



# The Village Record

The Newsletter of  
Village of Flat Rock  
Singleton Centre  
Flat Rock, North Carolina  
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Volume 10, Issue 1

Summer 2004

## From The Mayor's Desk

*Ray E. Shaw, Jr.*

Since our last newsletter to you, a new fiscal year has begun. The Council adopted a budget for FY 04-05 in the amount of \$730,000. This budget provides for payment to Henderson County of \$137,243 per the negotiated agreement in which the distribution of sales tax is retained on a per capita basis rather than changing to an ad valorem basis for the next two fiscal years.

A contract has been awarded to Carolina Specialties for renovation of the Stradley-Jones house for Village offices and for a meeting room. Work is expected to start this month.

Work continues with the Community Planning Group with two public meetings and a technical charrette having been held and one more public meeting scheduled. It will be held on August 19th from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Bo Thomas Auditorium on the Blue Ridge Community College campus. You should have received a flyer on these meetings. A traffic count has been completed and any recommendations based on the re-

sults will be forthcoming. A note of thanks should go to the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee that assisted the consultant in this study.

A revenue study group has been formed to evaluate Flat Rock's future funding possibilities after sales tax revenues cease beginning with FY 06-07. Thanks to the 13 individuals who volunteered to serve on this committee.

On a final note, we say thank you to Myles Reilly who so ably chaired the Traffic Safety Advisory Committee during this past year. The Council is grateful for his service.

### \*\*\*FOR YOUR INFORMATION\*\*\*

***Duke Power has scheduled a planned outage for Saturday, August 14th from 11:00 PM for approximately three (3) hours for maintenance. This outage will affect a large portion of Flat Rock. Please make your personal plans accordingly.***

***Not all of Flat Rock will be affected by this outage. As more details are learned about the affected area, it will be posted on the Village Web Site. A rain date is scheduled for Saturday, August 21st.***

**Village Hall Construction  
Contract Awarded**

*Nick Weedman*

The Village Council recently accepted a bid from Carolina Specialties Construction Company, Inc. of Hendersonville for renovation of the historic Stradley-Jones house and the construction of a new Village meeting hall. The contract will be signed by July 15, 2004 and construction should begin shortly after that. The total amount of the contract is \$553,385. Additional costs are expected for landscaping, furnishings, and miscellaneous items. The work is expected to be completed by the end of 2004.

Work has begun to remove one of the buildings on the property and consideration is being given to various options to remove the old barn.

Access to the property will be through the existing drive at the Blue Ridge Fire Department adjacent to the Village Hall property. The present drive that enters in front of the Stradley-Jones house will be closed. Parking will be provided for about 30 cars and a smaller parking lot to serve the Book Exchange and Historic Flat Rock will be included as well.

The project will entail extensive renovation of the 170-year-old house. Plans call for all administrative functions to be located in that facility. A new Village Hall that can accommodate about 50 people in the assembly area as well as rest rooms and a kitchen facility will be constructed behind the administrative area.

The project will maintain the architectural integrity of the Stradley-Jones house and the new addition has been carefully designed to blend into the existing property as much as

possible. Extensive renovations to the old house are required to bring it up to current building standards and to comply with other laws.

**2004/05 Budget Adopted**

*Nick Weedman*

The Village Council passed a budget ordinance for 2004/05 at the June 10, 2004 Council meeting. The budget provides for the normal operating costs to operated the Village Government functions as well as provide for the finalization of the new Village Hall and the first of two annual payments to Henderson County as part of the sales tax distribution agreement.

A summary of the major items in the budget follows:

**Total General Fund Revenues** \$730,000.

**Major Expense Items**

Council expenses	38,000.
Administration	192,400.
Finance expenses	10,000.
Payment to Henderson County <i>(sales tax distribution agreement)</i>	137,243.
Legal	15,000.
Elections	7,000.
Public Buildings & Equipment	230,457.
Street signs	4,500.
Community Program Support	10,000.
Kudzu eradication	5,000.
Planning	37,800.
Ordinance Administration	13,600.
Board of Adjustment	1,000.
Contingencies	25,000.

