

Weekly Perspective

Our view

Property appraisal policy needed

An opinion from the N.C. Attorney General's office underscores a ticklish situation confronting the Perquimans County Board of Commissioners.

The opinion supports securing the approval of the property owner-occupant before entering construction in progress for appraisal purposes to avoid any "unfortunate sort of dispute."

If permission is denied the tax officer should make the best appraisal possible based on information available to him, according to the attorney general's office. Should the result be higher than the owner believes to be correct, he may appeal, but the burden of proving actual value falls on the property owner, the opinion states.

We heartily agree that permission "should" be sought of the property owner before entering a construction project, but we also understand that oft-times it is difficult to find a property-owner during working hours.

It is in the best interest of any taxpayer

to allow the tax appraiser to get a first hand look before placing a value on any dwelling or other building.

But it is also apparent that many private citizens do not want uninvited guests on their property.

The board of commissioners has discussed the subject at prior meetings but has so far not come up with any sort of notification system that would not require an excess of paperwork and additional manpower.

Tax supervisor Keith Haskett has also responded to the problem by posting a schedule of his appraisal visits in this newspaper.

These kinds of steps show that the board of commissioners and the tax supervisor are making a positive effort to resolve the problem.

But the opinion from the attorney general's office indicates that further study is needed, and that a clear policy needs to be established for making appraisals of new construction.

Looking back

by VIRGINIA WHITE
TRANSEAU
November 1942

RENOVATION GOING ON AT LOCAL BANK: In order to add the efficiency of handling the increased business at the Hertford Banking Company, work was begun this week in renovating the local bank.

Officials at the bank stated the work would be completed with in six weeks. When completed, the bank will have an additional vault and entirely new fixtures, and a larger lobby for the patrons of the institution.

WE'RE SORRY: This week's newspaper experienced its most disastrous breakdown during its entire existence, and but for the cooperation and accommodation of the Roanoke Beacon at Plymouth and the Enterprise at Williamston, it would have been necessary to miss this week's edition entirely. As it is, the paper is greatly curtailed, it being necessary to leave out most of the advertising and news, but we have been saved from missing an issue altogether due to the good nature of the two above mentioned newspapers.

MISS BLANCHE BUTLER LEAVES FOR TRAINING AS MEMBER OF WAAC: Miss Blanche Butler, daughter of Mrs. G.W. Butler, left Thursday for Des Moines, Iowa, to begin training as a

WAAC. Miss Butler's application for the Women's Auxiliary Armed Corps was accepted several weeks ago. After completing her training, Miss Butler expects to be stationed in Norfolk.

DRAFT BOARD SELECTS 13 WHITE MEN TO FILL NOVEMBER 18th CALL: Thirteen white men have been notified by the local draft board to appear on November 18th for induction under the Selective Service, Mrs. Ruth Sumner stated Tuesday. The men who will fill call number thirty-two are, Robert Turner, William Morgan, Columbus Layden, George Riddick, Lofton Dail, Paul White, Thurman White, Kermit Kirby, Willie Colson, John Winslow, Millard Robertson, Willis Lane, and Robert Lane.

LETTERS POLICY

We welcome letters to the editor. Subject matter should be of interest to the community rather than a personal gripe.

We reserve the right to edit for space limitations.

Please include name, address and phone number. Name and address will be printed.

Parkville area developed by Quakers

Before its 1868 establishment by the County Commissioners, Parkville Township was called Suttons Creek District.

Parkville Township is bounded by Perquimans River on the south, Suttons Creek on the east, and Bagleys Swamp on the west. From points on the creek and the swamp, man-made lines run cross-country to Little River, which forms the northerly boundary.

Proprietor Thomas Amy. He was in public affairs local and provincial from 1670 to 1705, and for forty years he was a leader among the Quakers.

The Monthly Meeting of Friends in Perquimans frequently met in Tomes' house, as did the Yearly Meeting. In 1705, he gave land for a meeting house, which later acquired the name Old Neck Meeting House. There through most of the eighteenth century all the Quakers of the state gathered for their Yearly Meeting.

The first church built in Perquimans County was also in Parkville Township. It stood by Perquimans River two miles west of Winfall and was erected by the Quakers in 1704. It was first called the Upper Meeting House and later took the name Wells Meeting House.

Parkville Township has had two incorporated towns. The first was Parkville (sometimes called Canaan), which was developed prior to 1820 by Aaron Albertson. He even cut two roads just to reach his town. These survive as the two-mile and four-mile desert roads, but few traces remain of the town itself.

The second town was Winfall, which was begun about 1872 by Josiah H. White, Judge Jonathan W. Albertson, and Edward C. Albertson. These three men owned farms which came together near Red House Fork, and they sold residential and commercial lots.

Tradition says the town was called Winfall because a great wind blew down a store there.

The railroad increased Winfall's importance and in 1887, the town was incorporated. A. Smith Jordan was the first mayor.

Other communities in Parkville Township include Chapanoke, named for a distant Indian village, and Bagleys Swamp, named for early eighteenth-century landowner Thomas Bagley.



Mongrel hordes swarm for gifts

It's hard to believe, but that joyous time of year is almost upon us again.

As of Thursday, Nov. 20, you will have exactly 35 shopping days left until Christmas, and that's even counting Sundays and Christmas Eve.

I decided to get a jump on the mad Christmas rush and took off with a couple of other beat-the-scramble hopefuls and headed for Lightfoot last week.

For those of you who have never had the opportunity to shop at the mammoth complex commonly referred to as the "Williamsburg pottery," let me make a few recommendations.

Do not attempt a shopping spree in Lightfoot any time after July 4th if you hope to beat those who think they're

smart to get their Christmas shopping out of the way early.

