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THE PERQUIMANS WEEKLY

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County approves subdivision moratorium

ERIN RICKERT

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners recently approved a measure that calls for a six-month moratorium on the development of area subdivisions that are five lots or larger.

Perquimans County Manager Bobby Darden said the break will not only allow for time to develop plans to enhance the two area water plants, but the

discussion of possible changes to the regulations and process for approving subdivisions.

"We will be able to use the time to plan for all the growth coming into the county and to make sure we address all growth-related issues," Darden said.

In the last three years, development of waterfront and interior properties around the county — especially New Hope and Woodville, have brought nearly 1,000 newly devel-

oped lots to Perquimans.

Darden said the lots have put a strain on the two existing water plants that will only get worse as new developments continue to go up.

Engineers are using the six-month delay to layout time lines and expansion ideas that will take the areas future growth into consideration.

Darden said since the moratorium took effect last month he has received at least two calls a day from

out of town developers, people in real estate and various others.

"We have had moratoriums before, but we have never received this many calls," Darden said. "We must have had a lot of things waiting in the wings we did not even know about."

As it stands now, those interested in developing subdivisions must submit plans to the County Managers Office and designs are reviewed by the

Planning Board.

The moratorium could change this by requiring a more formal process possibly equipped with a Technical Review Committee.

In the Board's Monday night meeting, commissioners voted unanimously to retain the help of Lee Padrick, a representative from the Division of Community Assistance.

In the past the division, which provides assistance to rural counties in the

Northeast, has successfully helped both Chowan and Gates counties assess their subdivision regulations.

"It may be a good time for our Planning Board to draw on their expertise," Darden said.

If the Planning Board chooses to make changes to any existing regulations a public hearing will be held and County Commissioners will vote on the changes toward the end of the moratorium this May.

Winfall expects major growth

Erin Rickert

Perquimans County residents could begin to see construction as early as this year on a nearly 80-unit housing development proposed for the acreage adjacent to Winfall Landing Park.

The 16 acres of woodland next to the park is slated to be cleared and made into a Traditional Neighborhood Design community of both residential and town houses by REAL Developments, Inc. out of Norfolk, Va.

The development was the brainchild of John Harris, the property owner who originally donated three of his 19 acres to the town to create Winfall Landing Park.

John W. Harris Jr., president of REAL Developments, Inc. and son of John Harris, said right now final plans for the development are being worked out with Chris Brown Designs, an architectural firm from Princeton, NJ.

"We are 80 percent complete on the layout plans," Harris Jr. said. "But we should at least have roads this year."

While Harris said he still was unsure of end design plans and the cost of the development, he did say he was relatively sure the homes would be created to cater to those in the workforce, retirees and young families looking for their first home.

"All along this has been his [John Harris's] dream," said Winfall Mayor Fred Yates. "It is something we didn't want to rush into — wanted to do it right. This is very positive for Winfall."

While Harris does not expect the development to be finished for another 10 years, Yates said the influx of housing to the area would still cause the town's population to increase significantly.

"This whole unit would probably double the population of Winfall once it's put in," Yates said.

In anticipation of this growth, Yates said he has

RESIDENTS ENJOY SPRING-LIKE WEATHER



PHOTO BY ERIN RICKERT

Courtney Langley enjoys riding her scooter in her Woodland Circle neighborhood while her mother, Elizabeth Langley, takes advantage of the spring-like weather to wash the salt and sand from last week's snow from her car. Mild temperatures are expected to continue through Thursday.

Couple trades city life for small-town lifestyle

ERIN RICKERT

As youth, Hertford residents Martin and Grycel Butts lived in a terrifying neighborhood where violence permeated every street corner.

Noise from gunshot blasts and ruckus from street fights were frequently heard trickling in through the windows of both Martin's and Grycel's New York City apartments.

"We lived among gunshots," Martin said. "It was something you would hear on the norm. Every couple of weeks people were killed by stray bullets."

Yet it was not until the early 90s that the two decided to leave New York after Grycel's 18 year-old brother Majdi was shot in front of her home.

It was near that time the two left the projects of New York City for Hertford, a move that would take them closer to relatives and the kind of life they always dreamed about.

Now, almost ten years later, the Butts view the move and their new life as the best investment they ever made.

A truth which not only won them a spot in

Carolina Country Magazine, but a safer home for themselves and their three young children Alaijha, 7, Javaughn, 4, and Martin, 13.

Now the couple can not only sleep through the night in Hertford without the sounds of gunshots and street fights, but also they have a life they say would have never been possible had they stayed in New York.

Since the move, Grycel, 33, a certified nursing assistant at Interim Health Care in Elizabeth City, is back in school at the College of the Albemarle working toward her certification as a licensed practical nurse, while Martin, 35, works as a longshoreman.

Grycel said she is the first in her family not only to get a high school diploma, but a college education.

The couple has even purchased a home, gotten married and Grycel obtained her driver license.

Their children are making the honor roll and young Martin has even been published in books.

"We do not believe we would have achieved all this if we were still in New York," Martin said.



PHOTO BY ERIN RICKERT

Martin and Grycel Butts say moving to Hertford from New York about 10 years ago was the best thing they could have done for themselves and their children, Alaijha, Javaughn and Martin.

While both left behind family in the Big Apple, their move started a trend that has brought a good majority of their family away from the violence to Hertford.

"When I moved down here I wanted to better myself," Grycel said. "To me it's like a Cinderella story. Not many people from the projects make it this far."

London dead at age 65

RYAN BURR

The Daily Advance

Under the leadership of the Rev. John H. London Jr., First Baptist Missionary Church of Hertford had open doors, but it did more than that to ensure it was not only serving Baptists.

One of the achievements revered by London's friends and family was his formation of the 12-church Perquimans County Fellowship, which included Methodist and Baptist ministers. They held services at each other's churches once a month.

"He was a community person ... known for crossing denominational lines, but we had one goal in mind: to seek Jesus," said Fred Yates, mayor of Winfall and a long-time friend of London's.

Last Monday, London died after falling ill about two years ago. He was 65 and had been hospitalized at Albemarle Hospital in the final days of his life.

Yates said he talked to London in the hospital.

"He kept telling me he was tired. I think he had made his peace with the Lord," Yates said. "He will be missed a lot."

A funeral was held at Perquimans County High School Sunday afternoon, with burial at Cedar Wood Cemetery.

London was well-known locally as the minister of First Baptist Church for 36 years, but he was also

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WEEKEND WEATHER

THURSDAY
HIGH: 74
LOW: 47
MOSTLY CLOUDY

FRIDAY
HIGH: 59
LOW: 39
PARTLY CLOUDY

SATURDAY
HIGH: 62
LOW: 47
FEW SHOWERS