**Total Expenses** \$730,000.



**Village Sign Enforcement Officers.**  
*Left to right: Bruce Recker, Dick Burns, and George Wells.*

**Signs**

*Terry Hicks*

Most of us appreciate the absence of signs that could clutter our road sides. This is the result of the very restrictive Village of Flat Rock Sign Ordinance. Real estate signs may be placed only on the property being advertised for sale or rent, and must be at least ten feet from the traveled roadway with only one sign permitted per road facing. The ordinance does not permit signs to be placed off the owner's property. Therefore, directional signs are prohibited. All signs are limited in size, and a permanent sign marking a business establishment or otherwise located on property may be installed only after a permit for the sign has been issued by the Village government. All but official highway signs are prohibited in the NCDOT right of way along each public road within the Village. Illegally placed signs in the right of way, and off premises signs that do not conform to the requirements of the ordinance are subject to removal by the Village Sign Officer. Other violations of requirements of the Sign Ordinance may subject the property owner to fines and penalties for each day of noncom-

pliance. Political signs are governed by State Law and are outside the Village regulations. We have a sign ordinance we can all embrace, one that, if observed by all, will preserve the beauty of our unique, historic mountain community.

**Alternative Revenue Study Group**

*Terry Hicks*

On June 17 this group had an organizational meeting. Following general discussions the group organized into three separate committees. The focus of each committee and the group as a whole is to research and report back to the Village Council on how the Village can continue receiving revenues from county sales taxes in budget year 2005-06. More significantly this is to be accomplished without requiring any additional monies from our citizens than is currently paid for services. We feel confident this can be accomplished by having payments for existing services channeled through the Village rather than paid through the county or to other service providers. Your Village Council is working hard to avoid adding to your annual expenses.

Volunteers serving on this committee are:

- Marilyn Gordon
- Mike Cervini
- Jim Mosakowski
- Howard Perley
- Charles Williamson
- Bob Brown
- Tom Sheppard
- Dieter Hammer
- Neil MacLellan
- Martha Andrews, and Dick Jackson

## Long Range Planning for Flat Rock

*Bruce Recker*

### 1. Learn all about it in our Citizens Meeting

For more than a year, the Community Planning Group has been working with two consulting firms to develop a long-range plan for Flat Rock. The group's advisors will present their findings and give us their recommendations in our next public meeting. Please join us and your neighbors at our meeting which will take place from 4 to 6 pm on August 19<sup>th</sup> at the Bo Thomas Auditorium at Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC).

### 2. The Community Planning Group (CPG)

The long-range planning project was initiated by our Mayor and our Village Council. Since it had been some time since the Village was incorporated, they felt it was time to take a close look at what had happened since then and to develop recommendations for the future.

To make this happen, the Village Council formed The Community Planning Group. This committee includes representatives from key stakeholder groups in our town including the Village Council, the Traffic & Safety committee, the Planning committee, Historic Flat Rock, Carl Sandburg, Flat Rock Playhouse, the Village Merchants Association, and others. The Council authorized this committee to look for leading experts in the field who might assist us. After an extensive search, two outstanding North Carolina consulting firms were engaged. Land Design specializes in community planning and design. Wilbur Smith Associates are traffic and safety engineers.

### 3. What are our objectives?

Our study has several objectives:

A. to gather information about our community

B. to project these findings 10 to 20 years into the future

C. to present reasonable choices and recommendations for three key areas: managing future growth, traffic and safety, and the Village center

### 4. What's the matter with staying the way we are?

Since we started our study, we have often been asked the following question; "We live here because we like Flat Rock. Why do you want to change it?" Well frankly, we like Flat Rock too. We don't want to change it either. However, it will be almost impossible to keep it just the way it is. We want to be able to manage the inevitable change and still keep the things we love most about Flat Rock.

Just think about all the growth in Flat Rock over the past ten years. We are surrounded by changes. The area is booming. More people are moving here every day. Even if we did nothing to change our Village's rules and regulations, our Village could easily double in population and traffic over the next 15 to 20 years.

There is a lot of undeveloped land in Flat Rock. We have to ask ourselves, "Will our present zoning ensure that it will be developed properly?" Imagine the impact of developing just one large tract on our open spaces, our population and our traffic. Then multiply that by all of the land available in town and imagine what will happen! We have to manage the changes.

### 5. What have we done so far?

In March, we conducted a citizens' survey. Even we were surprised. We had a terrific (53%) response to the survey we sent to the citizens of Flat Rock. The survey results are available on the Village website at [villageofflatrock.org](http://villageofflatrock.org).

We held in-depth interviews with many key stakeholders in the future of our Village including representatives from the CPG, Highland

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Lake, Kenmure, and others.

In May, we conducted a well attended public meeting to introduce our planning process to the people of Flat Rock. We also held a very successful all day brainstorming session or “charrette” with the Community Planning Group and our consultants. This intensive effort lasted from 9 am until 6 pm and produced many good ideas.

In June, members of our traffic and safety committee worked together with our traffic consultants to complete a comprehensive traffic and parking survey at key locations throughout the Village.

