

THE MORNING NEWS

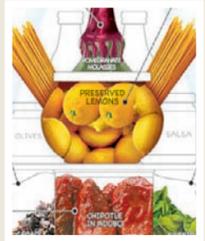
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ROGERS EDITION

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ADVICE

PAGE 1E

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50¢

Group Denies Church Request

By John Henley Jr.
 THE MORNING NEWS
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ROGERS — The Rogers Planning Commission denied a request by a church to build in south Rogers.

The request failed on a 4-4 vote. Commissioners David Thrasher, Ron Shelby, Don Spann and Jim White voted against the motion. Commissioner James Gosserand was not at the meeting.

Phil Hastie and his son, Lane, pastors at Celebrate Family Church, requested a conditional-use permit to build a church at 2301 W. Laurel Ave.

The five-acre parcel of land is in a residential single-family zone and abuts the Creekside subdivision on three sides.

"Presently we have no plans or drawing," Phil Hastie told commissioners, adding he was only requesting the permit so plans could be submitted in the future.

Phil Hastie assured commissioners whatever would be built would have curb appeal and be well thought out.

"We want to be good neighbors," he said.

Residents from Creekside were at the meeting to speak regarding the request. Jim Lefevre, 2801 S. 24th St., is the chairman of the neighborhood's architectural-control commission. One of Lefevre's main concerns was traffic on West Laurel Avenue, which Lefevre called a "cow path" and not a road.

Improvements to Laurel Avenue from South Eighth Street to 26th Street could be completed with the proposed 2010 bond issue; however, it is not high on the list of priority projects, said Steve Glass, the director of Rogers Planning. The improvement is projected to cost about \$11 million.

Resident Ed Simpson of 2803 Creekside Drive was concerned that neighborhood residents would have no say about what kind of building could be built on the property if the permit was approved.

SEE REQUEST PAGE 2A

DOWNTOWN WORK

Renovation Cost Doubles

COUNTY REQUIRED TO PROVIDE COURTROOM FOR NEW CIRCUIT JUDGE

By Scarlet Sims
 THE MORNING NEWS
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BENTONVILLE — Costs to renovate a downtown building for a new courtroom have more than doubled, the Benton County Finance Committee learned on Tuesday.

Project Coordinator Jim Ecker told the Quorum Court in January that renovation costs for the Tucker Building, south of the courthouse, would be \$36,750. Earlier this week, Ecker notified the county costs would run about

\$85,000. The county is required by law to provide a courtroom for a new circuit judge in 2009.

Ecker was not at Tuesday's committee meeting.

Ecker said in an interview he should have given the Quorum Court a low estimate and a high estimate for a worst-case scenario. County workers ran into several costly problems, including having to break out and repour concrete and add a sewer line and lift station for public restrooms. Ecker estimated those parts of the project alone cost about \$13,000, which is \$9,000 more than

originally estimated.

"So far, we're running right down the worst-case scenario," Ecker said.

Gas lines also had to be relocated, the air-conditioning unit needed new duct work and the tin ceiling was too butchered to reuse, Ecker said. The building needed extra insulation to cut noise from the lift station, and Ecker didn't consider a security systems in his original estimate.

"All that together — \$1,000 here, \$1,000 there — adds up to real money," Ecker said.

Ecker underestimated the costs

for fiber optics and networking for the new courtroom, Comptroller Richard McComas told the committee. No paperwork has been submitted to the county showing the need for more funding, said Michelle Anderson, the accounting office manager.

Ecker said he is awaiting estimates on fiber optics before delivering a final cost for the project.

Even though the costs have increased, the county will save money by doing most of the construction and design in-house, Ecker said.

SEE WORK PAGE 2A

AUTOGRAPH SESSION



SARAH BERRETT • THE MORNING NEWS

Wallace Spearmon Jr., Olympic hopeful and former University of Arkansas track and field star, autographs books Tuesday for first- and second-graders from Bellview Elementary School at the John Q. Hammons Center in Rogers.

Olympic Hopeful Talks To Students

SPEARMON TAKES TIME OUT FROM TRAINING FOR TRACK AND FIELD TO READ

IN THEIR OWN WORDS
BEING HOSPITABLE

Eighth-grader Brianna Hickey, who shadowed a Morning News reporter on Tuesday, interviewed some Bellview Elementary School students. She asked what they thought of Olympic track and field hopeful Wallace Spearmon Jr. and his reading of the book "Be Hospitable."

Q. What's hospitable to you?
 A. Finding someone that's lost.
 — Savanna Autrey, 7

Q. What is hospitable to you?
 A. I don't know.
 Q. What have you learned?
 A. Be respectful.
 — Megan Dickson, 7

Q. What is hospitable?
 A. Being nice and helpful.
 Q. What have you learned?
 A. That you can be hospitable in lots of stuff for the environment.
 — Joey Terry, 8

SOURCE: STAFF REPORT



By Lana F. Flowers
 THE MORNING NEWS
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ROGERS — Helping a competitor in need and embracing people different from you are ways to be hospitable, according to "Be Hospitable," a book read to Bellview Elementary School students Tuesday by Olympic hopeful Wallace Spearmon Jr. of Fayetteville.

Spearmon took time out from his schedule of four-hour training sessions to read to first- and second-graders from the Rogers school.

The children traveled to the John Q. Hammons Center to hear Spearmon and his trainer father talk about their Olympic dreams in track and field and how people should be nice to each other.

That last sentiment

was summarized in "Be Hospitable," a book by Todd Parr and sponsored by the Hilton family of hotels.

Being hospitable means applauding someone for a good performance, Spearmon read to about 50 students.

"So good job to y'all for making it here today and being a good audience," Spearmon told the students.

Spearmon read that being hospitable means embracing people who are different, including those in different places, like China, where the summer Olympics will be held in Beijing.

Spearmon hopes to compete there, after a few more stops in some time trials to see if he becomes part of the U.S. track and field team.

SEE SPEARMON PAGE 2A

GETTING STARTED

IN THE NEWS

Collegians Arrested In Drug Probe

SAN DIEGO — Dozens of San Diego State University students were arrested after a sweeping drug investigation found that some fraternity members openly dealt drugs and one even sent a mass text message advertising cocaine, authorities said Tuesday. Of the 96 people arrested, 75 were students.
FULL STORY, 3B

Report Lists Local Real Estate Hot Spots

Benton County commanded four of the top five markets for 2007 home sales in the region, according to Paul Bynum, a statistician with Coldwell Banker Faucette Real Estate in Fayetteville.
FULL STORY, 1D



INDEX
THE MORNING NEWS
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Business	Section D	Food	Section E
Classifieds	Section F	Nation & World	Section B
Comics	4-5E	Region & State	7A
Crossword	3E	Sports	Section C

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