

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: February 20, 2013

SUBJECT: WNC Dome Presentation

PRESENTER: Dennis Justice

ATTACHMENTS: Yes

1. PowerPoint presentation
2. WBTV Article
3. Monolithic Letter

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Dennis Justice, President of Terran Sports LLC, has requested time on today's agenda to discuss the WNC Dome project. WNC Dome is a proposed regional disaster shelter, disguised as a sports arena that would be built at the WNC Agricultural Center. The single-shell Monolithic Dome design has proven to resist EF-5 tornadoes like the horrific one that hit the Faith Chapel Christian Center domes in Birmingham. Its eco-friendly design is fast to build and is far less costly to run than conventional structures. Its sturdiness can withstand tornadoes and earthquakes, a perfect design for a regional disaster shelter. It would be located at the Ag. Center, so requires no new management staff and is across from the Airport. This could also rescue people from coastal cities in the Carolinas from a pending major hurricane.

The Board is not requested to build the project, but to endorse the project.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

No specific action is requested at this meeting. The Board is requested to hear the presentation, and discuss whether it wishes to endorse the project. Should the Board wish to endorse the project, a request to formally do so would be scheduled for the Board's March 4th meeting.

Suggested Motion(s):

No motion suggested.

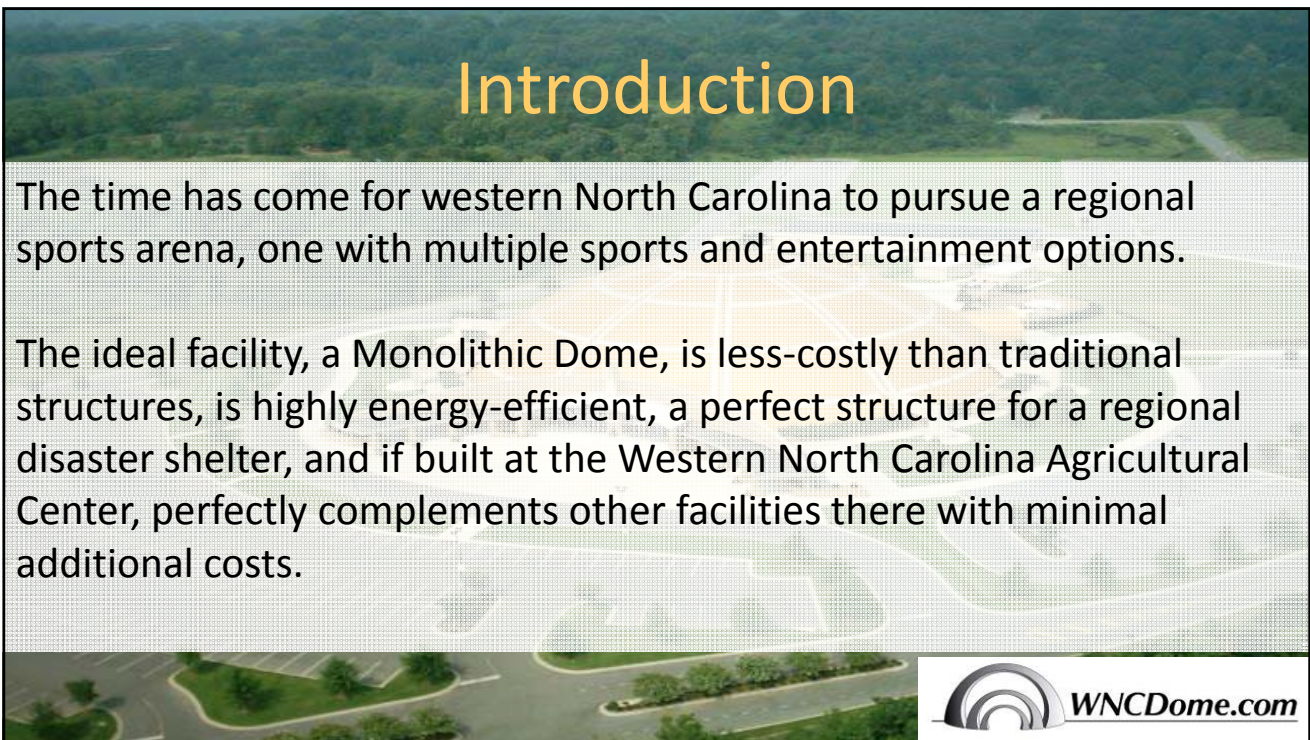
WNCDOME.COM PRESENTS WNC DOME: Let's do this!



