

C. Clarify Recent Legislation Regarding Financing of Energy Improvements. As of the date of this report, we have seen no bill or other legislative proposal indicating that the revisions suggested last year by the School of Government and the State Treasurer's office to clarify local authority to finance energy improvements through a property assessment program will be addressed. If a bill is introduced, it would likely take the form of a general law. We are checking with the School of Government for any progress on this issue.

D. Annexation Agreements. As of the date of this report, we are aware of no legislative proposals to enhance Asheville's ability to use voluntary annexation. As reported below, there are some bills that have been introduced to limit annexations by North Carolina cities in general, and Asheville in particular.

II. Other Legislative Matters:

A. State-wide Energy Efficiency Program. By separate resolution, Council requested that our delegation support legislation for a state-wide energy efficiency program, as proposed by the NC Save\$ Energy Alliance. According to a representative from the Alliance, Senator Nesbitt has taken an interest in this proposal, and may not only support such a bill, but may sponsor it. We have supplied him with copies of relevant material and have offered to assist with drafting and research.

B. Annexation. Attempts to limit City-initiated annexation continue. Bills have been introduced in both houses of the legislature to impose a moratorium on annexations until July 1, 2012, and to stay annexations in progress, including those that are in some stage of judicial review. This would affect the Biltmore Lake annexation. In addition, a bill has been introduced to repeal the Biltmore Lake annexation; this bill is similar in effect to bills that have been introduced regarding other cities in North Carolina. A bill has also been introduced to impose a five year moratorium on annexations by municipalities in Buncombe County. The League of Municipalities is working on the state-wide, or general law, bill. Council is encouraged to contact members of our delegation regarding the local bills, and information is available to assist in that process.

C. Leicester Incorporation. Last week, a bill was introduced to incorporate the Town of Leicester. Several years ago, when a similar proposal was considered, the City Council expressed concern about the size of the area to be incorporated. We are advised that the new proposal is smaller. While a written description is now included in the bill, we need some visual representation of that area to make a sound comparison. The bill that has been introduced makes the incorporation subject to a referendum.

D. Municipal Broadband. On March 8, 2011, Council adopted a resolution opposing bills that would limit local government authority to provide fiber-optic service to residents and citizens. A copy of that resolution has been transmitted to our delegation. As Council knows, Asheville is under consideration by Google for a project that would make very high speed internet available in the area at affordable rates. This has obvious implications for economic development. The bills under consideration would compromise the City's ability to facilitate or participate in that project. We will make our delegation aware of how this bill potentially affects Asheville.

E. Other Bills of Interest. Bill numbers and a brief summary are provided below. Please advise if more information is needed on any bill. To our knowledge, these bills have not been adopted yet.

- HB 308 – Admission Ticket Reform Act. Possible implications for the Civic Center.
- HB 281 – ETJ Restrictions. Would allow residents in ETJ to run for municipal office and vote in municipal elections.
- HB 309 – Selective Vegetation Removal/State Highways. Would allow for removal of vegetation from right-of-way of State highways to enhance the visibility of roadside signs. Would also allow for digital billboards on State highways.
- SB 279 – Clarify definition of renewable energy resources to include wood.
- SB 281 – Municipal Service Districts. Allow the establishment of municipal service districts for the purpose of converting private streets to public streets.
- SB 291 – Catawba County/Local Bid Preference. Allows Catawba County to award contracts for public construction projects to local bidders under certain circumstances.
- SB 305 – Carrboro/Housing Discrimination. Allows Carrboro to adopt ordinances prohibiting housing discrimination on basis of sexual orientation, gender identification, or gender expression.
- HG 332 – Clarify Development Moratorium Authority. Provides that development moratoria are not permitted for the purpose of developing new or amended plans or ordinances.
- SB 315 – Roadside Campaign Signs. Allow political campaign signs in State highway right-of-way.
- SB 318 – Repeal Plastic Bag Ban in Coastal Areas. As title indicates; applies only to those coastal counties authorized to ban plastic bags.
- HB 349 – Promote Green Roofs on Buildings. Authorizes certain incentives, including relief from storm-water fees, for green roofs.

This report is provided for information purposes. If further information is needed, please let us know.

III. Resolution Opposing Cuts to the University of North Carolina System, or the North Carolina Community College System, by the NC General Assembly:

At the Mayor's request, a resolution has been prepared to oppose cuts to the university or community college system by the General Assembly. Cities that are locations for these institutions are being strongly encouraged by the North Carolina Metropolitan Mayors Coalition

to consider resolutions in support of these institutions. The attached resolution addresses both UNC-A, and AB Tech.

Attachment

cc: Gary Jackson, City Manager