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'Horizons' discussion: new plans

HERTFORD — Revitalization of the downtown area, industrial recruitment efforts and plans to improve the quality of life in the town were among the Hertford Horizons program discussed last night.

The meeting was set for 7:30 p.m. at the courthouse, and the purpose of the meeting was to discuss progress made so far in the program and future plans. Work on the program has been going on for more than a year.

Three committees, under the direction of an eight-member steering committee, have been appointed to study three issues: downtown revitalization, industrial development and the quality of life.

The town's program is in conjunction with the state Division of Community Assistance STEP program — the strategic plan for economic progress.

As part of the downtown revitalization efforts, architecture students at East Carolina University drew plans for storefront remodeling based on what the appearance of the buildings was when most were originally constructed approximately 70 years ago.

The drawings were completed more than a year ago, and little progress has been made so far. Chamber of Commerce Director Mary Harrell said one of the problems being confronted is the lack of available contractors to do the work at a reasonable price.

This and other issues being discussed by the various committees were presented to the public at Wednesday's meeting.

Christmas parade Saturday

Hertford residents will line the streets on Saturday for the annual Christmas Parade.

The event, sponsored by the Jaycees, will begin at 2 p.m., and a special visit by Santa Clause is anticipated. The procession will begin at the high school, march down Edenton Road Street, turn right on Grubb Street, turn right on Church Street, turn right on Dobbs Street, and march back to the school.



Hero Jack Dalton, portrayed by Del Potter, talks with his true love Bertha Blair, portrayed by Christine Carson, while the hard-hearted and jaded vixen Anna Alvarado, portrayed by Kim Barret, spies on the conversation. The scene was part of the recent performance of "Curse You, Jack Dalton!" for the Holiday Island Civic Club's dinner theater. This was the second performance of the play by the local community theater group, the Perquimans Playhouse.

Subdivision raises citizens' concerns

The environmental impact of the proposed 650-acre Albemarle Plantation subdivision was a main topic of discussion at a public hearing last week in Hertford. The hearing was attended by more than 50 area residents.

The first phase of the development includes 914 housing units, an 18-hole golf course, a clubhouse, and a land-application sewage system. It is this first phase that is now in the permit review process.

Future plans include a second 18-hole golf course, a motel, a marina, a theater, a shopping center, and tennis and horse riding facilities.

The proposed development is located on the Albemarle Sound at the mouth of the Yeopim Creek in the Bethel Township of Perquimans County.

Helen Matthews, president of the Holiday Island Board of Governors, was concerned about the county's ability to provide water for the development. She said if either of the two water plants in the county is shut down, there will be a shortfall of 152,000 gallons per day. The water supply in the county would only last for four days in this event. She also said the present six-inch water supply line to the area of the county, which was paid for by Holiday Island, could not possibly serve both developments.

Carolyn Hess, a Holiday Island resident and founder of the Albemarle Environmental Association, submitted five recommendations:

- Maintain all present wetlands in their natural state. The wetlands act as a buffer against nutrients and chemicals reaching fishing waters.
- Relocate the fairways to allow for a 100-foot buffer between wetlands and greens.
- Monitor the types of chemicals being used on the golf course.
- Place groundwater monitoring wells on the golf course and periodically monitor surface waters for toxic chemicals.
- Increase the proposed residential lot sizes to 15,000 square feet.

"The golf course complex has been compared by its developer to Hilton Head, S.C. and we understand that area is having problems with groundwater and surface waters," she said.

"We would like to suggest that the first major development in an area sets the tone for future developments. Wetlands can be chopped away little by little until they have been drained and replaced by developments and parking lots. The decision must be made now to either protect the valuable wetlands we have in Perquimans County or to give them away to developers," she said.

Two agencies recommend permit denial

HERTFORD — Concerns expressed by local residents about the construction of ponds on wetlands in a proposed 650-acre waterfront development have been echoed by two agencies which have recommended that the permit from the Division of Coastal Management be denied.

John Parker, permit coordinator with the Division of Coastal Management, said there are 15 state and federal agencies now involved in the permit review process. Though the permit is for a bulkhead at the development, it may be denied because of these other concerns.

Two of those agencies, the federal National Marine Fisheries Service and the state's Division of Marine Fisheries, have already recommended that the permit not be granted because of inadequate information provided for the permit application.

The NMFS recommended that the authorization for the construction of the bulkhead not be provided until adequate information is available to assess impacts of proposed development and large-scale marina facilities. This recommendation was supported by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The DMF stated that the project poses a serious environmental threat and has the potential to significantly damage the wetland habitat of the area.

