



Cherokee Tribune/Amber M. McCloskey



A Union Hill man now faces a longer list of charges related to an alleged dogfighting operation he was running out of his home.

Randall Thaxton, 44, of the 6300 block of Union Hill Road, was arrested Tuesday by the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office on seven counts of the felony dogfighting charge, 10 counts of animal cruelty and felony possession of marijuana.



Randall Thaxton

He was served on Wednesday by the Cherokee County Marshal's Office's animal control division with citations for violating county ordinances.

Animal Control Enforcement Officer Eric B. Bastress said Thaxton has been cited with nine counts each of animal neglect, tethering an animal and having no proof of rabies inoculation.

Bastress said the prosecution on these counts may be merged with the criminal charges Thaxton will face in Cherokee County Superior Court.

Thaxton remained in the Cherokee County Adult Detention Center on Wednesday with bond set at \$95,000, according to the sheriff's office.

His arrest on Tuesday was the result of a two-week joint investigation into dogfighting operations in Cherokee

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## Canton land-use map gains support

By Ashley Fuller  
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Canton stakeholders and officials said they support the proposed comprehensive plan update and land-use map, which appear headed to approval on Thursday.

Members of the Canton City Council and its stakeholder committee made up of residents conducted a public forum Tuesday night to hear citizen input on the update.

If turnout is any indication, citizens may feel just as good about the update — only one person attended to offer feedback.

The council at a called meeting at 6 p.m. today at Canton City Hall will hold a public hearing on the update and then vote to send it to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs for review.

The two agencies require local governments update their long-term growth plans every 10 years. They will review the plan and return it to the council, which is to address any concerns raised by the agencies and then vote to adopt the update.

Ursula Cox, who lives south of the city, was the only citizen to speak at Tuesday night's hearing. She talked about the desire of Brick Mill Road area residents to be taken out of the city's growth

boundary, which is an area designated for future growth.

Ken Patton, director of community development for the city, said there is a provision in the text of the plan for the city and county government to talk about the growth boundary agreement in the next five years.

Members of the stakeholder committee in attendance Tuesday came to a consensus to remove the "New Canton" suburban zoning from that part of the proposed land-use map. The zoning allows one to three units to an acre.

Patton said there are "environmental constraints" that make the Brick Mill Road difficult for development.

Cox said she otherwise liked the plan, adding a suggestion to re-evaluate the neighborhood living zoning area in south Canton that allows four to six units to an acre that can be traditional neighborhoods or senior housing.

"There is severe terrain and limited roads in that area," she said.

Stakeholder committee members said they are pleased with the plan that they helped the city staff and consultants put together in the past couple of months.

The land-use map includes "New Canton" zoning areas in

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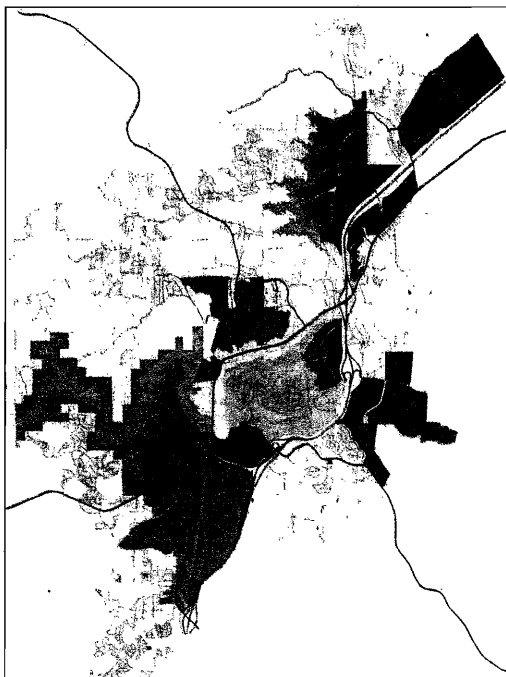


Photo special to the Cherokee Tribune

The Canton City Council today will conduct a public hearing and vote to send its proposed comprehensive plan update and future land-use map to the state for review. This rendering of the map shows suburban area development as yellow, employment centers as red, neighborhood living as blue, traditional neighborhood redevelopment areas as light and dark purple, historic and traditional neighborhoods as gray, natural area as green, downtown urban center as and, community level mixed use and retail center as beige and major.

## Driver in fatal crash may face charges

From staff reports

Charges likely will be filed against the driver in a two-car crash on Highway 20 in east Cherokee County that killed a Buford woman.

Bonita Green, 37, died Tuesday night at WellStar Kennestone Hospital in Marietta from injuries suffered in the crash at Water Tank Road in Macedonia at 5 p.m. that day.

Initial reports indicated a man in the same car had suffered fatal injuries, but Eric Morin survived and remained hospitalized on Wednesday at Atlanta Medical Center with serious injuries.

Eric Morin was driving an eastbound white Scion carrying Green when they were hit by a westbound black Ford Ranger.

The driver of the Ranger,

Deborah Altenburg, 57, of Adairsville, appears to have lost control, overcorrected and then hit the Scion head-on, according to the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office.

The crash remained under investigation on Wednesday, but charges likely will be filed against Altenburg. She suffered non-life threatening injuries and was transported to North Fulton Regional Hospital in Roswell.

Sheriff's office Public Information Officer Sgt. Jay Baker said investigators are working to determine the cause of the accident.

"We don't know if she fell asleep or took her eye off the roadway or if there were contributing factors such as excessive speed, alcohol, Baker said. Toxicology reports have been ordered from Altenburg.

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### OUTSIDE



Sunny, cool

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HIGH LOW  
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### TRYING TO STAY ALIVE

Woodstock in must-win mode to earn playoff spot  
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day, with one arrest made and more dogs seized. The dogs seized in Cherokee and Gilmer have been taken to area shelters, where they will be treated and held until the courts decide their fate.

