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Board hears plans for new high school



Above: Charles Warner, one of the presenters associated with Sherman Carter and Barnard Carter architectural firm points out the main principal behind their firm, which is to deliver ideas brought from board and faculty on what they want their school to be. Below: Jerry Huams, of WMB architects in Lexington was the second firm to make a general proposal for a new high school and construction of new traffic lanes to the Nicholas County School Board. Unlike the team of individuals from SCB, Huams was alone in his presentation. He fielded ideas and showed one possibility for the high school's placement and look.

By Josh Shephard
The Nicholas County School Board last night heard plans for a new high school. The board heard presentations from two Lexington architectural firms about their concepts for designs on a new Nicholas County High School.

Both firms presented their preliminary designs and history of experience designing and overseeing the construction of high schools to board members.

The Lexington firms of Sherman, Carter, and Barnard, who made their presentation at 6:00 p.m., and the WMB architectural firm, who began after the conclusion of the other firm, made their general presentations to board members, faculty, and residents and pooled opinions on what all wanted to see in a new high school.

Review of firms will be a two step process. The school board will be hearing from two other architectural firms this coming Wednesday at the same time.

Basically, both firms brought representatives interviewed board members and presented ideas for a new high school design and for ideas on how to improve the traffic situation around the high school.

No decision has been made by the school board to go ahead with plans to construct a new high school, but funds from the Kentucky School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) will become available in 1992 and it is possible a phase of the school construction could begin by the end of the year.

The state facilities construction commission was set up in 1985 and its purpose was to aid financially disadvantaged schools to afford new and improved educational buildings, or more accurately, fulfill small school system's needs.

"We have a high school that dates back to the 1900's. It is no longer able to supply our students with the type of equipment and resources they need to confront the advances in our society," Superintendent Robert Gilbert said.

The principle misconception most people have about the SFCC is that they equate new school buildings with higher school taxes. However, the truth in Kentuckians are already paying these taxes.

The higher the cost of the school, the more money they have to pay for the school.

Fact: The taxes levied to support the Kentucky School Facilities Construction Commission were established in 1985 and in 1990, when KERA was first established. All Kentucky citizens are paying them now.

Fact: Since 1985, all Kentucky public schools have had the chance to access millions of dollars in construction commission money to improve or build new facilities.

Fact: Before the Nicholas County School Board approved building the new Nicholas County Elementary School addition, just completed at the end of 1991, Nicholas was one of only six counties in Kentucky that did not take advantage of the funds offered by the SFCC.

Each school may apply for commission money every other year.

If a school decides not to participate in the funding then the amount allocated to that school system by the commission will be distributed between the participating schools.

All schools are required to present a list of unmet needs to the commission.

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Above: Charles Warner, one of the presenters associated with Sherman Carter and Barnard Carter architectural firm points out the main principal behind their firm, which is to deliver ideas brought from board and faculty on what they want their school to be. Below: Jerry Huams, of WMB architects in Lexington was the second firm to make a general proposal for a new high school and construction of new traffic lanes to the Nicholas County School Board. Unlike the team of individuals from SCB, Huams was alone in his presentation. He fielded ideas and showed one possibility for the high school's placement and look.

Hopkins questions legality of council's modular home ordinance

By Josh Shephard
The Nicholas County Council last night questioned the legality of a modular home ordinance passed by the council.

The ordinance, which defines a dwelling unit as a modular home in the City of Carlisle's definition of a dwelling unit was thought to be a dead issue when council passed the measure last in October.

But in last Monday night's City Council meeting, the issue cropped up once again in an unusual way.

A letter from Attorney Billy Hopkins, representing the Carlisle Planning and Zoning Commission, stated that the council may have passed the measure illegally because it is "in violation of the commission's recommendation based on a public hearing."

According to Hopkins' letter, the council may have acted illegally when they passed the ordinance because the commission had not yet had a public hearing concerning the ordinance. Hopkins quoted the Kentucky statute on procedures for amending city dwelling unit ordinances

which maintain that a public hearing and a commission recommendation was needed to pass the ordinance.

City Council attorney Skip Watson said Hopkins had only quoted half the statute.

The Council had its first reading of the ordinance on July 8, 1991. According to Watson's reading of the statute, the commission had 60 days after the receipt of the ordinance to hold a public hearing and deliver a recommendation to the council.

