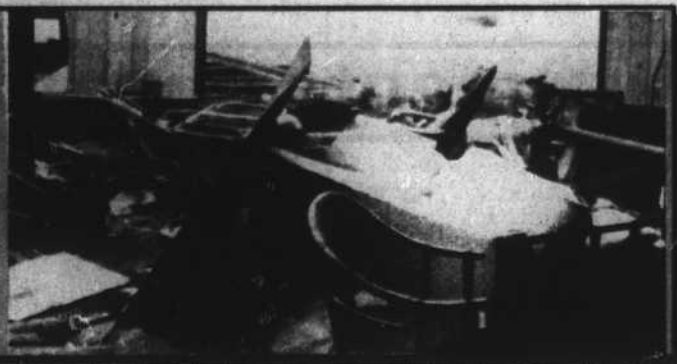


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# THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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35 Cents

## Activists gain momentum

### Others join New Bethel drug fight

By TRACY E. GERLACH  
The Daily Advance

A public meeting held late last month to confront the area's growing drug problem touched more than the people who attended the session.

Since members of the New Bethel community met July 29, others have asked how they can become involved in the effort to stop drug traffic in the neighborhood and throughout Perquimans County, attorney J.C. Cole, a member of the group, said Monday.

"A number of other people in the New Bethel community and the county want to join in," Cole said. "Any locality can be subjected to the problem."

A second meeting will be scheduled, he added.

The active community-based group met to come up with ways to eliminate drug transactions going on throughout their neighborhood on Harvey Point Road and Lowe drive. Cars constantly come in and out of the area and school bus drivers are afraid to turn their busses around on the street, residents said. Many are concerned for the safety of their children.

Hertford Beach Club is said to be the source of much of the drug traffic.

Already, less than two weeks after the meeting, Cole said some of the traffic seems to have subsided. He attributes the lull to an increased law enforcement presence in the area.

"I think it has everything to do with that," Cole said.

While the group has taken some initiative on its own, by reporting license plate numbers to the sheriff's department, they don't want to interfere with law enforcement.

"We're trying to work with law enforcement and at the same time protect our community without letting it get out of hand," Cole said.

Perquimans County Sheriff Joe Lothian said there have been some drug related arrests in the area since the meeting, but agreed the activity in the area seems to have subsided.

Lothian and two of his deputies attended the group's meeting.

"Looking at it from our standpoint, we've seen a lot less traffic," Lothian said. "We stopped some people. We knew why they were there."

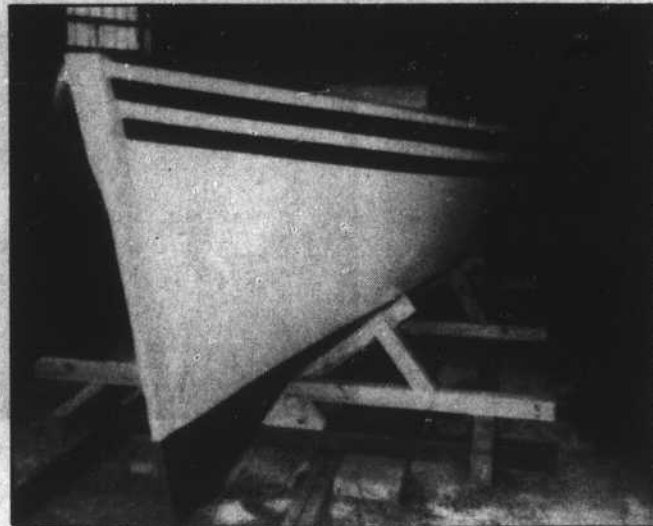
The group's next meeting will most likely focus on ways to expand law enforcement personnel and the formation of an official community watch program, Cole said.

Residents coming together to discuss ways to eliminate drug traffic is becoming more commonplace in Perquimans County.

Members of the Hertford Housing Authority's resident's association invited town officials and law enforcement personnel to a meeting in June to discuss a similar problem there.

District Attorney H.P. Williams pointed out last month that Perquimans County, especially Hertford, has been a major distribution point for drugs coming from New York to North Carolina and Virginia.

