

# Citizens say housing code attacks mobile home parks

By vote of 5-0, County Commissioners Tuesday night approved a county-wide minimum housing code over the loud objections of dozens of mobile home park landlords and tenants during a lengthy public hearing in Shelby.

Gene Lovelace, Vice-President of the county's Mobile Home Park Association, also a leading opponent of a rezoning plan he says targets mobile home parks, said the new code would waste taxpayer money.

"We don't need more interference from county government," he said. "Don't chase ghosts around the county, spend the money on law enforcement instead of enforcing a code that will make landlords go up on rent."

Jim Hefner, of Double Shoals

Road, charged that the aim in the new code is to eliminate the poor in the county but if the code passed that the homeless rate would triple and more people would be on the streets.

"You are attacking mobile home parks again," he told the board.

Mark Philbeck, another mobile home owner, said that people have to live in houses they can afford. "They see these homes before they move in and many can't afford anything else."

Sam Craig, of Metcalf Rd., who serves on the planning board, said that representatives on the board include mobile home park owners. "This is not directed to mobile home parks but concerns the welfare of all county residents and you'll be

able to see improvement in student grades and in the workforce when new housing standards are in place."

Lovelace argued that welfare payments and food stamps haven't raised the standards of life in Cleveland County. "What you are doing is making it tough on the average citizen," he said.

Karen Howell, who rents two apartments and one house, said she was 100 percent in favor of housing codes. "We need the ordinance and I don't feel it's directed to mobile home parks. Landlords need to tell their tenants to clean up."

Tina Poteat said she was concerned about older homes. She said in some areas of the county there is no indoor plumbing and people can't pay high rent and often have to rent by the week.

Poteat charged that the county's regulations are stricter than the City of Shelby but Planning

Director Bill McCarter said Shelby's is more stringent. She questioned the section in the ordinance which says if needed repairs cost more than 50 percent of the value of the home the owner will have to remove it. She said this requirement would result in the removal of most mobile homes which are 20 years old because the older homes have the most problems with meeting structural requirements.

Hefner said the City of Shelby had amended its housing codes to permit home owners to do repairs if 50 percent of the residence is damaged or declared unfit for habitation.

Several people questioned the size of rooms in a mobile home, one of the eight criteria in the ordinance. But Commissioner Ray Thomas defended that portion of the ordinance, noting that was only one criteria and it was highly unlikely that a dwelling would be declared un-

fit for habitation for that reason only.

Lovelace said it's very difficult to evict tenants. "A tenant can get ticked off at you because you tell him to move and he'll tear up your house and you can't do anything about it because the law protects him," he said.

"But you have a choice of who you rent to," said Thomas.

Sandra Huntsinger said landlords have a choice "within reason." She said landlords were not allowed to discriminate.

"Landlords should keep up their properties and these are rules to help them do that," said McIntosh.

Faye Howell said she screens applicants and they sign a contract. "I have no problems," she said.

Hefner said it wasn't fair for the county to tell homeowners the size houses they should live in.

Wayne Moore expressed concerns about elderly people on fixed incomes and asked if they could get help in fixing up their homes.

McCarter said that grants are available through Isothermal Commission which worked with the Planning Board in developing the ordinance.

## HEARING

From 1-A

from fines; and \$129,111 from Community Schools.

In addition to a review of the proposed budget, the board will discuss long range facilities plans for the system with possible action regarding the use of bond monies and other available resources.

The board will be presented a recommendation regarding changes to the 4-5 report card.

## GRADUATION

From 1-A

'99 total 32.

The policy states that for the class of 1998 and thereafter students must earn passing scores of 156 in reading and 165 in math on the N.C. Competency tests. Students must have a performance score of 49 and a composite score of 46 on the North Carolina Test of Computer Skills.

Students who complete the requirements for an academically challenging high school program will be named North Carolina Academic Scholars and receive special recognition. Those named must have an overall four year grade point average of 3.0.

Students who choose early graduation are expected to have

Jean Thrift will present plans for the 1997 summer school program to the board for approval.

Fourth and fifth graders in the North School Honors Chorus will perform for the board. Members of the chorus are Patricia Avery, Jennifer Baxley, Harrison Bumgardner, Alex Dahl, Megan Dixon, Lindsey Hawes, Jessica Kanoy, Mary Malaythony, Erin McCauley, Elisabeth McDaniel, Elizabeth Robbins, Amanda Shannon, Donna Tackett, Ashton Teague and Josh White.

a plan to be implemented immediately upon leaving high school and applications must be signed by students and parents. The student must declare, upon registering for the senior year, the intention to graduate early and meet all graduation requirements by the end of the first semester of the senior year. Early graduates may participate in all graduation activities but would no longer be considered enrolled in high school and ineligible to participate in school related activities but have special permission to attend the school prom.

"The establishment of the additional level of diploma should be an encouragement for students who are academically motivated and willing to challenge themselves in the classroom," the policy states.

## MEACHAM

From 1-A

member of Piedmont Baptist Church and Tom is Presbyterian but they usually attend Piedmont Church together.

Tom retired over 20 years ago from Lackey-Falls Pontiac and Martha retired eight years ago from Sadie Cotton Mill. Mrs. Meacham is the daughter of John and Stella Foster and

widow of Winfred Hope who died in 1965. Tom was married for 25 years to the late Lafaye Davis Meacham Smith, a former Kings Mountain Herald advertising saleswoman, who died in 1988.

"Martha and I had both decided we'd stay single but then we changed our minds," said Tom, a big grin spreading on his face as he and his wife relaxed in one of several swings in their yard.

## SIGN

From 1-A

from the street right-of-way and no higher than three feet. The architects drawing of the sign projects it to be mounted in a 10-inch flower bed.

Lou Ballew said it appeared the new sign would be perpendicular to Piedmont and it could obstruct the oncoming traffic pulling out of Piedmont Avenue. She suggested that if visitors to the Center used the proper entrance and exit there would be no problem and that the no entrance sign at the light should be enforced.

The Senior Center is asking

for a seven feet variance in the city's sign requirements. Thornburg said that senior citizens have raised more than half the funds required for an illuminated eight feet long free-standing sign which would have space over it to advertise Center events. The present sign is on the Depot building.

"This has been an ongoing project by senior citizens because they want people to know that the Depot is the Senior Center and want to have a place to advertise events at the Center and a sign that is visible to passersby," said Thornburg.

## Kings Mountain Weather Report

(Compiled by Kenneth Kitzmiller)

	March 26-April 1	Year Ago
Total precipitation	.56	2.18
Max. one day	.55 (28)	1.10 (31)
Year to date	15.10	14.23
Min. temp.	13 (31)	35 (28)
Max. temp.	81 (29, 30)	71 (26)
Avg. temp.	59.0	49.4

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