. A public hearing has to be held before those rules are adopted.

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