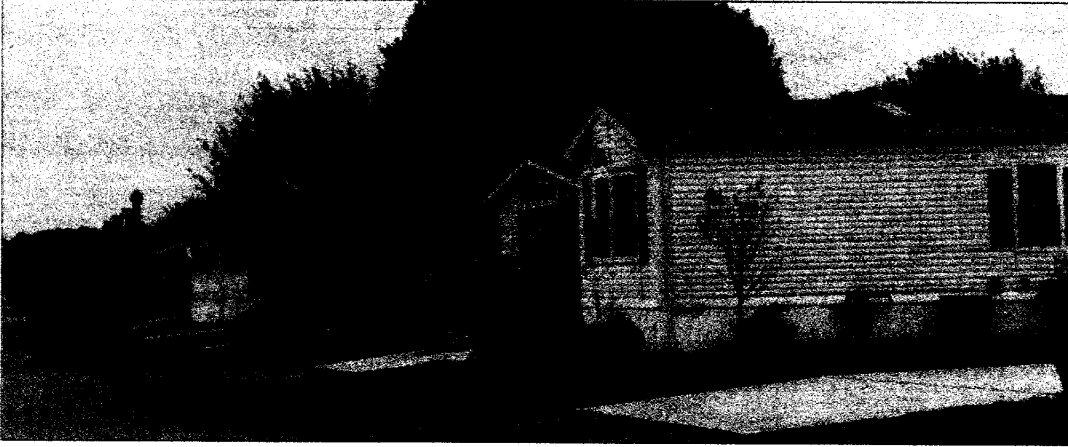


Sussex council updates manufactured home regs

Officials remove \$400 fee, public hearing to place temporary structures



Sussex County officials are in the process of updating county code on manufactured homes. RON MACARTHUR PHOTO

By Ron MacArthur October 11, 2019

Sussex County officials are in the process of updating regulations on manufactured homes.

Assistant county attorney Vince Robertson said the quality of manufactured homes has improved in recent years, and the code should be adapted. He said the changes would make it easier to replace existing manufactured homes.

At its Oct. 8 meeting, county council approved two amended ordinances.

Developers can now place temporary construction and model home sales trailers at construction sites with a two-year permit from the county planning and zoning office. Previously, applicants were required to apply for a \$400 special-use permit from the board of adjustment and appear at a public hearing.

Sussex County Planning and Zoning Director Janelle Cornwell said the trailers can be on site longer than two years with permission from the county depending on the scale of a project.

"These are not supposed to be permanent. We want to make sure when they are placed, they are removed," Cornwell said.

Council President Mike Vincent said builders and developers have complained for years about needing a special-use exception and a public hearing.

In addition, manufactured homes can now be initially placed on existing lots less than the current restricted three-quarter acre in AR-1, agricultural-residential, zoned land as long as the lots are not in major subdivisions or coastal zone subdivisions.

Under the regulations, single-wide homes can be replaced by single-wide homes, but multi-sectional homes cannot be replaced by single-wide homes.

Councilmen were concerned that manufactured homes would end up in established or new subdivisions.

Cornwell and Robertson reiterated to council that manufactured homes are not permitted in major subdivisions. "We haven't seen that happen," Cornwell said.

"I just want to make sure we don't make a mistake," said Councilman John Rieley.

County attorney J. Everett Moore said nearly all subdivision covenants prevent placement of manufactured homes.

Also, manufactured homes moved to lots can be older than in the previous ordinance. Homes can be up to 10 years old, which is double the current ordinance's restrictions at 5 years of age.

Cornwell stressed that manufactured homes placed on lots must meet all county requirements including setbacks and inspections.