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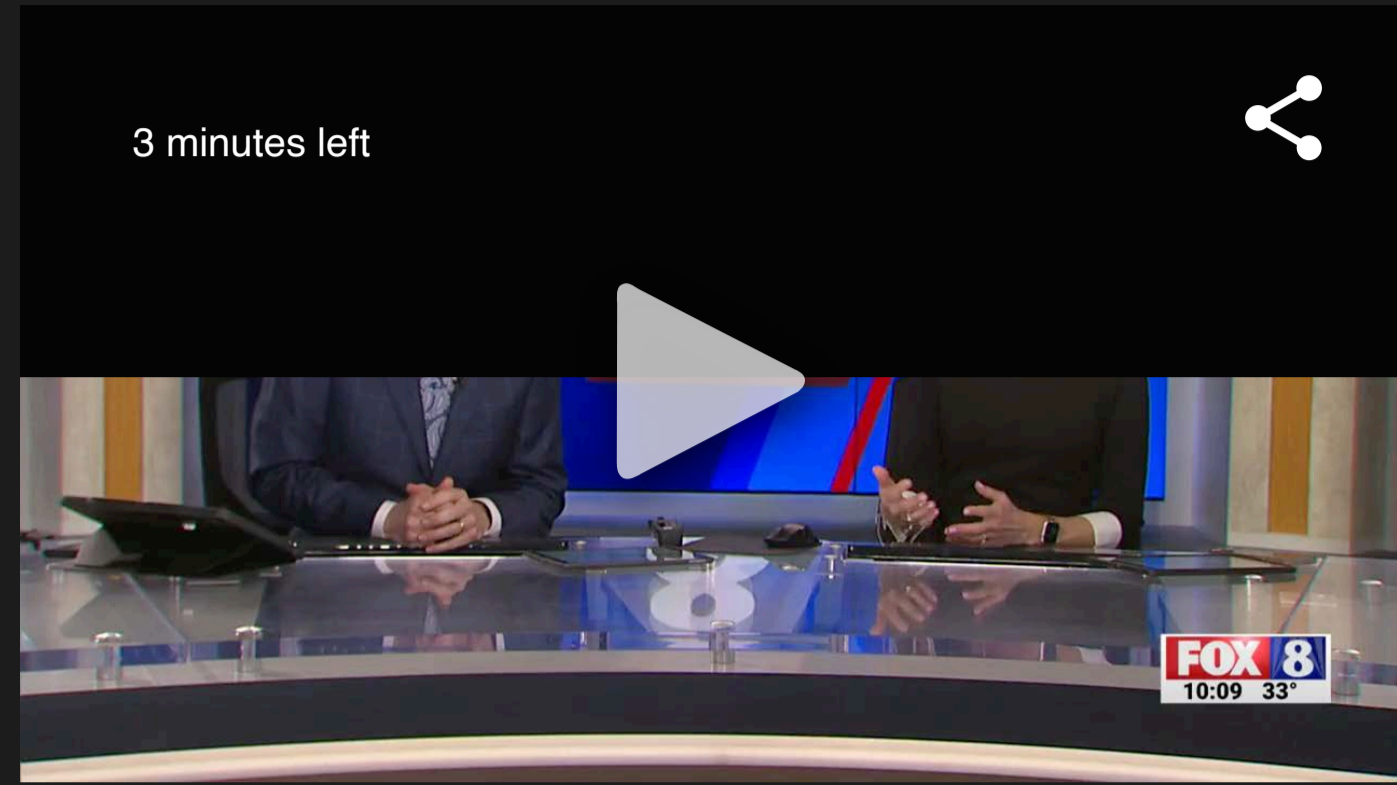
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PIEDMONT TRIAD NEWS

Summerfield Town Council takes stand against possible de-annexation

by: Caroline Bowyer
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SUMMERFIELD, N.C. (WGHP) — Members of the Summerfield Town Council took a public stand for the first time Tuesday night against a possible de-annexation of a piece of property.

