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NEWS ARTICLE: Access North Georgia on May 24, 2011

Corps discusses docks with citizens, Oakwood



Oakwood's Stan Brown (white shirt)



Nick Baggett, Natural Resource Manager



Park Ranger Corbin Martin

OAKWOOD – Tuesday night’s U.S. Army Corps of Engineers informational meeting attracted not only citizens, but Oakwood City Manager Stan Brown as well.

The Corps is holding one-on-one discussion sessions in each of the five counties that abut Lake Lanier to explain to lakefront property owners and developers some of the changes that are now part of their Shoreline Management Plan (SMP).

Tuesday night the Corps came to West Hall Middle School. About a dozen citizens and property developers attended the session and chatted one-on-one with Corps representatives, learning about some of the SMP rule changes.

Brown was among the last to leave, asking questions, and being asked questions, by Corps representatives. Brown was there representing the future interests of fast growing Oakwood.

Describing how Oakwood is bordered to the north by Gainesville and to the south by Flowery Branch, Brown said that any growth by his municipality would have to be eastward beyond I-985 or towards the lake at their west.

“One of our goals...is to try to pursue a Lake Lanier access for the public. We’re looking at different properties that are owned by the Corps that we might be interested in doing some sort of a lease...to have some public space out there that the city could operate and maintain,” Brown said.

“Also, we’ve had a number of private (lake) property owners that have expressed some interest

in being a part of the City of Oakwood. Their properties and adjacency to the lake makes it interesting to us.”

The SMP changes being explained at the meeting by the Corps pertained mostly to community boat docks and the extension of the cut-off date for community boat dock permit applications.

Brown said that should Oakwood achieve their desired lake presence, being acquainted with the SMP and dock permitting procedures is important information for the City to know.

Nick Baggett, Natural Resource Manager for the Corps, explained that the recent tight economy and building slump had caused builders and developers to delay their construction projects around the lake and thereby risk missing the window for community dock applications,

Baggett said that one of the purposes for tonight’s meeting was to explain that the application deadline for community dock permits had been extended from December 31, 2013 to December 1, 2014. Baggett felt that the extra eleven months would be of help to many developers and builders.

“There are currently 8,593 dock permits on record for Lanier with a maximum authorization for 10,615. Community docks will be counted as one permit for each two boat slips,” said Corp Park Ranger Corbin Martin.

The competition for future dock permits will begin to tighten and community boat docks will be one way of maximizing the number of people who will be able to utilize this aspect of Lake Lanier.

A link is provided below to the complete SMP.