Introduction

The time has come for western North Carolina to pursue a regional sports arena, one with multiple sports and entertainment options.

The ideal facility, a Monolithic Dome, is less-costly than traditional structures, is highly energy-efficient, a perfect structure for a regional disaster shelter, and if built at the Western North Carolina Agricultural Center, perfectly complements other facilities there with minimal additional costs.



Introduction

Terran Sports LLC, a sports management and promotion company based in Fletcher, has the unique vision and talent to bring in the sports and entertainment tenants for the proposed “WNC Dome.”

This presentation is designed to introduce the Monolithic Dome concept, the potential tenants of such a dome arena, and how local leaders can act in a pro-active regional approach to have this dome open by 2015.



WNC Dome.com

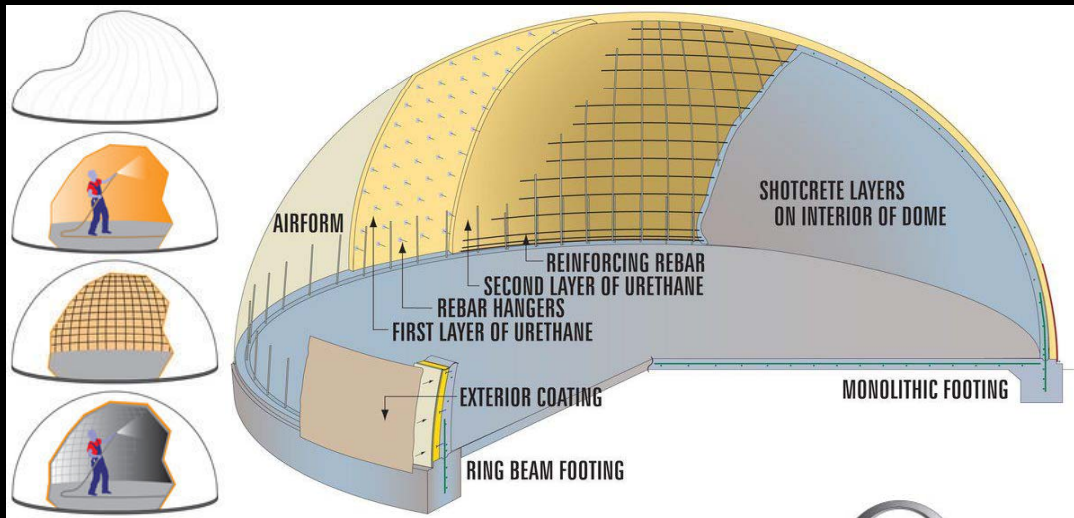
About the Monolithic Dome

The Monolithic Dome is constructed as a freespan facility for sizes up to 1,000 feet. The construction employs inflating an airform and spraying concrete from the inside. Once the airform is inflated, construction time is greatly minimized due to being less susceptible to weather. Once constructed, they are resistant to tornadoes and earthquakes.



WNC Dome.com

How Monolithic Domes are built



Cloud Hidden in Asheville



This 85-foot diameter home, built in the mountains near Asheville, shows this is far from a "pie-in-the-sky" concept.



This concept also brings affordable housing



The "Orion" model has traditional straight outer walls but a dome roof, an affordable alternative for housing projects like from Habitat for Humanity.



Advantages of the Monolithic Dome

- Less construction costs and faster construction time
- Substantially less maintenance costs
- Energy efficiency make Monolithic Domes pay for themselves
- Environmentally-friendly technology
- Perfect structure for a regional disaster shelter
- Can last for centuries



“A POUND of prevention!”

If “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,” then WNC Dome is a POUND of prevention!



The 12,000-seat arena in Billings (MT) hosted an indoor football game with over 7,000 attending, one night before a tornado struck in 2011. It also hosts MontanaFair.

Billings paid \$26.6 million to renovate this facility, but did *not* put in technology to withstand another tornado!



The recent hurricanes, tornadoes, and other disasters have increased calls for concrete dome disaster shelters disguised as sports venues. 28 such domes like this one in Edna, Texas, are being built to protect the most needed when disaster strikes, and are normally used for basketball and volleyball in high schools.



