

Shallotte Aldermen Approve Sign For Handee Hugo's

BY DOUG RUTTER

Shallotte officials will allow a convenience store on the U.S. 17 bypass to put up a second sign in violation of town code.

Aldermen voted 4-1 last week to permit another free-standing sign at Handee Hugo's, located where the bypass intersects N.C. 130 West.

Mike Underwood of Handee Hugo's said motorists on the bypass can't see the existing sign that faces N.C. 130 until they've driven past the store. He wants to put up a second sign facing the bypass.

Town code allows businesses in Highway Commercial zoning districts to put up one free-standing sign.

However, most town board members agreed last week that the store has a unique situation because it's located on a corner lot. They said the existing sign isn't easily seen from the bypass.

Alderman David Gause made the motion at last Wednesday's meeting to grant a variance from the sign ordinance. Nobody spoke in favor or in opposition to the sign at a public hearing.

Mayor Pro Tem Paul Wayne Reeves voted against the request. He said the town's planning board had recommended against changing the sign ordinance to accommodate the store.

"I think they had several things other than this Handee Hugo in mind whenever that decision was made," Reeves said.

He said granting a variance would open the door for similar requests. "I personally don't feel that it's setting a good precedent, and I think we're opening a can of worms."

Reeves said he thinks one sign could get the job done if it was put in the right location.

Alderman Wilton Harrelson said "it would be an engineering impossibility to put a four-face sign facing in four different directions on one post that could be seen."

Other Business

In other business last week, aldermen:

■Voted to spend about \$20,000 for in-line sewer pumps to be installed at the lift station on Wall Street. Engineer Finley Boney said the

booster pumps are needed to alleviate a problem with pressure. "I think we might very easily save \$20,000 in residential pump replacements in the next 11 months," he said.

■Zoned property in Brierwood where the golf cart shed is located. The .84 acres of land was zoned R-

15, as recommended by the planning board.

■Annexed lot E-25 in Brierwood Estates as requested by owners Charles and Ellen Allen, after a public hearing at which no comments were heard.

■Adopted a resolution allowing absentee voting in all Shallotte municipal elections.

The resolution, introduced by Reeves, will be sent to the Brunswick County Board of Elections, which handles elections for the town.

■Authorized the police department to spend \$2,250 on car radios. Police received the money from the N.C. Department of Revenue as the

town's share of taxes paid on illegal drugs confiscated during an arrest earlier this year.

■Postponed a decision on proposed street improvements until the next meeting. The town has received bids on patching and paving work on Pine, Hinson, White, Pender and Columbus streets; Northside and

Country Club drives and Fairway Court.

■Agreed to consider a donation to the Brunswick County Literacy Council in next fiscal year's budget. Board members decided against spending \$200 to sponsor a team in the upcoming literacy council spelling bee.

Hearing Set On ETA Map

Shallotte officials will hold a public hearing next week on a proposal to extend town zoning authority outside the town limits.

Aldermen plan to establish an extraterritorial area (ETA) that would cover most property within one mile of the corporate limits.

If it's approved, the town could enforce its zoning and subdivision regulations and the state building code in that area.

Residents and property owners in the ETA would not receive town services, but also would not pay town taxes.

The proposed area extends south on U.S. 17 to Old Shallotte Road and north to Royal Oak Road. On N.C. 130, the area would extend west to Airport Road and east to Red Bug Road.

Shallotte's ETA would include all of Brierwood Estates and extend out N.C. 179 close to Hale Swamp Road. The map can be viewed at town hall.

The planning board voted at its last meeting to recommend approval of the extraterritorial area, which was last discussed about two years ago.

"They were anxious to see you go ahead with this," Public Works Director Albert Hughes told aldermen last week.

Town officials see extraterritorial zoning as a way of controlling future development around the town limits.

A public hearing on the ETA proposal will be held Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 7:30 p.m. in town hall.

Also next week, aldermen will conduct a hearing on an annexation request. B.B. Ward has asked the town to annex 1.46 acres at the intersection of Country Club Drive and Wendy Lane in Brierwood Estates.

The land is presently being used for tennis courts and a parking area. Ward has asked the town to waive all impact fees until water or sewer service is needed.

However, aldermen agreed informally last week that an out-of-town acreage fee would have to be paid before the land is annexed.

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