

County approves KM's ETJ expansion

BY ALAN HODGE
Staff Writer

The City of Kings Mountain won approval from the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners Tuesday night for a two mile Extra Territorial Jurisdiction, but it took a fuss and some confusion to get it.

On hand for the public meeting on the subject were over two dozen residents of the Oak Grove community who were under the impression that the ETJ was a thinly veiled precursor to annexation by Kings Mountain. The thought of being forced into the city, and having to pay city taxes, didn't sit well with the group. When it came time for folks to speak their mind on the subject, several stepped to the podium.

"I'm a country boy," said Perry Davis. "We don't want city taxes. It seems the city can annex areas even when the people don't want it. This is just an open door to annexation."

Oak Grove fire chief Diane Davis also spoke against granting the ETJ. She felt that Kings Mountain had been less than honest last year when city director of planning and development Steve Killian had attended a community meeting in Oak Grove.

"Oak Grove is opposed to this," she said. "Last year we were told the city had no plans to annex Oak Grove for at least 15 to 20 years."

Relative newcomer to the area Charles Williams said he had moved here to get away from Hurricane Floyd's devastation. Williams also said he never received a copy of the letter that Kings Mountain sent out to residents in the ETJ area explaining what was to transpire and why.

"I think this is a prelude to annexation," Williams told the commissioners. "I came here to live in the country and don't want more taxes."

It soon became apparent that a cloud of misunderstanding about exactly what the purpose of the ETJ was and, if Kings Mountain wanted to annex the area what procedures and criteria they would have to follow, had some folks confused.

Commission chairman Jim Crawley tried to clear the air. "The city can annex with or without the ETJ," Crawley told the crowd. "The ETJ question has no bearing on annexation. They are two separate things."

Killian took the podium again to shed some light on just what a city has to do to annex new area.

"By state law a city has to

KM students attend Summer Ventures

Several Kings Mountain High School students are attending Summer Ventures in Science and Mathematics at East Carolina University.

They are Carrie E. Brinkley, Timothy Lane Echols, Amit Paul Shergill, and Maegan N. Spicer.

Brinkley is studying medicine, Echols is interested in matrix algebra, chemistry and problem solving, Shergill is working with chemistry, problem solving and computer programming, and Spicer is involved with archaeology and matrix algebra.

Summer Ventures is a state-funded project involving ECU, Appalachian State University, N.C. Central University, UNC-Charlotte, UNC-Wilmington, and Western Carolina University. The program, in its 16th year, provides academic enrichment for highly motivated students with a career interest in science and/or math.

Among the activities for the students are medical research projects at ECU's Brody School of Medicine, computer programming, DNA fingerprinting, mathematical modeling with matrix algebra, chemical analysis, problem solving and an archaeological dig at an 18th century Indian fort in Greene County.

The program began on June 18 and ends July 15. Thirty-six counties are represented. Participants live in campus residence halls.

prove it has the financial wherewithal to provide services such as sewer, water, and police to an area before it can be annexed," Killian said. "There has to be a certain level of development, especially residential, before annexation can be considered. You can't just go out and cherry pick."

Crawley said he had received at least two calls on the ETJ subject. Killian replied he had gotten over 50 calls. Most were concerned about potential tax increases. Killian stressed that

approval of the ETJ would not affect anyone's taxes.

The area that Kings Mountain was seeking is known as the Highway 29 Industrial Corridor and extends from a point about 2,000 feet east of Dixon School Road down to Town and Country Barbecue. Knowing that the area will see increased urbanization and development, the City of Kings Mountain has already spent \$50,000 on maps and planning to ensure that the growth is in an orderly and logical fashion.


After the public hearing concluded, commissioner Charlie Harry moved to approve the ETJ. Just before the vote, commissioner Willie McIntosh - who called himself a "country boy" - expressed concern that given the level of misunderstanding over what the ETJ actually was, perhaps the vote should be put off while more study on the subject was undertaken.

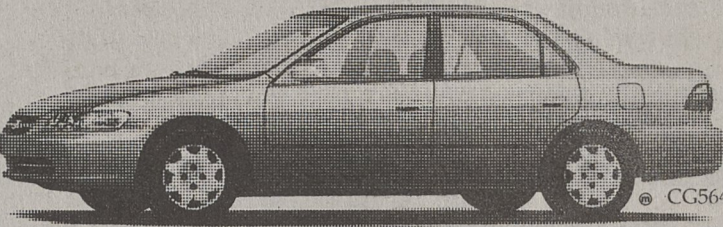
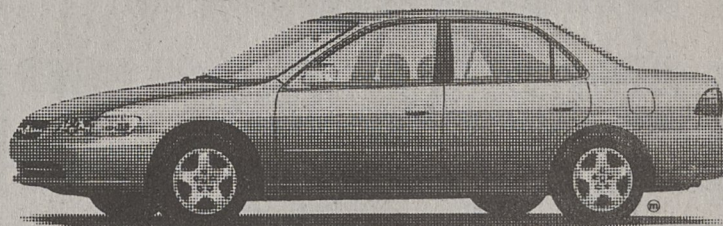
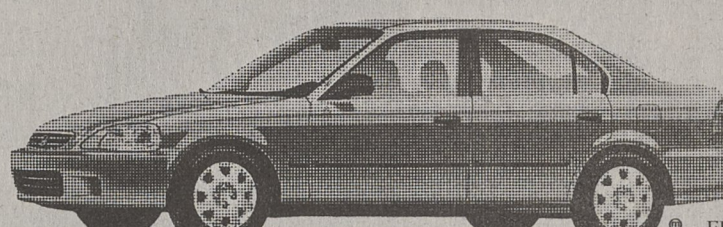
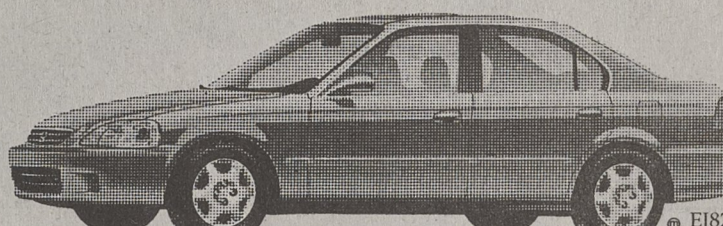

This comment brought county attorney Julian Wray into the discussion. Wray consulted his books on governmental proce-

dures and said that McIntosh could only amend the main motion with his motion as a complimentary addition. That issue settled, the commissioners voted unanimously to approve the ETJ, with the stipulation that some form of program be implemented to educate the public about the issue.

In other business Tuesday, the commission also appointed Patricia Bell to a three year term on the Cleveland County Commission for Women; appointed Dobbins Lattimore as

an alternate member to the Cleveland County Board of Adjustments for an open term; amended the Sheriff's Department budget to purchase two cameras for patrol cars; denied an appeal by Royster-Clark Inc. for abatement of a \$9.02 late tax listing penalty. In a letter, Royster-Clark explained that their offices in Tarboro had been flooded by Hurricane Floyd and that their Rocky Mount office was destroyed by fire, circumstances which delayed their filing.



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