

Commissioners Still Mulling Proposed Planning Board Ordinance

BY DORI COSGROVE GURGANUS
Calabash commissioners aren't satisfied with a new ordinance that would redefine responsibilities of the planning board, and will wait for word from the town attorney before approving any changes in the proposed document.

Planning Board member Al Smith drafted the ordinance, dubbed an "excellent job" by Commissioner George Anderson.

Problems arose Tuesday night, however, when the full board of commissioners had a chance to look over the proposed ordinance.

Most of the problems come from clauses that give the planning board powers that the commissioners don't even have, pointed out Commissioner Jon Sanborn.

He argued that parts of the proposed outline allow the planning board to hire consultants and advisors, and to distribute information and publications that the commissioners know nothing about.

"The board of commissioners doesn't even have that kind of latitude," Sanborn said, calling the policy a "blank check" from the town bank account.

Another part of the ordinance calls for representatives of the extra-territorial area (ETA) to have full, equal voting power along with representatives of District 1 and District 2 of the town.

Such a move, Commissioner Stu Thorn said, is "weighted towards the ETA," and gives that part of the jurisdiction more voice than District 1. Sanborn asked that phrases call-

ing for input or permission from the commissioners be added to many sections of the document.

The ordinance, which "passed 100 percent" with the planning board, said Anderson, will be reviewed by town attorney Mike Ramos for comments and suggestions.

A public hearing would have to be scheduled before the board could enact the ordinance, Ramos said.

Meetings With DOT

Commissioner Robert Noe said he'd had a meeting with a representative of the N.C. Department of Transportation recently, during which he pointed out damage to trees caused by the four-laning project on U.S. 17.

John Pope, a representative of Doug Bowers, Division 3 DOT engineer in Wilmington, walked along the entire length of Northwest Drive with the commissioner and looked at trees in the right of way that have been damaged by DOT contracted workers, Noe said.

Pope said he'd get back to the commissioner to report what might be done to remedy the situation.

Anderson also announced that several commissioners are to meet March 13 at town hall with a representative of Tommy Harrelson, secretary of the state Department of Transportation.

Frank Rouse, of Harrelson's office, asked for the meeting as a result of the town's Jan. 31 letter to the secretary, Anderson said.

Other Business

In other business:
■Noe reported that the town had contracted with a private waste service to pick up brush and lawn rubbish on a curbside basis within the town limits on April 13.

■Commissioner Ray Card reported that commissioners should soon hear a decision from the planning board as a result of its March 2 meeting to discuss rezoning Calabash Acres.

Audience members were "split

50-50," he said, on the issue of using Meares Avenue or N.C. 179 as a dividing line for the subdivision, and no real arguments were presented.

■Commissioners voted unanimously to purchase two sets of magnetic signs that will be used to identify automobiles driven by town employees or others while conducting town business.


■Thorn reported that a committee was appointed at the Coastal Initiative Group's March 4 meeting

to seek comments from local merchants regarding a proposed town festival and report back to the group.

■Card announced that the Calabash and Sunset Beach planning boards will meet at Calabash Town Hall

March 23 to discuss topics of mutual interest.

"It's nothing serious," he said. "They just need to keep in touch with neighboring towns."




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AT LELAND

Injuries Slight In Accident Involving Two School Buses

Both the N.C. Highway Patrol and the Brunswick County Schools are investigating an accident at Leland last Thursday afternoon that involved two Leland Middle School buses.

Approximately a dozen people, most of them students, received slight injuries in the 3:15 p.m. accident that occurred on Lanvale Road near its intersection with Old Fayetteville Road shortly after school dismissed.

One bus, operated by Connie Gainey Kennedy, had stopped to let a student off. A van was stopped behind that bus. The second school bus, operated by Kennedy Lee

Morrison, ran into the rear of the van, pushing it into the rear of the first bus.

Morrison was charged with failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident.

Trooper D.A. Lewis of the N.C. Highway Patrol was working on his report Tuesday, trying to reconstruct where students were seated on the buses, said Highway Patrol spokeswoman Ruby Oakley, and the report was not available.

Bill Turner, assistant superintendent for auxiliary services, said he had investigated the accident also.

Turner declined to discuss his findings until he has an opportunity to talk with the driver.

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