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## **Oakwood restaurant to benefit from sewer extension**

Project will extend sewer line 2,100 feet off Winder Highway

The “purple building” in Oakwood could get a makeover soon, thanks to a planned sewer project.

The City Council voted last week to go forward on an agreement with Smokehouse Properties to extend sewer from Ga. 53/Winder Highway to Smokehouse’s site off Ga. 13/Atlanta Highway and Poplar Springs Road.

Smokehouse Barbeque & Catering now operates on the property, which features a building housing a kitchen and take-out order counter and another building serving as a dining room.

Plans call for Smokehouse to renovate an adjacent “purple building,” which was, at one time, a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant.

“This is going to be a great thing for the community,” said Don Rogers of Smokehouse. “The improvements ... are going to be very pleasing to the eye. ... (The building) is very much an eyesore now.”

Oakwood City Manager Stan Brown joked about the building when addressing the matter with the City Council.

“When we did a visual survey with the (Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce) about a year ago, it (was identified) as the No. 1 location that we’d like to see corrected in this county,” he said.

The sewer project calls for extending a line from Walden at Oakwood apartment complex off Winder Highway, a distance of about 2,100 feet.

“We’re going to need to work with the property owners down through there, but I think we’re in a good situation because this will set up sewer service for everything along Winder Highway on that side,” Brown said.

Smokehouse would pay to tie on the new sewer line but also a “pro rata share of the actual line extension, which I think is a fair way to go about it,” he said.

“And then our connection fees for the other properties (that tie on) in the future would recoup our costs,” which would run about \$200,000 for the project, Brown said.

The only other option of extending sewer to the Smokehouse property would involve connecting to a main line near the Autozone automobile parts store off Ga. 53/Mundy Mill Road.

It's a shorter distance, but "you're looking at tearing up a parking lot and boring under Atlanta Highway," Brown said. "It's cost-prohibitive."

Smokehouse is "still trying to get the final numbers together for the sewer project, along with our building costs," Rogers said. "I do believe firmly all of this should get done."

A renovations company has been hired to begin improvements, he added.

When the project is finished, Smokehouse will offer more menu items and feature a 125-seat, air-conditioned dining area, Rogers said.

"Also, we should be hiring more people when the new building is completed," he said.

"This should also help the community in these trying times."