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LOCAL itizens continue to argue for right to vote on LBT

REBECCA PISCOPO, EMILY WEAVER

For the third month in a row, Kings Mountain citizens debated the controversial mixed beverage referendum even though City Council did not have the issue scheduled on Tuesday night's agenda.

Concerned citizens had asked for a vote on the mixed beverage sales referendum to be placed on the agenda last week. But the city refused. Mayor Rick Murphrey said that they didn't see the point of placing it back on the agenda if the resulting vote (4-3 against) was going to remain the same.

But the request for a mixed beverage vote continued Tuesday night with multiple clarifications on the issue, ensuing more debates.

Cleveland County Board of Directors' Economic Director Steve Padgett cleared-up the Chamber of Commerce's stance on mixed beverage during the meeting's "Citizen Recognition."

"The support requested by the KM Advisory Council was clearly understood and acknowledged to be for a right of citizens of the City of KM to have a voice in their

communities, future direc-tion. The Cleveland County Board of Directors hereby encourage (the) Council to allow the Democratic process of the freedom to vote. That is the support of the Chamber," Padgett said, who also clarified that the Chamber is not throwing their support behind LBTD (liquor by the drink) itself being allowed in Kings Mountain.

But just as some folks were urging council members to allow citizens the right to vote, others were thanking them for not being allowed. There were supportive com-ments of last month's 4-3 vote against the LBTD referen-Resident, dum. Greg Carpenter congratulated City Council on their decision.

"I just wanted to say I appreciate the service you brought (KM)," Carpenter

There were also those in attendance, such as Gina Collias and Scott Neisler, who were not going to let the dust settle just yet. Collias has spoken at every City Council meeting about the right of the people of KM to

The Citizens for Progress Leader updated City Council members about a petition that is currently in four business locations in town. It has been approved by the Cleveland County Board of Elections, and it would also call for a referendum for mixed beverage sales if 35% of registered voter signatures can be obtained.

"I am here...to send the message that we, the citizens, who want the right to vote on mixed beverages, will not be silenced or oppressed. We will continue until the citizens' voices are heard and our votes are counted," Collias stated before council.

However, Dwayne Hoore believes that some who are passing out the petition are misleading the public. He said that when he went to Kings Mountain's one-stop voting site, the Masonic Lodge, to cast his ballot for the 2008 election he was stopped by a woman with that petition who allegedly did not tell him exactly what it was for.

Hoore said, "She told me that I needed to sign this petition for or against, as if it was

a vote. That was extremely misleading. I almost signed the petition then I realized when I read the paper that, that was a petition to get a certain number of names on that paper so they could have a vote.

He added that he quizzed her again, and claimed that she still said that the petition was for or against mixed beverages. Hoore requested that Council consider throwing out the petition.

Council, however, does not have that power. Hoore did say that he had called the Cleveland County Board of Elections because the woman who talked to him crossed over the line which said "No Campaigning beyond this point.

Jerry Mullinax, who voted for the mixed beverage referendum, contested against Hoore's point.

"I was out there also. I thought she did quite a job, and I think she was behind the 15 foot marker...I give them (those monitoring the petition) two thumbs up," Mullinax said.

Scott Neisler, who attended the meeting but didn't speak, said that those monitoring

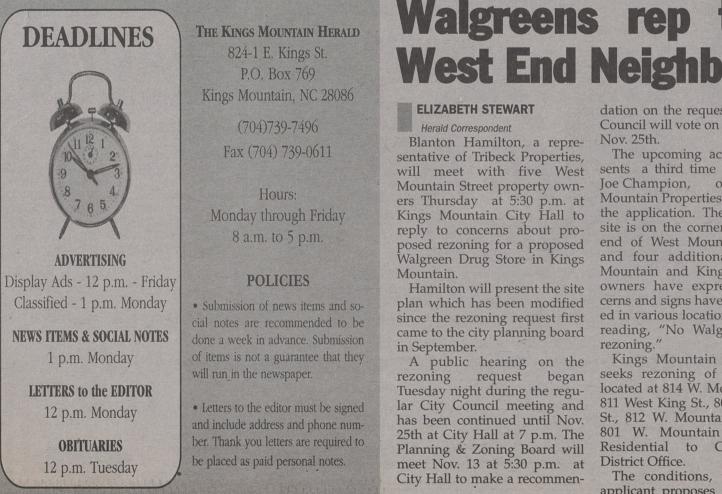
the petition are trained first hand to say what the petition is for up front. It is also their job to tell a potential signer to read the print on the page.

Scott Carpenter, who does not support the referendum, said to City Council, "I encourage you to stick by your statements." He added that when beer and wine sales were allowed by the public's vote that only one, and now two grocery store chains have come to Kings Mountain. Yet, other businesses such as Winn-Dixie have shut down.

Even though there wasn't a vote Tuesday night, those in attendance still had stirring spirits over the right to vote on the sale of spirituous liquor.

In other City Council action, the mayor honored East Elementary Principal Jennifer Wampler for the school achieving No Child Left Behind's "Blue Ribbon Award."

Murphrey also recognized Autumn Roper, who is currently attending Cleveland Community College, for her Miss North Carolina crown in the "Miss America" pageant.



Walgreens rep to meet with West End Neighborhood Thurs.

> dation on the request and City Council will vote on the request

> The upcoming action represents a third time around for Joe Champion, of Kings Mountain Properties, who filed the application. The proposed site is on the corner lot at the end of West Mountain Street and four additional lots on Mountain and King. Property owners have expressed concerns and signs have been posted in various locations in town, reading, "No Walgreen, stop rezoning."

Kings Mountain Properties seeks rezoning of properties located at 814 W. Mountain St., 811 West King St., 809 W. King St., 812 W. Mountain St., and 801 W. Mountain St. from Residential to Conditional

The conditions, which the applicant proposes and which

exceed the minimum requirements of the Kings Mountain Zoning Ordinance, according to Planning Director Steve Killian, are:

All structures are to be located as close as possible to W. King Street.

Existing landscape along W. Mountain Street to remain as

Sidewalks are to be added along West Mountain to enhance public safety.

Decorative street lighting to be installed along W. Mountain to enhance public safety.

Seven existing driveways will be reduced to two which also enhances public safety.

All structures will be architecturally in harmony with existing structures.

Decorative brick wall with pilasters along W. Mountain Street.