The planned development, Albemarle Plantation, is located on the Albemarle Sound at the mouth of the Yeopim Creek in the Bethel Township of Perquimans County.

Water conservation is Farm-City topic

HERTFORD — Without water no life could exist on earth, yet the residents of the planet often take such a valuable resource for granted, according to the speaker at Perquimans County Farm-City Week Banquet last week.

Just how valuable that resource is and what should be done to conserve and preserve it for future generations was the topic discussed at the annual Farm-City banquet, held at the Perquimans County High School cafeteria.

Guest speaker Frank J. Humenik, a professor at N.C. State University and an agricultural engineer with the N.C. Agricultural Extension Service, spoke about the need for everyone to better manage water usage.

"We all have to change our attitude," he told the more than 200 people gathered in the cafeteria. "How much do you all pay for water? You all treat it like it is free."

He said there are 326 million, million, million gallons of water on this planet. "To get an idea of how much that is, if you were in a fire brigade passing gallon buckets every second, it would take you 10 million, million years. But 97 percent of that water is salt water," he said.

Most of that fresh water, 95 percent, is found underground, and Humenik said 50 percent of the population of North Carolina depends on water from ground sources.

He said goals at N.C. State include devising methods to use water more efficiently for agriculture and forestry, and to preserve the natural resources. He also said individual citizens, whether farmers or urban dwellers, can help attain

those goals.

An important lesson that few people realize is that water is constantly recycled on the planet, he said. It is a closed system. "We all need to realize there is no ultimate sink," he said.

Humenik discussed the Agriculture Cost Share Program which provides incentives for farmers to implement water control measures, and he called the program a model for other states to follow. In an experiment conducted at N.C. State, he said two test sites were selected. At one site, water conservation practices were put into place, and none were used at the other site.

Where the conservation practices were used, there was 50 percent less runoff from the land, 80 percent less nitrogen and phosphorus lost to runoff, and 99 percent less sediment runoff. He said the farmer who used the conservation practices had his fertilizer bill reduced from \$10,000 to \$2,000 because animal waste was sprayed onto the fields.

As for those who do not live on a farm, Humenik said the grass is always greener over the septic tank. "In North Carolina, we have more septic tanks than any other state, yet we are not blessed with good soils for septic tanks use. We have tremendous problems with septic tank use," he said.

He said that people should use devices that conserve water use in the home to prolong the life and effectiveness of septic tanks. He said devices exist for toilets, shower heads and faucets. "You can save 20 to 30 percent of water use in the home with these devices," he said.



Northeastern District Agriculture Extension Director Tom Hobgood presents Mayor Bill Cox with an award for the town being more than 200 years old. The award was presented at the Farm-City Banquet last week. Also pictured are councilmen Erie Haste Jr. (left) and John Beers. Hertford, chartered in 1758, is the fifth oldest town in the state and the award was presented in conjunction with the statewide Farm-City Week celebration.

County gets \$30,000 for senior center

HERTFORD — A new addition will be added to the Perquimans County Senior Citizens Center as a result of a \$30,000 state grant awarded to the county and town of Hertford, County Manager Paul Gregory reported last week.

The new addition will be a new dining area for the meal program, and it will enable the center work-

ers to move the present site at Wynn Fork to the senior citizens building. The addition, which will be built adjacent to the senior citizens building, will also include a kitchen and bathrooms.

Gregory both the county and the town of Hertford will match the grant with \$3,000 apiece.

Resignation

Commissioners accepted the resignation of Johnny Caddy from the Industrial Development Commission.

Exit signs

Commissioners agreed to request that the state Department of Transportation install entrance and exit signs for Hertford and Winfall along the U.S. Highway 17 Bypass.

Schools plan before, after school care

HERTFORD — Parents will be able to leave their children in the care of school employees before and after school under a plan now being investigated by Perquimans Board of Education members.

Superintendent Mary Jo Martin reported that school officials will be sending a survey home with students for parents to indicate if they are interested in the program.

The care will be provided from 6:30-8 a.m. and from 3-6 p.m. Martin said the survey will also be used to see if there is any interest for the program to be held on teacher workdays in the morning hours. Parents will have to provide transportation for the students for all days the program is offered.

Martin said it has not yet been decided where the program will be located. "It will depend on the survey results," she said.

A state grant of \$30,000 will be used to set up the program and the county will charge parents a fee for the service. That fee has not yet been determined.

It will not just be a babysitting service, Martin said. "Students will do homework, arts and crafts, and work on computers. There will be many enriching activities," she said.

For more information on the program, parents are asked to call the central office at 486-5741.

New position

Martin reported that Brenda Teranova, assistant principal at Perquimans Middle School, will assume new duties as the director of instructional support services.