

Holden Beach Board OKs Landscaping Plan

BY DOUG RUTTER
 Holden Beach Commissioners approved a landscaping plan for town hall last week, but still haven't decided where to house the police department.
 Commissioners unanimously accepted a beautification committee proposal at their meeting last Wednesday to dress up the west and north sides of town hall with plants and walkways.
 The supplies and labor will cost less than \$5,000, said Beautification Committee Chairperson Margaret Vasco.
 She said the shrubs need to be planted before March 31. Plans also call for a ramp at the meeting room door to make it accessible to the handicapped.
 On a 3-2 vote, commissioners agreed to have a gutter installed on the west side of the town hall roof so rainwater wouldn't harm the new plants.
 Commissioners Gay Atkins and David Sandifer voted against the idea, which was proposed by the beautification committee.
 Sandifer said he wanted to know the cost of the project and where the money would come from in the town budget before approving it.
 Ms. Atkins said she thought the board should agree on an overall plan for the town hall complex before putting up a gutter on one side of the town hall.
 Commissioners toured the complex grounds during their meeting last week, but came to no conclusion about where to put the police department.
 The force currently works out of the bottom floor of a house the town owns at the northwest corner of Davis Street.

The town board that left office in December had planned to renovate the old public works garage and use it for the police department.
 But the new board, which features four new faces, hasn't decided whether to follow those plans or leave the police department in the house.
 Bids received for the garage renovation were about twice as much as what the town had expected. Instead of \$30,000, renovating the garage as planned would cost the town about \$60,000.
 If the town board decides to leave the police department where it is, Building Inspector Dwight Carroll said the house would have to be brought up to current standards.
 Carroll said the state has already given Holden Beach two extensions so the police can use the house on a temporary basis.
 In a related matter, earlier plans to replace the underground gasoline storage tank with an above-ground model are on hold.
 The town has removed the old tank and is presently buying gas at local service stations.
 Commissioners indicated last week that they might like to keep it that way to save the town money on the new tank and insurance.
Street Lights Coming
 Brunswick Electric Membership Corp. has agreed to set up two types of street lights on Holden Beach so residents can choose the one they like best.
 Town Manager Gary Parker said two "metro" and two "decora" lights will be erected on poles near the 100 block of Ocean Boulevard West, with a 400-foot separation between the two types of lights.

A majority of the town commissioners are in favor of renting street lights from the local utility. Parker said placing them at each intersection and spacing them every 500 feet would cost about \$30,000 per year.
 Town officials asked for the free sample lights on Ocean Boulevard so residents can see them operating and decide which type they want to have on the island.
 The board's next workshop will be held Monday, Feb. 17, instead of the regular Feb. 19 date. Several commissioners will be attending a class for newly-elected officials in Chapel Hill on the 19th.
Other Business
 In other business last week, commissioners:
 ■ Took no action after meeting for about one hour in executive session to discuss legal and personnel matters.
 ■ Did not discuss a proposal that would allow the building inspector and town manager to interpret rooms on house plans as bedrooms if they can reasonably be expected to be used as bedrooms. Gil Bass,

Sandifer and Ms. Atkins voted against a motion by Sid Swarts to bring the issue off the table.
 ■ Heard from Allan Dameron that Brunswick County Travel Package will be asking the town to contribute money to help fund an upcoming meeting of the N.C. Board of Transportation in Brunswick County. Dameron said he would come back to the board soon with a specific request.
 ■ Asked Parker to get bids from companies interested in handling the town's trash pickup and removal. Board members want proposals for multi-year contracts and curbside recycling included with the bids. The town's contract with its current hauler, Chambers, expires March 31.
 ■ Briefly discussed delays with the underground utilities project. Parker said he expects work crews to return no sooner than March, and possibly as late as September.
 ■ Appointed Commissioner Jim Fournier as Holden Beach's representative on the Water Quality Task Force.

Older Adult Programs Face State Changes

BY TERRY POPE
 Services for Brunswick County's older adults will undergo state-mandated changes this year, leaving local officials wondering about the outcome.
 Affected July 1 are two programs in Brunswick County's Department of Social Services and two in the Brunswick County Health Department. DSS must give up control of its in-home health care and adult day care programs for the elderly.
 "There's a possibility of good and bad," said Brunswick County DSS Director Jamie Orrock. "You don't know how it will impact."
 County commissioners must designate a local agency to develop a plan for older adult services for 1992-93. That agency will coordinate programs through the N.C. Department of Human Resources' Division of Aging.
 The state is not asking for cuts in older adult programs, just that one agency serve as coordinator in each county under the direction of local boards of commissioners.
 The goal is for county commissioners to become more involved in planning the types of services to provide for the elderly. The state plan was outlined in March 1991 by the Division of Aging in a publication titled, "North Carolina Aging Services Plan: A Guide for Successful Aging in the 1990s."
 The county can either keep its present Department of Older Adults, now headed by Ronnie Robinson, and have it implement programs for the elderly, or it can choose a private agency. A decision is expected by March, in time to prepare the county's 1992-93 fiscal year budget.
 "What our commissioners choose to do, I do not know at this point," said Orrock, who said he will meet this week with County Manager David Clegg to review the changes.
 Orrock said state officials are also slow in delivering the news.
 "We're not getting much information out of the Division of Social Services," he said.
 What Orrock does know is that his department will lose its \$30,000

in-home care for the elderly program and its \$8,000 in-home adult day care program to another agency. Those provide in-home health care for patients who are perhaps steps away from being placed into a nursing home.
 The county's Department of Older Adults oversees the congregate meals programs at senior citizens centers in Shallotte, Leland, Southport and Oak Island. Meals are served five days a week at all but Oak Island, where meals are served once a week. The department also coordinates home-delivered meals and senior transportation programs.
 The health department helps DSS with its Community Alternative Program (CAP) and Personal Care Service programs by providing nursing assistance. The current ongoing caseload in CAP is 26 patients and 14 for Personal Care Services, said Health Director Michael Rhodes.
 "It does allow your county commissioners to become more involved in selecting the types of services for the elderly in the county," said Orrock. "That can be based on what the community believes is needed."
 The state's Aging Services Plan details a 10-year vision for developing "county-based programs on aging, strengthening services for the impaired and improving services that maintain the health and independence of all older adults."
 The shift is aimed at improving state, area agency and county planning for a growing older population in North Carolina. According to statistics, the state's older population is expected to increase at twice the national rate during the 1990s as more and more retirees settle here.
 The study also noted that per capita spending for in-home services across the state in 1990 for persons 65 or older was unevenly distributed by counties, from a low of \$7.77 to a high of \$392.
 In-home services, transportation and housing emerged as the most important issues facing the aging in North Carolina in a 1990 survey of all 100 counties, the study indicated.

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