



G. Smedes York

East Wake Zoning Plans Reach a 'Sit' Still

By RICHARD CINQUINA
Staff Writer

The diagnosis of the troublesome east Wake County zoning issue by the chairman of the county planning board was something less than optimistic. Speaking in the aftermath of yet another abortive attempt to explain zoning to diehard East Wake opponents, the planning chairman, G. Smedes York, said, "We'll have to move pretty slowly on this thing. In all fairness, I really don't know where we go from here."

The planning board held an informal workshop Wednesday with east Wake residents to try again to explain zoning. As in six prior public meetings on the controversial issue, the people who attended the workshop were loud and unmistakable in their position on zoning: they don't like it, don't need it and don't want it.

East Wake is the last unzoned section of the county, and the planning board has the responsibility of making a recommendation — one way or the other — to the county commissioners.

But although planning for the zoning now is dragging out into its second year, prospects for east Wake being zoned anytime soon are dim, according to York.

His prediction all but dashes the hope of some that east Wake would be zoned this spring.

"It's possible the planning board may decide not to recommend zoning, but it's not probable," York said. "More likely, it may be best to sit on the situation for a while."

By "sitting" on east Wake zoning, York did not exclude the possibility that the area may remain unzoned throughout 1975.

He listed two main problems the planning board is

encountering — the Wake commissioners and communications.

York said, "We're not getting any direction from anybody. The commissioners are not giving us any direction at all."

Regarding the two commissioners representing east Wake (Chairman Vassar P. Shearon of Wake Forest and J. T. Knott of Knightdale), he added, "They've been relatively silent up to this point."

On the matter of communicating with east Wake residents, York was less clear, although he hammered away at the problem. "We've just got to find a better way to communicate with those people, to find a way to make them understand zoning."

He indicated that until this new means of communications is found, progress on east Wake zoning would remain at a standstill.

"I don't want to be in the position," he commented, "of shoving this thing down people's throats."

Returning to the idea of indefinitely delaying action, York said, "The economy is so stagnant... that no development is going into east Wake. Maybe the people out there are right, that there may be no need for zoning right now."

However, York, one of Raleigh's major developers and property managers, said "something ultimately must be done in the way of land-use planning," since Wake is one of the fastest growing counties in the state.

This was all he would say when asked his position on the matter. Other than referring to the eventual need for countywide zoning, York said, "I'd hate to commit myself at this point. I think that would hurt the communication process."

Oakwood Residents Try to Hold Line on History

By ERNIE WOOD
Staff Writer

Oakwood has arrived. The strong possibility that Raleigh will make Oakwood its first historic district zone stands as a symbol of the neighborhood's achievements.

But that's just the tip of the iceberg. Or, if you will, the tip of a turret on one of the big Victorian houses that give Oakwood its character.

If the City Council agrees with the Raleigh Planning Commission's recommendation to give Oakwood historic district designation, the city would keep watch over the section's Victorian architecture.

Meanwhile, people will probably continue to be drawn to the inner city neighborhood by a peculiar combination of architecture and certain intangibles they find missing in newer areas. The Oakwood settlers come ready to do battle with decades of neglect to turn a decaying neighborhood into a beautiful bit of history.



Two homes on Oakwood Avenue

Staff photo by Rob Flynn

neighborhood declined. "Then, all of a sudden," she says, "we have such marvelous people who have moved in. We are delighted."

But Oakwood is at a crossroads, where the individual joys of house restoration must often begin to yield, some say, to the good of the neighborhood.

"We're at the point," says architectural historian and Oakwood resident Ruth Little Stokes, "where we have to decide whether we're going to be a historic neighborhood or whether we're going to be just a nice neighborhood. If the (historic district zoning) ordinance doesn't pass, we're going to be just a nice neighborhood."

She contends that the ordinance, which would limit the type of work that can be done on a house, is necessary to the area's integrity.

And only now are area residents beginning to talk of realistic proposals for the future. There have been dreams in the past of gas streetlights and cobbled streets. But Barry K. Poe, president of the Society

for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood, feels those "might be too much." There are proposals, however, to put power lines underground.

The association recently filed a request with the federal government for tax exempt status and has begun looking for grants.

"But we've been so defensive in the past," says Poe, "that we haven't had time to address ourselves to the future."

Oakwood's accomplishments to date, however, have been significant:

- The neighborhood has been "downzoned" to prohibit apartments and other high-density development.
- The city recently moved the huge Tucker House from Blount Street to Person Street adjoining Oakwood to serve as a community center.
- The proposed North-South Expressway, for all practical purposes, has been killed.
- A walking tour has been published. Copies are available from the Chamber of Commerce, the state Archives and History Building, Mordecai

House and Olivia Raney Library.

- The neighborhood has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- There have been 52 houses renovated.
- Over the past three years, by some estimates, property values have increased 25 to 30 per cent.
- One of the most remarkable success stories in the neighborhood belongs to Robert Hoadley and William Makepeace, who in 1971 bought a house at Polk and East streets (an intersection now generally regarded as the center of Oakwood) for \$10,500. They put about \$25,000 into the house, lived in it and sold it a few months ago for a sum large enough to buy another old house for \$55,000 and renovate it.
- Hoadley contends that the rising value of the houses is important only as it reflects the rising value of the neighborhood. "The day of the \$10,000 house in Oakwood is over," he cautions bargain hunters. Houses already renovated are rare, and, when available, carry price tags of

between \$35,000 and \$40,000.

