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## Commissioners OK subdivision ordinance

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Tom between a desire to enhance the water quality at Lake James and to keep real estate at the lake affordable to the working class of Burke County, commissioners tossed motions to create a countywide minimum lot size back and forth, confusing even themselves at times.

After much ado about sewage disposal, the commissioners, upon recommendation from environmental health experts, voted 3-2 to go with a subdivision ordinance and proposed zoning amendment to establish the following

guidelines:

- a minimum of 1/2 acre lot if central water and sewer are accessible.
- a minimum of 1 1/2 acres if either central water or sewer is available.
- a minimum of 2 acres if neither central water nor sewer is accessible.

Much of the debate was centered around the question of whether septic systems created an environmental hazard.

"We're shooting ourselves in the foot even thinking about a minimum lot size. The fellow from N.C. State (University) said that a sewer system would be as much or more trou-

ble environmentally as a septic system," Commissioner David Campbell said. "We've cutting working-class people out. We'd be much better off to not put in grass or fertilizer."

Chairman J.R. Simpson indicated a concern for future use of the lake.

"We owe a greater duty to our own residents and the future generations of Burke County to come to the area to boat, fish, swim and enjoy the lake," Simpson said. "According to the report, some sewage has emptied into the lake. We need to keep the water pure."

Crescent Resources attorney Tom Starnes

argued that a lot size was of no consequence to a septic system.

"Lot size is meaningless or of no consequence. Is this prudent government or a political game?" Starnes said. "What is important is the design, construction and maintenance of a septic system. There has never been an incidence at Lake James where a septic system has created pollution."

The ordinance is effective immediately. However, commissioners expressed some concern about the creation of such an ordinance.

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