

# The Perquimans Weekly 35¢

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## Planning board must make Ward rezoning decision

### Hertford Council sends request back to board for answer by August HTC meeting

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The Hertford Planning Board didn't do its job regarding the Charles Ward rezoning request, according to Hertford Town Council.

Council voted Monday night to send back to the planning board a request by Charles Ward to rezone property at the intersection of Grubb Street Extended and Sunrise Lane from C-2 to R-8.

Ward asked the town to rezone the property to allow him to build sixteen 850-square foot single-family homes on the acreage, which is presently farmland, several months ago.

The planning board sent word back to council in June that the four board members who attended their final meeting to discuss the rezoning were deadlocked at 2-2 on the issue. Officially, a split vote means a recommendation to the council to deny the request because it was not passed by the planning board, Town Manager John Christensen told council.

After a discussion at council's meeting in June, councilman Carlton Davenport moved to deny Ward's request based on the split vote of the planning board. His motion was defeated 3-2 and sent back to the planning board for further review.

With no updated decision from the planning board before council Monday night, Davenport said the issue should be sent back to the planning board "because it's their job and they made no recommendation."

Davenport said all seven members of the board should meet and make a decision on the request.

Councilman Billy Winslow said he had spoken with some planning board members who informed him they did not want to act on the request, but rather wanted council to take the action.

Mayor John Beers agreed with Davenport that the planning board should take another look at the issue because three of the board's members were not present for the final vote on the issue.

The planning board should make its recommendation by council's August meeting, councilman Sid Eley said. He added that if he was a landowner making a zoning request, he would think the town had taken too long to make a decision.

Davenport said council and the planning board should meet within 10 days to discuss the request and make a decision on the issue.

Residents who live adjacent to the Ward property have asked the town to deny the request.

## Illegal house plants troublesome

### Woman arrested for allegedly growing pot inside her home

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

House plants can get you in trouble.

Perquimans County sheriff's deputies arrested a county woman Friday night after finding three marijuana plants growing in her home, according to Chief Deputy Dean

Cartwright.

Christine Kingston, 27, of Route 4, Box 730, Hertford, was arrested and charged with manufacturing a controlled substance. Bond was set at \$10,500 unsecured.

Cartwright said Deputy Kevin Byrd received information from Elizabeth City Police Sgt. Carl Pureza that Kingston was growing marijuana. Pureza's source was a confidential informant. Based on the information obtained from the informant, the Perquimans County Sheriff's Department obtained a search warrant.

Cartwright said deputies

found the three marijuana plants, six pipes and numerous marijuana seeds at the residence.

Kingston's first appearance before a judge was set for July 15.

Two Snug Harbor men were arrested Monday for allegedly breaking into a residence in the subdivision.

George Sehlmeizr, 32, and Johnny Andrew Coggins, 20, both of Holly Street in Snug Harbor, were arrested and charged with first degree burglary, injury to personal property and simple assault. Both were placed under a \$10,500

secured bond.

Cartwright said Byrd received a call that a break-in was in progress in Snug Harbor. The report stated that two individuals were at the home of a third individual "trying to have a confrontation with a gentleman inside the house."

Cartwright said Byrd was told that the man inside the house wouldn't come out and kept telling the pair to leave. Finally, Byrd was told, the man inside the house closed the door and went back inside. At that point, Sehlmeizr and Coggins allegedly broke the door and

entered the house, where a confrontation occurred.

Byrd's report states that the two left and that as he observed them, they attempted to elude him. Byrd and Deputy Darlene Jacobs were able to catch both men and take them into custody.

The incident occurred at the John Harris residence. Troy Martin, who was allegedly in the Harris house, was allegedly assaulted during the incident.

Both Sehlmeizr and Coggins are scheduled to appear in court on July 15 in Hertford.

## TRUCK FARMING GROWS IN THE FAMILY



PHOTO BY SUSAN HARRIS

July means sweet corn ripens in Perquimans County. In the shop of Tommy and Sherry Harrell in Bear Swamp, Bear's Pick corn is being harvested, graded, crated, cooled, labeled and packed in trucks ready for shipping in refrigerated trucks from Kansas City to Florida to New England.

## Truck farm is way of life for Harrells

### Tommy and Sherry Harrell ship Bear's Pick produce all over

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

It's may sound corny, but aw shucks, Tommy Harrell is just keeping the family legacy alive.

Tommy is a third generation truck farmer.

He and his wife, Sherry, are in the midst of one of the busiest seasons of the year right now — harvesting sweet corn for shipment to markets from Kansas City to New England to Florida.

For the 3 1/2-4 week sweet corn season, the Byron mechanical harvester makes its way into the acres of corn around 6:30 each morning. By 7:30, wagon loads of corn pulled by tractors are being pulled into the Harrell's packing shed for packing.

Two wagons are pulled into the shed at the time, with packing work stations set up on either side of the wagons. Twenty-four women grade and pack the corn into wire-bound crates. The crates are then lifted into a hydro-cooler, a

machine filled with ice and water that pre-cools the corn. Sherry Harrell said that each morning during corn season, 60 300-pound blocks of ice are hauled in from Elizabeth City for use in the hydro-cooler. It takes about 20 minutes for a crate to move through the machine, which recirculates the cold water around the crates, reducing the temperature by about 40-50 degrees.

Once out of the hydro-cooler, the corn is stacked onto pallets, a Bear's Pick label is pasted on and the 42-crate pallets are moved by forklift into a storage cooler that is set on about 33 degrees.