Governments at all levels are taking disaster infrastructure far more seriously. In wake of Hurricane Sandy, New York City is considering a sea barrier plan that could cost over \$1 billion. FEMA has granted \$683 million throughout 18 states, including TX, AL, MI, and SC. **FEMA covered 75% of the cost of the dome below since it had 75% open space.**



But what is “WNC Dome?”



WNC DOME IS A REGIONAL DISASTER SHELTER

The Monolithic Dome design has proven to withstand EF-5 tornadoes. The Faith Chapel Christian Center in Birmingham, as well as “The Bridge,” their six-dome complex, withstood such a tornado on April 27, 2011. Nearby modular units (like the extra classrooms at some of our local schools) were obliterated in the **mile-wide twister**.

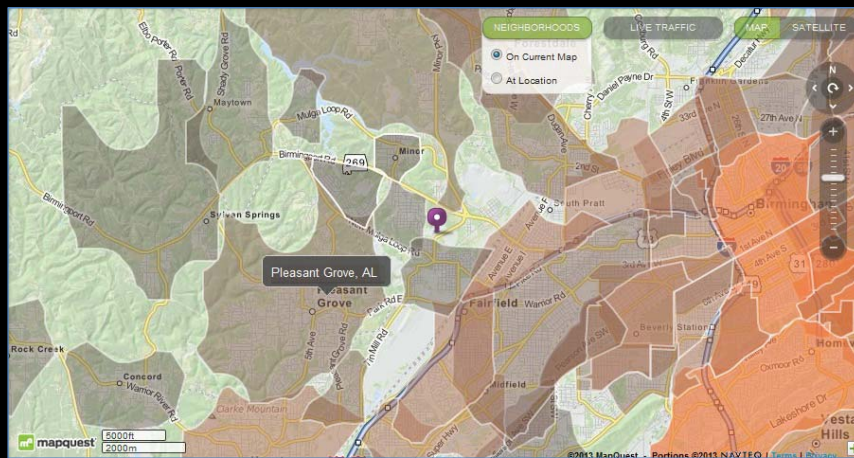
The Bridge was used by the Birmingham Red Cross for weeks as a disaster shelter for people made homeless by the horrific tornado attack.

This concept is perfect for a structure, across from the Asheville Airport, to shelter people from incoming tornadoes or people evacuating a coastal city (in North Carolina or South Carolina) from a hurricane.





The black star shows where Faith Chapel Christian Center was when an EF-4 or EF-5 tornado hit. Videos on YouTube show the monster tornado was about a mile in diameter, with highest winds exceeding 200 M.P.H. Modular units on site were obliterated but the domes survived virtually undamaged.



Ten people lost their lives in Pleasant Grove, despite being just one mile away from the domes and with almost an hour notice a monster tornado was coming. When WNC Dome is built, it is critical to offer communication to the area (including signage on the widened I-26) as to prevent such a tragedy here.



The following pictures show how Faith Chapel Christian Center used “The Bridge” in coordination with the Birmingham Red Cross to shelter displaced residents for weeks. This should give an idea as to the coordination we will need with local, state, and national officials to be able to respond to emergencies.

(Photos by Joe Songer of *The Birmingham News*)







The Bridge shows how versatile the Monolithic Dome concept is. Various domes host a basketball court, youth center, childcare with a large indoor playground, giant climbing wall, full-sized kitchen and reception area, and even a bowling alley. This concept could be used for school gyms, rec. centers, or even a swimming complex!



WNC DOME IS THE CROWN JEWEL OF THE WNC AGRICULTURAL CENTER

WNC Dome is ideally suited for the WNC Ag. Center. The other venues are not ideal for the sports that WNC Dome can host. Because it would be at the Ag. Center, there is no need to hire any new management staff.

Having the venue across from the Airport and a widened Interstate 26 means excellent access for sporting events and for emergency use.

If there is a serious emergency, the Governor or even the President could easily fly to the airport and visit WNC Dome to assess the situation personally.

WNC Dome will likely be a concept for future domes at other Ag. Centers statewide (the one in Williamston needs one for sure), and other cities nationally.



WNC DOME IS A SPORTS ARENA

“Domes mean sports!”

The Monolithic Dome design is a natural for sports. The “igloo” look just screams “HOCKEY!” Hockey, Arena Racing USA, indoor football, indoor soccer, indoor lacrosse, and similar indoor sports could be held in a facility that is ideal for them.

It can also host religious events and concerts. It can be used on weekdays during the WNC State Fair for major concerts, to draw in people on slower days.



