

HBO documentary on the Bee Gees tracks highs and lows

STORY ON PAGE 5A



How ACHS' Bethel got a chance to punt for Ole Miss

SPORTS ON PAGE 6A



THURSDAY
DECEMBER 10, 2020

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Zoning district could allow for zoos, amusement parks

BY BEN POUNDS
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A new type of zoning district, under consideration for Oak Ridge, could allow for motor-sports parks, but also zoos, summer camps, retreats and amusement parks.

The Oak Ridge Municipal Planning Commission is scheduled to discuss the proposed district at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10.

The idea for the "Special Recreation District" as the city Community Development Department has called it, came as a result of a developer's proposal to build a motorsports park with an amphitheater, RV campsite and other amenities on several parcels of the Horizon Center. The Horizon Center is located near, but not in, the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement (BORCE) and the

former K-25 site.

Planning Commission will have to approve this new district in order for it to go forward to City Council for final approval.

Thursday's meeting is a work session, meaning the Planning Commission can take no vote. The full meeting agenda is available online.

You can view the meeting at oakridgetn.gov/online/streaming.

In accordance with Gov. Bill

Lee's executive orders regarding limiting public gatherings to prevent the further spread of COVID-19, as well as allowing public meetings to be conducted by electronic means, the meeting will be conducted with planning commissioners participating electronically through video or audio conferencing. The Municipal Building courtroom, where the meeting will take place, will not be open for members of the

public to attend in person.

However, you may submit public comments electronically to commdev@oakridgetn.gov, or by post to City of Oak Ridge - Planning Commission, PO Box 1, Oak Ridge, TN 37831. Contact the Community Development Department at (865) 425-3531 or visit www.oakridgetn.gov for more information.

SEE ZONING, PAGE 4A

NEWS BRIEFS

New Xfinity



New offer
adds \$600

...shepard, and Rita Er...
 e. Words cannot...
 ess how much her...
 ty will miss her pres...
 in their lives.
 e to COVID-19 con...
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...atherford Mortuary...
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Historic ck, but n a bind

...41 years in...
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...now reunited with her...
 heavenly family, she has...
 left a spot that can never...
 be replaced.
 She was preceded in...
 death by her husband,

...Weatherford Mortuary...
 is handling the arrange...
 ments. An online guest...
 book can be signed at...
 www.weatherfordmortu...
 ary.com.

...to watch how the initial...
 rollout fares — skepticism

...vaccinated eventually, if...
 initial shots go well.

ZONING: CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

Proposed district
 Planning Commission...
 previously discussed ideas...
 for the new district at an...
 earlier work session. As...
 with most zoning districts,
 the focus is general and...
 goes beyond developer...
 H.E. "Rusty" Bittle's initial...
 proposal for the motor...
 sports park.

A presentation by the...
 city of Oak Ridge staff de...
 scribed the proposed dis...
 trict as being for "flexible...
 use and high quality faci...
 lities for recreation, specta...
 tor sport or entertainment...
 that serve a regional de...
 mographic and may draw...
 larger crowds for special...
 events."

"This is not easy. I'm...
 sure we'll make some...
 changes as we move for...
 ward," Community Deve...
 lopment Director Wayne...
 Blasius told the Planning...
 Commission during the...
 earlier work session.
 "We're not trying to rush...
 it. We're also not trying...
 to let it lay around," he...
 later added.

He said it was impor...
 tant that the permitted...
 uses list "reflects some...
 thing that we would want."

Staff listed some per...
 mitted uses of the pro...
 posed district in a...
 presentation: road and...
 race courses, amphithe...
 aters and outdoor the...
 aters, trails and "other...
 passive recreation," sports...
 and athletic facilities,
 amusement parks, zoos,
 golf courses or driving...
 ranges, country clubs, fair...
 grounds, parks and other...
 public recreation uses and...
 "retreat centers and...
 camps" such as summer...
 camps. Regarding that last

use, Planning Commis...
 sioner Jane Shelton said...
 Oak Ridge had in the past...
 had two Girl Scout camps.