Later in the month, we held our second public meeting. We reviewed the work which had been completed. Then we held a series of small group discussions. We wanted confirmation that our thinking was moving in the right direction. Our consultants will use this information as a basis for their recommendations. They will present their conclusions and their final report at our next public meeting on August 19<sup>th</sup>.

#### **6. Thanks to all who helped**

We extend our sincere thanks to the many volunteers who helped us on this project. Some of them were truly outstanding. For example, one remarkable woman remained at her post for hours in the pouring rain to collect traffic data. Another worked diligently to enter accurate survey information into our database. However you helped us, we thank you most sincerely.

#### **7. What comes next?**

Our consultants are ready to present their findings. They have made every effort to get input from our committees and our citizens. As a result, we hope that their conclusions will be practical and realistic. As soon as we have analyzed their findings and reviewed our priorities, we will begin the long process of implementation. We will need the leadership of our Mayor and

our Council members as well as the support of all of our citizens to capitalize on the work which has been done.

Not every suggestion will be easy to implement. However, if we want to control our future, we must make the recommendations into realities. We want Flat Rock to be a great place to live for the next 10 to 20 years!

#### **8. An important reminder!**

Don't forget to join us for the final public meeting which will mark the conclusion of our planning project. This meeting will be held from 4 to 6 PM on August 19th at the Bo Thomas Auditorium at Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC). See you there.

### **The Village Needs You**

*William Slonaker*

There are currently openings for two volunteers in the Zoning Administration Office. The position requires two (2) hours per week in the village office plus attendance at a monthly breakfast meeting. You will be asked to read, understand and help administer the Village Zoning Ordinance, interfacing with property owners and builders. No prior experience is necessary. If you have the time and wish to perform this valuable service for your village, please call Michelle at 697-8100 any weekday between 9AM and 4PM for an application.

### **Mid-Year Building Activity Report**

*William Slonaker*

The Zoning Administration approval of the village building permits for single family homes this year-to-date (June) numbers 20 approvals. That is about 37% fewer than the same time last year and 20% fewer than 2002. If this approval rate continues, we should see

about 40 single-family home permits issued by the end of 2004, or a decline of about 30% from 2003.

On the other hand, we have several subdivisions (Highland Lake, Dunroy on Rutledge, Sherwood Estates and the upcoming Villas at Singleton Centre) that should cause this activity to increase next year.

Building activity at **HIGHLAND LAKE** and **DUNROY ON RUTLEDGE** continue at an even pace.

**SHERWOOD ESTATES** is a new subdivision of fourteen 2+ acre lots on Route 25 South. It was approved by Village Council last year. No homes have been built to date.

**VILLAS AT SINGLETON CENTRE** have received preliminary review and approval by the Village Planning Board. Thirteen single-family homes on one-half acre lots are planned. It is on West Blue Ridge adjacent to the Singleton Centre.

### **Traffic Safety Advisory Committee**

*Myles Reilly*

As part of Village of Flat Rock's contract with Land Design Consultants, TSAC agreed to recruit volunteers to observe and record in a hand-held computer driven device, all vehicles and in which direction they were moving. This was performed by twelve (12) great citizens, at four (4) key locations, in two (2) hour shifts - 7-9AM, 11-1PM, 4-6PM, with total dedication, sometimes under severe rainfall/wind conditions, without skipping a beat! The results were made public at the July 15th public meeting at Blue Ridge Community College. For those interested in how the time was selected, we agreed with our consultants that an average day was more appropriate, rather than a school day,

or special day of heavy or light traffic. Kudos to our volunteer citizens!

Several alternative methods of speed control, and estimated costs for each, were presented to the Council by TSAC. The Council will evaluate these in conjunction with Land Design's recommendations. The alternatives covered possible arrangements with the Sheriff's department and variations thereof; inaugurating our own department; several passive electronic devices both portable and permanent; ongoing publicity campaign. In the meantime, good citizens, please, please observe our posted speeds and traffic laws!

Two requests to NCDOT were turned down - reducing speed limit through the Village to 25 mph from 35 mph, and traffic light and turn lanes at Little River and Kanuga. In each case the rejection was based upon NCDOT's standards of safety.

Council action on endorsing or not the St. John in the Wilderness proposed land trade and resultant permanent closing of an unsafe portion of Rutledge Drive, plus extension of Highland Lake Road across Route 25, along St. John's northern boundary, to join with Rutledge approximately at the church's western boundary northern boundary, to join with Rutledge approximate at the church's western boundary/or appropriate spot has been put on hold, to be reviewed when Land Design submits its recommendations. If enacted, the project would unite the now separates 2 church campuses. The proposal would remove some cross traffic to the edge of town, but it is not without controversy.