From the storage cooler, each truck is loaded and is off to market.

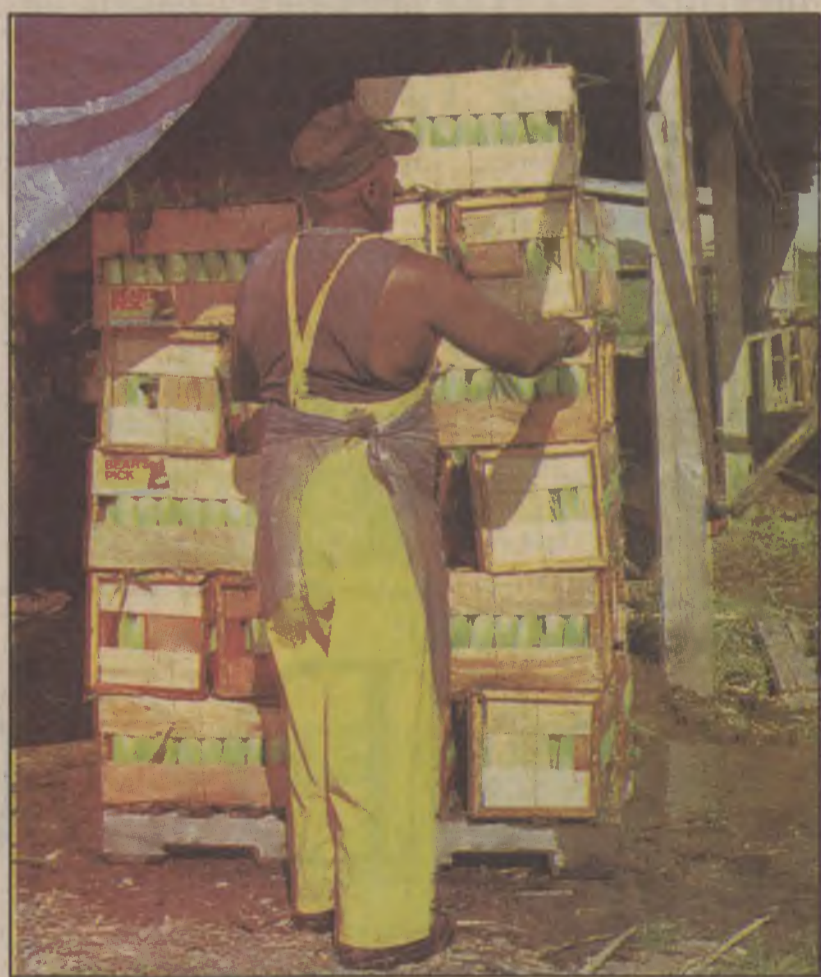
This process continues each day until about 5-6 p.m.

The work provides a month of employment for 48-50 local people.

The Harrells also truck cabbage, and sometimes pumpkins and cucumbers.

The life of a truck farmer is what Tommy Harrell has always known. His grandfather raised truck crops in Chowan County, and was the first to ship snap beans, Tommy said.

Tommy's father, Thurman, kept the family tradition going. Tommy and his brother,



Bobby, both farmed with their father at one time, operating as T.R. Harrell & Sons. The trio shipped 26 different vegetables to markets all over. Tommy said the three bought the first mechanical harvester in North Carolina in 1971 for use on their growing enterprise.

Locally, the Harrell family was probably best known for their strawberries. People from all over drove down Center Hill Highway each spring to pick berries.

Tommy and Sherry went into business on their own in

1980, operating as C. Tommy Harrell Farms. In addition to the truck crops, the Harrells raise soybeans and corn.

In addition to shipping sweet corn to market, the Harrells sell it for eating and freezing. Customers can go to the shed on Bear Swamp Road to purchase the corn. There are signs on Center Hill Highway directing customers to the farm operation.

When they're not working on their farm, the Harrells can often be found lending a hand to community, business and farm-related endeavors.

## Inmates to help tear down Keel building

### Town hopes to lower original \$21,000 bid

By SUSAN R. HARRIS  
Editor

The Town of Hertford is hoping that some free inmate labor can help lower the cost of demolishing the Keel building.

Town Manager John Christensen said Monday night that an inmate crew will begin emptying the building and clearing the lot on July 20. After that work is complete, Christensen said the town will go back to Whitehurst Sand and Gravel for an updated bid on tearing down the building.

Whitehurst's initial bid was for over \$21,000. Christensen said town officials hope that with the building empty and the lot clean, the town can save money on the building's demolition.

The town tore down a condemned house on King Street last month. Whitehurst was awarded that bid in June.

Hertford Police Chief Dale Vanscoy told council he is very concerned with the speed of traffic on U.S. 17, especially at its intersection with Wynn Fork Road.

Vanscoy said since the four-lane has been open between Edenton and Hertford, speeds have been recorded in excess of 80 miles per hour and accidents have increased.

Vanscoy asked council to consider making a request to the state to lower the speed limits to 45 miles per hour from the town's southern limits to about halfway between the intersection of Harvey Point Road and the Perquimans River Bridge.

"It could save somebody's life," Vanscoy said, adding that speed on U.S. 17 has become "a major problem."

The town agreed to contact the state Department of Transportation in support of the lower speed limit.

U.S. 17 has been marked at the crossover between the Perquimans Centre and Captain Bob's Restaurant, but Christensen said he has received no word from DOT when they will change the traffic pattern at the intersection.

The plans for making the crossing safer include not allowing traffic to go straight across between the two feeder roads.