## Fishing for answers



Hertford officials are fishing for answers to determine the disposition of the ca. 1920 shad boat (left) recently presented to the town by the state. Some have suggested displaying the historic vessel, built by the Basnight family on North Carolina's Outer Banks, in a shelter at Missing Mill Park (right). With no local money available for a building project and



Photo by Susan Harris

state grants shrinking, town officials are asking residents for their input. Where should the shad boat be housed? Do you think individuals, businesses and civic groups would pitch in to help? Call the Hertford town offices or any councilman with your ideas.

## Hertford fights electric rate hike

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Hertford Town Council went on record Monday night opposing electric rate hikes resulting from problems at the Brunswick power station.

Stock equaling about 18 percent ownership in the plant was purchased from CP&L by ElectricCities when the organization was formed. Officials say that costs to fix the ailing plant will approach \$3 million. And CP&L wants ElectricCities to pay its proportional share of the bill.

But ElectricCities board members contend that CP&L knew that there were problems at the plant when they sold the stock, and therefore CP&L and its shareholders should be responsible for getting the plant back on line.

Hertford resident Eldon Winslow, who attended the meeting, told town officials that residents "will be hurting" if a rate increase must be implemented to cover renovations at the power plant. Winslow said that the 7.8 percent increase passed on to electric customers earlier this year coupled with rising town and county taxes will already have an impact on strained budgets, and that an additional rate hike would be a tough pill to swallow for some taxpayers.

Councilman Sid Eley recommended that the town go on record opposing the rate hike and stating that CP&L should pay the fix-up costs since CP&L knew about the problems when the stock was sold to ElectricCities.

**ElectricCities officials contend that CP&L knew there were problems at the Brunswick power plant before they sold 18 percent of the stock to ElectricCities.**

Fellow councilman Eric Haste concurred, and requested that the resolution be detailed.

### Boat ramp noise

Winslow also reiterated his concern about the early morning noise at the municipal boat ramps.

"I hate to be negative all the time," Winslow told council, but said that riverfront dwellers are routinely awakened between 4 and 6 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday by the commotion at the docks.

The problem was so bad recently, Winslow said, "If I'd have been Irene Towe or (Mattie) 'Pete' Broughton, I'd have shot a shotgun over their head."

Winslow voiced a concern that the town might add more ramps at the site.

"As far as I know there are no plans to build another boat ramp in the town of Hertford," Mayor John G. Beers told Winslow.

Councilman Billy Winslow said that he has talked to residents in the community regarding the problem, and still feels that perhaps a parking per-

mit system can be implemented to help quiet the noise problem. Winslow said he has considered limiting parking to those persons who have purchased licenses to do so from the town. His contention is that there should be one license for county residents and one for non-residents.

"I feel like that way we could better control the ramp," Winslow said. He added that with license purchase, which could be shown with a sticker to affix to vehicles or boat trailers, police officers could tell easily whether vehicles parked in the lot were authorized to be there.

"I don't see any solution to it," Eldon Winslow replied. "It's something we've got to live with." He added that he hopes the no-wake zone approved by state officials recently will help.

The no-wake zone goes into effect in October.

Beers added that the town must determine whether licenses or fees can be charged at the boat ramps because federal monies were used to build the facilities.

### Parking ordinance

Emphasizing that the move had only safety in mind, Beers proposed an ordinance outlawing parking on both sides of Berry Street. Cars parked along the narrow street which leads to the Perquimans Village Shopping Center present a hazard to the safe movement of vehicular traffic along the short stretch, Beers said.

Council agreed, and the ordinance went into effect immediately.

## Town mows through new weed ordinance

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

Hertford residents fed up with the uncontrolled growth of weeds and grass on neighboring properties can measure their dissatisfaction, thanks to a new ordinance passed by the town Monday evening.

Council unanimously passed an ordinance in regular session that calls for action to be taken by the municipality when town officials receive reports of weeds or grass exceeding 10 inches in height on any parcel of land within the town's corporate limits.