Campgrounds, under...
 the version of the propos...
 al staff presented at the...
 earlier meeting could include...
 "travel trailer parks" in...
 tended for temporary...
 recreational use, but not...
 for people living in them...
 permanently.

It would allow as "acces...
 sory uses": hotels, confer...
 ence and meeting spaces,
 food and beverage faci...
 lities and dwellings units...
 for caretakers among oth...
 ers. In keeping with Bit...
 tle's stated plans for land...
 at the Horizon Center, it...
 would allow for research...
 and development faci...
 lities. He and others con...
 nected with the...
 development have stated...
 at various meetings their...
 desire to build a research...
 and development facility...
 as part of the project and...
 give a space for testing...
 by automobile companies,
 departments of trans...
 portation, insurance com...
 panies and even Oak...
 Ridge National Labora...
 tory.

Restrictions

The proposal by staff...
 stated any development...
 in such a district would...
 need to be 30 feet from...
 the edge of the district...
 and 100 feet when the...
 edge borders "residential...
 or greenbelt properties."

The maximum building...
 height would be 40 feet,
 but Planning Commission...
 could approve taller bu...
 ildings for individual...
 developments.

*Call Ben Pounds at (865)
 441-2317 and follow him
 on Twitter @Bpoundsjour...
 nal.*

US govt, states sue Facebook for 'predatory' conduct

WASHINGTON (AP) —...
 Federal regulators on...
 Wednesday sued to force...
 Facebook to sell off its In...
 stagram and WhatsApp...
 messaging services. In a...
 separate case, 48 states...
 and districts also accus...
 ed the company of abus...
 ing its market power in...
 social networking to...
 crush smaller competi...
 tors.

The antitrust lawsuits...
 were announced by the...
 Federal Trade Commis...
 sion and New York Attor...
 ney General Letitia James.

"It's really critically im...
 portant that we block...
 this predatory acquisi...
 tion of companies and...
 that we restore confi...
 dence to the market,"...
 James said during a...
 press conference an...
 nouncing the lawsuit.

The FTC said Facebook...
 has engaged in a "a system...
 atic strategy" to elimi...
 nate its competition, in...
 cluding by purchasing...
 smaller up-and-coming...
 rivals like Instagram...
 in 2012 and WhatsApp...
 in 2014. James echo...
 ed that in her press...
 conference, saying Fac...
 ebook "used its monopo...
 ly power to crush smalle...
 r rivals and snuff out...
 competi...
 tion, all at the expense...
 of everyday users."

Facebook is the world's...
 biggest social network...
 with 2.7 billion users...
 and a company with a...
 market value of nearly...
 \$800 billion whose...
 CEO Mark Zuckerberg...
 is the world's fifth-ric...
 hest individual and...
 the most public face...
 of Big Tech

swagger. Facebook did...
 not have immediate...
 comment.

James alleged Facebook...
 had a practice of open...
 ing its site to third-p...
 arty app developers, then...
 abruptly cutting off...
 developers that it saw...
 as a threat. The law...
 suit — which includes...
 46 states, Guam and...
 the District of Colum...
 bia — accuses Facebook...
 of anti-competitive...
 conduct and using its...
 market dominance to...
 harvest consumer data...
 and reap a fortune in...
 advertising revenues.

"For years, Facebook...
 has used its monopoly...
 power as a social net...
 working website to...
 stifle competition and...
 innovation and to sell...
 alarming amounts of...
 user data to make money...
 all at the expense of...
 the many people who...
 use its platform,"...
 North Carolina Attor...
 ney General Josh Stein...
 said. James was on...
 the executive commit...
 tee of attorneys ge...
 neral conducting the...
 investigation, said.

"Personal social net...
 working is central to...
 the lives of millions...
 of Americans," Ian...
 Conner, director of...
 the FTC's Bureau of...
 Competition, said in...
 a statement. "Facebo...
 ok's actions to entrench...
 and maintain its mon...
 opoly deny consumers...
 the benefits of competi...
 tion. Our aim is to...
 roll back Facebook's...
 anticompetitive con...
 duct and restore com...
 petition so that innov...
 ation and free competi...
 tion can thrive."

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An Act of Love

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