"We gave them 90 days. During that time I received no communication from Mr. Hopkins about the commission's intentions. There was no public hearing held and I received nothing, not a letter or any other advisement, that they planned to hold a hearing."

"But this situation has never come up before. The council met their obligation and under the circumstances, the council's decision to go ahead and pass the ordinance should be all right," Watson said.

If procedure worked as Hopkins stated in the letter, the commission could hold up the passage of any similar ordinance simply by taking no action, Watson said.

Councilperson Tammy Vaughn, who is council's liaison with the Carlisle Planning and Zoning commission, said Hopkins had said he attempted to contact Watson several times on the issue.

Watson said he would be able to get in touch with another council member.

"I'm sure to me you two need to get together and settle this matter. I've got both attorneys in each meeting saying they are trying to contact one another and I'm having a difficult time figuring out who to believe," Vaughn said.

Council led the matter up to Watson and Hopkins to settle and remained firm behind.

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Minutes before trial Hamm enters guilty plea

By Josh Shephard
The Nicholas County Circuit Court last night heard the guilty plea of a man charged with the murder of a woman.

CYNTHIANA — A tragic chapter in the lives of a Nicholas County family ended Monday when five minutes before opening statements were made, Steven D. Hamm settled for a guilty plea to second degree manslaughter.

The penalty is 12 and a half years.

Hamm, who was arrested and charged with murder in Cynthiana following an automobile accident that claimed the lives of Nicholas County residents Harry L. and Ann Carmack Trapp, changed his plea to guilty minutes before his murder trial was supposed to begin.

By his guilty plea, Hamm waived his rights to an appeal.

In two preliminary hearings, Hamm had entered pleas of not guilty to the charges.

Hamm's murder trial was scheduled to begin last November 18, but Hamm's defense counsel, Mark Woloshin of Newport, was granted a 60 day continuance in proceedings in order to review lab evidence presented by prosecuting attorney Jack Keith of Cynthiana that allegedly showed the headlights of the car Hamm was driving at the time of the accident were off when it occurred.

The trial, which began with preliminary motions Monday morning, January 13 ended abruptly when Hamm agreed to change his not guilty plea.

During court proceedings earlier Monday morning Woloshin made several motions to suppress prosecution's evidence concerning Hamm's blood/alcohol level as well as drug screen tests which Keith claimed would show Hamm was also under the influence of marijuana

and Valium just prior to the accident.

Circuit Judge Robert McGinnis sustained only two of the defense's motions which prohibited entering in as evidence tests which showed the levels of alcohol in the defendant's urine and several photographs made at the scene.

McGinnis overruled defense's motion for another continuance.

After the morning's proceedings, jury broke for lunch at approximately 12:15. At 1:15, the jury was scheduled to hear both counsel's opening statements.

However, at 1:10 p.m., defense met with prosecution and agreed to settle for a guilty plea to second degree manslaughter, which would deny Hamm's right to an appeal.

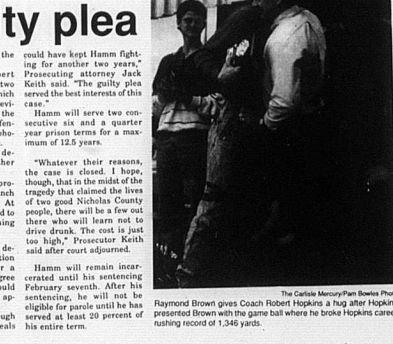
"If they had gone through with the trial, the appeals

could have kept Hamm fighting for another two years," Prosecuting attorney Jack Keith said. "The guilty plea served the best interests of this case."

Hamm will serve two consecutive six and a quarter year prison terms for a maximum of 12 1/2 years.

"Whatever their reasons, the case is closed. I hope, though, that in the midst of the tragedy that claimed the lives of two good Nicholas County people, there will be a few out there who will learn not to drive drunk. The cost is just too high," Prosecutor Keith said after court adjourned.

Hamm will remain incarcerated until his sentencing February seventh. After his sentencing, he will not be eligible for parole until he has served at least 20 percent of his entire term.



The Carlisle Mercury/Pan Bowes Photo Raymond Brown gives Coach Robert Hopkins a hug after Hopkins presented Brown with the game ball where he broke Hopkins career rushing record of 1,340 yards.