In addition, the town can act upon reports of the accumulation of rubbish, trash or junk which threatens to be a fire hazard, cause water to stagnate or provide a possible home for rats, mice, snakes or vermin of any kind.

The ordinance was passed in response to residents' complaints about the uncontrolled growth of grass and rubbish collection on certain properties in the town. The ordinance cites the conditions as threats to the health and safety of those who dwell in the surrounding areas.

Under the law's guidelines, notices of ordinance violations should be reported to the town manager. The town manager will set into motion an investigation of the reported violation by the appropriate health or municipal officials.

If the town manager finds that conditions outlined in the ordinance exist, a written notice will be delivered to the property owner stating the ordinance violations, and a hearing will be set before the town manager within 10-30 days of the notice. If the hearing determines that the condition of the property creates a public nuisance under the ordinance, the property owner will be notified that he has 15 days to bring the property to code. The town will bring the property to code after that time and bill the property owner for the cost. Failure to pay the bill within 30 days will result in a lien against the property, and will be treated as a delinquent tax bill.

The ordinance does not prevent the town from initiating criminal proceedings provided for by state general statute.

Carlyn Brown, a Hertford resident who attended the meeting, applauded the council for taking action.

The new ordinance is one more in a series of municipal laws passed by the town of Hertford in recent years aimed at cleaning up the town and ridding it of abandoned, substandard structures, junk vehicles and other conditions that may prove detrimental to the health and safety of the residents.

## County leaders behind new interstate highway but want U.S. 17 left in tact

By TRACY E. GERLACH  
The Daily Advance

An interstate highway connecting Raleigh and Norfolk by way of Perquimans County would provide Northeastern North Carolina with a safe route to the Tidewater area, Hertford Town Manager Bill Cox said Monday.

But he and other Perquimans County officials will ask the state Department of Transportation to consider constructing a new highway bed rather than current proposals which involve turning U.S. Highway 17 into an interstate.

A major concern is the disruption of homes and businesses located along U.S. 17.

If Highway 17 were transformed to an interstate, access areas would be federally restricted. Exits and crossroads used by local businesses and residents would be limited, Cox said.

Still, he said a major highway in this area is long overdue.

"Any highway improvement would be a benefit for Northeastern North Carolina," Cox said. "We're many years behind the

rest of the state in highways."

Building a highway through this area connecting Raleigh and Norfolk would do two things, Cox said. It would give local residents a safe and accessible route to the Tidewater area and a four-lane highway to Raleigh.

A resolution stating the county's position will be forwarded to the state Department of Transportation following the Board of Commissioners meeting, County Manager N. Paul Gregory said Monday.

"Everyone would be accessible to the highway, but it would not disrupt houses, homes, businesses that are along 17," Gregory said. "We all need it, but in order to be a true interstate, it needs to be separate from 17."

The DOT is currently conducting a feasibility study on the interstate paid for with \$4.8 million authorized by congress last year.

Six alternatives for locating the interstate are under consideration.

Only two of the options would impact Perquimans

County. One would include expressway type improvements to U.S. 17 and 104 between the Virginia line and I-464 in Chesapeake.

The other would upgrade U.S. 64 between Williamston and Raleigh and U.S. 17 between Williamston and the Virginia line and U.S. 17 and 104 in Virginia to interstate freeway.

Other plans would bring the highway by way of Bethel and Ahoskie, Rocky Mount and Suffolk.

Another factor that could arise from upgrading Highway 17 is the relocation of established water lines, added Mack E. Nixon, chairman of the board of commissioners. The county is in the process of settling a \$193,000 bill with the Department of Transportation for lines moved four years ago during improvement work to the highway.



Photo by Janine Bunch

State and local officials agree that an interstate linking Raleigh and Norfolk, Va. is needed, but the path the road will take is the source of great discussion. Officials in Perquimans County do not want the interstate to follow U.S. Highway 17 (above) due to the necessity of relocating even more homes and businesses than is being required by the four-laning effort. But county leaders do want the roadway to touch the county, and hopefully spark some economic fire.

LOOK  
ON  
PAGE 2  
FOR  
COMMUNITY  
HAPPENINGS