Road striping (not always perfect) has been completed by NCDOT.

Personal. My term with TSAC was up July 10th. It has never been dull! Still lots to be

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done; exciting that some projects have moved forward or been completed. Dennis Johnston, a loyal member of our Zoning Administration, will replace me, and I wish him well. Please join me in gratitude for our entire and highly motivated VFR volunteers and paid staff; we are blessed to have each one of them. Peace!

### **Green River Library – Available For Flat Rock Citizens**

*(The following article is by Carla V. Cohn for the "Friends of Green River Library")*

Are you familiar with your neighborhood Green River Branch Library? The Henderson County Library System has several branches. The Green River Branch is about six miles south of the intersection of US 25 and the Little River Road. Go south on US 25, turn left on the Green River Road and go one block to Green's Six Oak Mall and the Library.

Our Flat Rock patrons tell us they delight in the personal service they receive from the staff and volunteers. All Libraries in the System have computers available for public use; you may call ahead to check for availability at 697-4969.

Anything available at any Library in the system, with the exception of magazines, can be ordered and picked up at your preferred location. All Library materials may be returned to any HCPL facility, regardless of the check out location. You may order materials by phone (697-4969).

The Green River Branch has videos, books on tape, magazines, and some music CDs. DVDs can be ordered from Main and picked up here.

Green River STORYTIME for toddlers and preschoolers, conducted by Sharon Jackson from the Main Library, is on Thursdays at 9:00 a.m. for toddlers (registration required for toddlers only) and 10:00 for preschoolers. Until July 29, there will also be story time for third through sixth grades at 11:00 am.

Internet users may browse the Library Catalog from home. Go to [www.henderson.lib.nc.us](http://www.henderson.lib.nc.us). On the library web site click the button for "search our catalog". You can also check your own library record. Click "My Account". Your User ID is your library card barcode number and your "Pin" is the last four digits of your phone number. (Your pin can be changed, if desired, after initial use). You can order the material you want to be delivered to the Green River Branch and you will be called when it comes in. Drop in and visit! If you don't have a library card, get one at Green River! We look forward to seeing our neighbors.

### **Meet the Candidates Forums Highly Successful**

The Village of Flat Rock sponsored two highly successful "Meet The Candidate" forums recently.

The first Forum on July 6<sup>th</sup> had all five candidates for the two positions on the County Commission participating. Incumbents Grady Hawkins and Charlie Messer as well as challengers Chuck McGrady, Jeff Hart, and Jon Yarbrough all gave excellent presentations and responded to questions from the audience. Between 90-100 mainly Flat Rock residents were present for the session. Interestingly, four of the five County Commissioners were present either as participants or as observers.

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, the Forum highlighted judicial candidates for the North Carolina 29<sup>th</sup> District Court Judge position. Four participants included incumbent Dawn Skerrett and challengers Rick Adams, Mose Highsmith, and Athena Brooks. A handout prepared by Council Member R. V. (Bob) Staton gave a description of the District and Superior Courts and proved very popular. Over 50 people participated in this session.

Former Mayor Terry J. Hicks moderated both sessions and handled the difficult task of selection of questions to be asked of the candidates in an outstanding manner.

**Schedule of Meetings**

All monthly **Council Meetings** are scheduled for the **second Thursday** of each month at 9:30 AM.

**Agenda Workshops** are scheduled to start at 9:30 AM on the **Monday** 10 days prior to the Council Meeting, unless that Monday falls on a holiday.

**The Planning Board** meets the **first Tuesday** of each month from 9:00 AM until 11:30 AM.

**The Board of Adjustment** meets the **first Tuesday** of each month at 3:00 PM, if there are Agenda items.

The **Village of Flat Rock** office hours are 9:00 AM—4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

**The Zoning Administration** office hours are from 2:00 PM-4:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

*The deadline for articles to be included in the Fall issue of "The Village Record" is Thursday, October 14th .*

**Village Directory**

**Mayor:**  
Ray E. Shaw, Jr. 698-2449

**Council Members:**  
District 1  
Robert V. Staton 696-4020  
Nick Weedman 693-5300

District 2  
Judy M. Boleman, Vice Mayor 698-8912  
David Bucher 696-3269

District 3  
Terry A. Hicks 697-9022  
Donald E. Roark 697-2068

**Village Clerk:**  
Rowena M. Sweezy 697-8100

**Administrative Assistant:**  
Michelle D. Parker 697-8100

**E-Mail Address:** vofr@bellsouth.net  
**Website:** villageofflatrock.org

**Village of Flat Rock**  
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