The Humane Society of the United States began its investigation into the ring in April after receiving a tip on its anonymous hotline. Two weeks ago, the organization contacted the sheriff's office and other local law enforcement to pursue search warrants.

The Thaxton arrest in the first in Cherokee to be made under Georgia's strengthened dogfighting law, which was written by state Sen. Chip Rogers (R-Woodstock) and signed into law this spring.

## Canton

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pockets of the county surrounded by the city, and extends the "Employment Center" zoning in the northeast part of the city along Interstate 575, which allows for mixed-use commercial, office and institutional, light industrial and industrial office uses.

"It has some real good points and some programs we want to try to initiate," John Beresford said, adding he is especially excited about plans to develop hiking trails and canoe areas along the Etowah River.

Jo Anne Eggleston said the plan includes new roads, including an Interstate 575 interchange for The Bluffs at Technology Park, which would be north of exit 20 at Riverstone Parkway.

"We want people to have easy access to the Bluffs. There are going to be a lot of employment opportunities there," she said.

She also mentioned improvements, such as widening and landscaping, to Highway 5 in the south end of the city, an area she said is "really stressed."

Councilman Wally Fowler said he thought the staff and consultants did a good job of collecting all the data.

"Overall, it was excellent," he said.

## Congress

Continued from Page 1A

matters such as transportation improvements — an important issue to the district's voters.

Price said one solution would be to increase the use of public/private partnerships for transportation improvements.

Jones wrote that he would

military power in Iraq the next U.S. president.

Political opposition to the proposed deal in Iraq has increased discussion in Washington and Baghdad about a U.N. extension. The Iraqi Cabinet this week authorized Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki to reopen talks on the Status of Forces Agreement, and he has sent proposed changes to Washington.

"We're analyzing those amendments," Bush told reporters in the Oval Office during a meeting with Massoud Barzani, the president of the semiautonomous Kurdish region in northern Iraq. "We obviously want to be helpful and constructive without undermining basic principles. And I remain very hopeful and confident that the SOFA will get passed."

The current U.N. mandate gives legal authority for U.S. forces to operate only through Dec. 31. Iraq considered the mandate an affront to its sovereignty and sought a replacement agreement with the U.S. that functions more like a treaty between equals. Negotiations began in May; the Bush administration had hoped to complete them by the end of July.

Security "gains that have been made will start to unravel potentially because we don't have a legal man-



The Associated Press

President Bush meets with Iraq's Kurdistan region President Massoud Barzani in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington on Wednesday. The current U.N. mandate gives legal authority for U.S. forces to operate only through Dec. 31. Iraq considered the mandate an affront to its sovereignty and sought a replacement agreement with the U.S. that functions more like a treaty between equals.

date to operate," Pentagon spokesman Geoff Morrell said Wednesday.

U.S. officials say they are working for a comprehensive deal and that there is no active effort to draft a temporary extension to the U.N. mandates. "I don't think anyone has put pen to paper on anything," State Department spokesman Sean McCormack.

Some administration officials, though, argue it is time to begin laying the groundwork to go back to the U.N. Security Council. Getting an extension to the mandate would require the approval of Russia and China, which hold veto power on the council.

Russia has signaled it could support an extension. China is expected to go

along with Russia's vote. Although potentially welcome, that assent would come at the potential price of leverage, real or perceived, over the next U.S. administration. Some U.S. officials are reluctant to give either country that bargaining chip, especially after the Russian war with Georgia in August.

U.S. and Iraqi negotiators completed a draft text this month that would keep U.S. troops in Iraq through 2011 unless both sides agree they could stay longer. It would give the Iraqis a greater role in U.S. military operations and allow Iraqi courts to try U.S. soldiers and contractors accused of major crimes off duty and off base.

There is significant Iraqi opposition to the draft and the move to reopen the talks

took on heightened significance after a dramatic weekend U.S. raid on Syria staged from inside Iraq.

Iraq now wants the agreement to include a clear ban on U.S. troops using Iraqi territory to attack its neighbors, government spokesman Ali al-Dabbagh said Wednesday. He said Iraq wants the right to declare the agreement invalid should that happen.

That ban is among four proposed amendments the Iraqis have submitted. The others include a clear definition of "duty" when cases arise involving crimes committed off base by U.S. troops and the right to inspect all U.S. military shipments entering or leaving Iraq.

"The Americans must

realize that these changes are necessary to enable the government to persuade the people to accept the agreement," al-Dabbagh said.

U.S. officials have said the existing draft text is its final offer. But with time running out on both the mandate and Bush's term, they have agreed to at least consider the Iraqi proposals. At the same time, they insist changes will not be taken lightly.

"The bar to any revisions is very high," McCormack said.

But he insisted that no one in the administration was yet working on the alternative: extending the U.N. mandate. "There is still a lot of life left in the process and it's really the focus of our efforts," he said.

## Cookie Artisans



Cherokee Tribune/Amber M. McCloskey

Riley Johnson, 3, left, daughter of Claudia and Marine Corps Sgt. Tylon Johnson of Woodstock and Seth Gallman, 5, son of Laura and Scott Gallman of Woodstock, decorate Halloween cookies. Safe Kids of Cherokee County's held 'Moonlight Madness' at Kroger in Towne Lake on Tuesday evening with children's costume contests, trick-or-treating, pumpkin carving by Cherokee County Fire and Emergency Services firefighters; free replacement batteries for smoke detectors and silver reflective plastic trick-or-treat bags.

**Holiday Home Tour**

SMYRNA VININGS

Benefiting The Foundation of Emory-Adventist Hospital at Smyrna