The council approved a resolution opposing any type of significant de-annexation in the town, particularly the property owned by David Couch and related to the Villages at Summerfield Farms property.

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At Tuesday night's meeting, three people spoke during public comment and urged the council to take action sooner rather than later, which is what council members did.

"We're two weeks in," one resident said. "We need to do something. Let's do it. Let's do it tonight."

Others urged the council to add a map showing the piece of land in question to the town's website.

"I think there needs to be more involvement of what we can do on the town website," another resident said. "There are citizens out here that are doing y'all's jobs. And y'all need to say, 'hey, this is what y'all need to do. This is what we're trying to do.'"

The discussion centered around a more than 900-acre property owned by developer David Couch. Council members have heard rumors he might want to de-annex his property from the town, so he can build a large-scale development on the land and not have to follow town development standards.

As of now, there is no de-annexation bill filed in the state legislature.

The town council has asked citizens of Summerfield to reach out to legislators in Raleigh and share their concerns. The mayor said a lot of people have done so already.

"We work for the people, and we work so the people can be heard," Mayor Tim Sessonm said. "We heard from the people, and that's how we reasoned out the decision we made...listening to almost 100 people that night. That's part of the reason we've made such an ask of our citizens to reach out to the general assembly."

FOX8 reached out to David Couch, who has not directly acknowledged having conversations about de-annexation. He released this statement:

““

"I of course can't speak on behalf of the legislature, so any questions about their plans would have to be directed to them. I'm just a builder, and what I can tell you is our area has a severe housing supply crisis that's only going to get worse with billions of dollars in economic development in the immediate vicinity. It's just not tenable for a town in the center of such growth to all but close itself off to additional housing options, and to severely restrict what a private landowner can do with his own property."

--DAVID COUCH, DEVELOPER

At Tuesday night's meeting, council members also decided to hire a lobbyist.

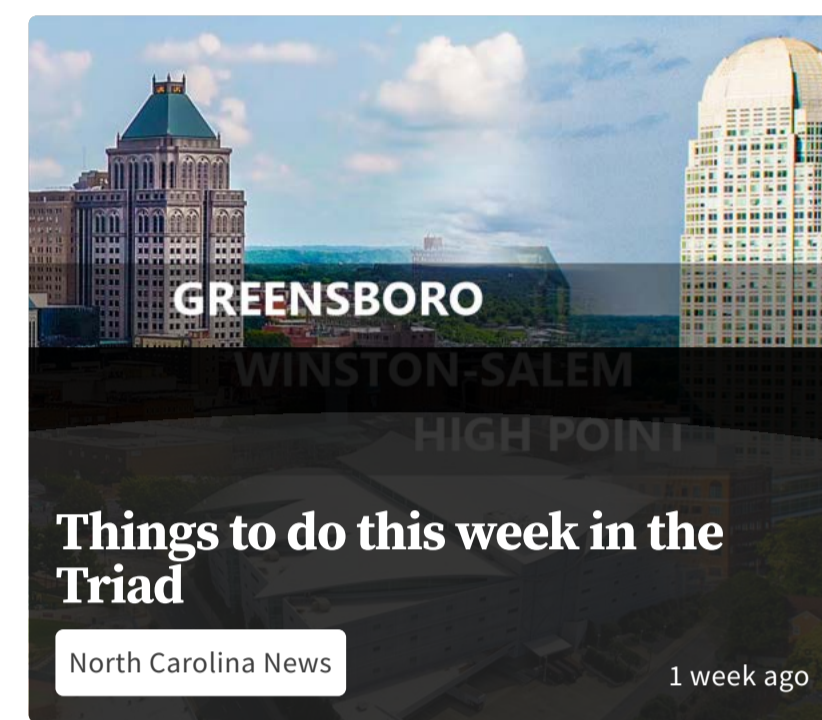
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