Thirty-seven houses have been restored in the area since 1969, and 15 restorations are under way this spring. Thirty-five Oakwood houses — in the estimation of the society — never needed restoration. That make 87 houses which are now sound, old homes.

The architectural guidelines for the proposed historic district would not affect the work already done on those houses.

Generally, the people in Oakwood say they want to preserve "the nature of what they've got. Says Barry Poe, "Oakwood is attracting people because they appreciate architecture and quality they don't see any-

It would cover only exterior work in the future, regulating such items as type of building material, colors of the houses, and window, door and other detailing.

"New structures within the designated historic district should reflect qualities and elements found in Victorian modes," note the standards. But the guidelines emphasize details which are not allowed instead of specifying what must be done in Oakwood, therefore allowing a certain amount of flexibility.

Linda Harris, the city planner who has overseen the guidelines, points out that many Victorian styles themselves were eclectic collections from different periods. So that with approval from the city, the guideline would allow both carriage lamps, now popular items which came from a period too early for Oakwood, or modern globe lamps, which would be too contemporary for real historical accuracy.

The office district along Person Street would still be able to build as earlier zoned, but would have to come up with plans that aesthetically blend

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MASONIC NOTICE!
An emergent communication of Garner Lodge No. 701 A.F. & A.M. will be held Monday, May 19, 1975 at 7:30 P.M. for the purpose of conferring the Master Mason Degree. All Master Masons are invited to attend.
E.C. Martin, Master
A.C. Capps, Secretary

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Around the City

BLOOMSBURY GARDEN Club will meet at 6 p.m. today with Mrs. Mattie Brockwell of 2206 The Circle.

SIR WALTER LIONS Club will meet at 6:15 p.m. today at Balentines Restaurant in Cameron Village. Malcolm Williams of the Raleigh-Durham

Airport Authority will speak.

RALEIGH ENGINEERING Club will hold a picnic at 6:30 p.m. today at the North Hills Swim Club ballroom on Yadkin Drive.

RALEIGH SERTOMA Club will meet at 1 p.m. today at the downtown Holiday Inn.

WADE AVENUE Task Force will meet at 7:30 p.m. today in the rear clubroom of Jaycee Community Center. Topic is Thoroughfare Review Plan.

RALEIGH HOST LIONS Club spring picnic will be held at 5:30 p.m. today at Lions Park.



Charles Craven

TRIANGLE Chapter of the American Business Women's Association will meet at 6:30 p.m. today at North Hills Steak House. Dr. Thelma J. Roundtree will speak.

THE ITEM UP FOR AUCTION WAS A "broiler," one of those electrical appliances you see in gas stations and small stores that carry sandwiches, cold drinks and sometimes soup.

"All right," said Strick, proprietor of the little grocery on Maywood Avenue called the Box. "What am I bid for it?"

"One dollar," said Marcus Flegette.

"I ought to hit you between the eyes from the back side," said Strick.

Two or three more bids were offered by the little band of customers in the place, but they upped the bids only with change. The highest bid was \$2.35.

"One thing," said Bankshot Frayle in an admiring sort of way. "You don't have to plug it in, it's already hot."

Strick gave him a scorching glance.

"I'll never let it for less than \$35.00 said Strick. "Now how do you like that?"

"The way you talk, Strick," said Bankshot, "you'd think you could roast a turkey in it. . . But it won't do anything but heat soup."

"Bet you a hundred it'll brown biscuits," said Strick. He got a cardboard cylinder,

of biscuit dough out of the refrigerator and busted it on the edge of the counter. He put a couple of biscuits in the broiler and turned it on.

"Now listen for the bell," said Strick.

"It's got a bell?" somebody asked.

"And lights," said Strick. Presently the bell went "ping" and the lights went out. "Now," said Strick, opening the broiler door.

The biscuits had puffed up a little.

"They're not brown," said a customer.

"They've been gassed," said another.

Somebody upped the bid to \$2.36.

Right then Nat Woodlief, the big beer salesman who is sergeant in a Marine reserve unit here, entered the place, pushing a dolly loaded with cases of beer.

When Strick tried to sell the broiler to Nat, the beer man said with a grin: "I'll give you a check for it."

The broiler has gone through, so many demonstrations that now the lights won't burn and the bell won't ring. But Strick is still asking \$35. "The aluminum in it is worth that much," he said.

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MASONIC NOTICE
Hiram Lodge No. 40, A.F. & A.M., will hold a Stated Communication in the Masonic Temple, 1520 Caswell Street, Raleigh, N.C., on Monday, May 19, 1975, at 7:30 p.m. An educational film will be shown. Refreshments will be served. All Master Masons are invited to attend.
Dewey B. Preast, Master
Forrest H. Pecht, Secretary

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MASONIC NOTICE
There will be a Stated Communication of Cary Lodge No. 116, A.F. & A.M. this evening, at 7:30 p.m. All Master Masons are cordially invited to attend.
Frank Oberer, Master
T. C. Jenkins, Secretary

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