Although our trip up was on a weekday, the hordes were out, by the chartered busloads no less.



Noel Todd McLaughlin

If you, like me, think you are doing well to even think about Christmas shopping

in mid-November, at least try to do it on a weekday.

A friend of mine went to the pottery last Saturday, and although she survived the trip, she lived to tell of her venture minus any Christmas purchases.

She said the lines in front of checkouts were endless. And after seeing one woman completely lose her mind, she decided to head for home, while her sanity was still intact.

It seems the frenzied woman accosted a policeman screaming, "Our state fair doesn't even attract this many people! Can't you control how many come in here?" A silly expectation of a business, don't you think?

Even sillier, though, was a woman I

overheard ask a checkout clerk for gift wrapping. The Williamsburg pottery is strictly head 'em up, move 'em out. Shopping bags are available, but at a price, and grimy newsprint is all you dare hope for in the way of packaging.

To accommodate the herds are barns and barns chalk full of goods and shopping areas are numbered as well as separated by merchandise.

For instance, there is a barn of Mexican furniture, a warehouse full of paint-on-velvet, and a room housing only glazed ceramics. Real quality stuff.

And while I'm sure you couldn't buy such stuff any cheaper this side of the border, I think I'll stick closer to home for the rest of my Christmas's list.

Facing South

a syndicated column:
voices of tradition
in a changing region

MOUNT PLEASANT, Fla. — David Avant, Jr. fell 50 feet from a pine tree trying to retrieve his family's history.

The 60 year old photographer and historian was restoring a plantation house bought by his great-great-grandfather 150 years ago.

The house, long considered a community eyecore, hugs the north shoulder of U.S. Highway 90 near Mount Pleasant in northern Florida. It started life as a one-room building in the 1830's, but Avant's ancestors enlarged it into one of the largest homes in the area.

By the middle of the 20th century the house had fallen into disrepair and was being used as a corn crib.

Avant acquired the house from a cousin, promising to restore it. He wanted to give a piece of their past to his two children, David III and Eugenia.

"I'm trying to make a workable compromise out of the house — to make it so you can actually live there, but to keep it authentic as to period furnishings," he says.

After consultation with professionals, he began by leveling the floor of the house. "I spent a year underneath the house on my back every Saturday," he recalls. "Sometimes I had a man help me, sometimes I didn't. We used a 25-ton hydraulic jack. Jack up a support beam an inch, brace it, take your jack down, move it four feet, jack up the beam there, brace it."

Next came replacement of the piers on which the house rested, straightening the

logs in the walls, replacing the exterior clapboard, disinfecting everything in the building, painting and installing insulation. Avant worked there only on Saturdays; he lives in Tallahassee, 37 miles away.

Some tasks were unexpected. An insulation company stapled roll insulation under part of the house, remembers Avant. "Next day two goats ate the paper backing off the insulation and hooked a great deal of it down with their horns." So, Avant had to put up a fence before replacing the insulation.

One cold October Saturday in 1977, David Avant drove to the property to clear pine trees near the highway. A helper, scheduled to show up, never arrived. Avant cleared the first few trees away by himself easily enough. Soon he reached a pine with a diseased section. Up he went, fifty feet — until the pine suddenly began falling. "I had a choice — go down with the tree or jump. I let the tree go down part way and jumped — I didn't want to get crushed under the trunk by jumping too soon."

Ninety minutes later Avant regained consciousness. He didn't know the extent of his injuries: a compound fracture of one ankle, and a simple fracture of the other; a broken pelvis; several broken ribs and vertebrae; cuts, scrapes and bruises; severe shock. He couldn't move his legs.

"I tried calling for help, but nobody could hear. One car stopped to read the state historical marker out front, then

another, but both drove off without lowering their windows. Then another stopped with four ladies from Fort Lauderdale. They turned off the motor and got out to read the sign and walk around.

"I was out in those briars yelling, 'Help! Help!' and waving my hand. It scared them. They could see this man's hand sticking up and they didn't know who I was or what had happened. They got back in the car and then yelled at me to see what was wrong."

"I was pretty weak — didn't feel like carrying on any long conversation — all I could yell back was, 'Broke leg!' Well they jumped out of their car and came to help me. Those ladies saved me. Yessir, the ladies — and that historical marker."

The accident slowed Avant down, but didn't stop him. "I wasn't able to get out and do much work, but every evening, when I went to bed, I'd make my plans for what I'd be doing when I could."

Today the restored house is the pride of the Mount Pleasant community. Local groups hold meetings there, and neighbors to the property call Avant to report if anything is amiss. He and his family use it as both a hunting lodge and weekend retreat. His preservation work has been praised by professionals, but he's not through yet.

"We'll be rebuilding the missing western fireplace. Then there's the added east room, and we'll have a garden..."



DON FREDGANT
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FACING SOUTH welcomes readers' comments and writers' contributions. Write P. O. Box 236, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

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Ray Winslow

The first part of the township to be settled by Europeans was the rivershore between Suttons Creek and Vosses Creek (Brights Mill Creek), known as the Old Neck.

Most of the Old Neck was included in 2,500 acres granted to William West on Sept. 25, 1663 by Governor Sir William Berkeley of Virginia. Soon after, much of the land was possessed by William Voss, who lived on the point where the high-rise Perquimans River Bridge strikes the northern bank of the river.

Foremost among the early settlers of the area was Francis Tomes (ca. 1633-1712), who lived by Perquimans River on a farm later known as Riverside. Tomes was one of the first converts to the Society of Friends in North Carolina, and he opened his home to missionaries William Edmundson and George Fox in 1672.

Tomes was a member of the Governor's Council as a deputy to the Lord