WNC DOME IS A RECREATION CENTER THAT HAPPENS TO HAVE 5,000+ SEATS

Instead of having a building vacant on weekdays like most arenas, WNC Dome intends to have Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays occupied for recreational uses, maximizing the taxpayers' investment. This is possible due to few changeovers and smart management of sports infrastructure.

During hockey season, WNC Dome can and will have youth hockey, adult rec. hockey, figure skating, and public skating, as well as occasional ice shows.

During indoor football season, the turf can host youth indoor football, like the Columbus Lions have done for six years. Only we can partner with middle schools in three counties for a most exciting summer league.



WNC DOME IS AN EXTENSION OF WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

WNC Dome can offer internships and starter jobs for students at Western Carolina University in four specific majors: Sports Management, Athletic Training, Broadcasting, and Emergency and Disaster Management.

Taxpayers pay hundreds of thousands, if not millions, on those students, many without internship and job opportunities. **As such, this State project helps WCU!**

For example, the youth indoor football league could have as head coaches WCU students seeking degrees in Physical Education, Coaching, and/or Sports Management, gaining invaluable experience for their resumes when seeking teaching positions later.



About the WNC Dome project

- Dome would be 320 feet in diameter and 115 feet high, seat 5,000 – 5,500, and be the largest Monolithic Dome on Earth.
- The cost of the shell itself is estimated at \$5 million.
- It would take about a year to complete the dome once ground is broken.
- WNC Dome would be owned by the State and managed by the WNC Ag. Center.



About the WNC Dome project

- The Monolithic Dome Institute estimates in a letter sent to Terran Sports LLC that a dome arena could be built from \$14 million - \$35 million.
- **The project will have an estimated budget of \$18 million - \$25 million for a mid-range arena.**
- Careful coordination with all bodies involved will maximize chances of repayments by FEMA, as this is primarily a regional disaster shelter.
- Any savings realized could be reinvested for alternative energy units (like wind turbines) to lower energy costs.



Potential locations for WNC Dome



We believe there are four potential locations for WNC Dome. The ideal location would be the Gate 7 or "Heaven's Gate" location, with the second-best option being on the bottom-right next to I-26.

The yellow graphic represents the size of the smaller domes shown earlier being built in Texas.



What Terran Sports LLC gets

- Terran Sports LLC wants exclusive sports programming rights in WNC Dome, as well as naming rights revenue.
- Terran Sports LLC will want included in WNC Dome new infrastructure and equipment needed for ice hockey and skating, as well as for indoor football, since there are recreational uses for them.
- We cannot in conscience ask for a grant for Arena Racing USA infrastructure as there's no recreational use (hence the need for naming rights revenue).
- We will work in good faith to accommodate the Blue Ridge Roller Girls, if they want to have their bouts here.



What is asked of each body

- Henderson County is asked to endorse this project and urge other local bodies and the State of North Carolina to seek ways to build this project by 2015.
- Fletcher will be asked for a similar endorsement. If Asheville were to endorse the feasibility study, Terran Sports LLC will request a grant from Fletcher for start-up costs, as it is based in Fletcher.



What is asked of each body

- Asheville and Buncombe County are asked to endorse and pay for a feasibility study from the Monolithic Dome Institute, with a cost of \$25,000 - \$30,000.
- Terran Sports LLC would then pledge not to accept funding for the dome unless the State of North Carolina also grants Asheville and Buncombe their funding mechanism for their proposed arts center.



What is asked of Henderson County today

- Henderson County is asked to endorse this project and urge other local bodies and the State of North Carolina to seek ways to build this project by 2015.
- Henderson County is asked to offer technical assistance with Terran Sports LLC in relation to other interested parties, including likely grant writing to FEMA.
- Henderson County is asked to request of other local leaders to participate in a field trip to the Faith Chapel Christian Center in Birmingham, to see the domes for themselves.



How the public can help...

- If you support this plan, please visit www.wncdome.com
- “Like” us on our Facebook page
- Follow us @WNC Dome on Twitter
- The website and Facebook page has plenty of information and videos to share.
- **SPREAD THE WORD! LET’S DO THIS!**



Thank you!



LET'S DO THIS!



Charlotte to give Panthers \$143.75 million for stadium renovations, upgrades

Posted: Feb 07, 2013 7:18 PM EST

Updated: Feb 08, 2013 11:29 PM EST

By Coleen Harry - [email](#)

CHARLOTTE, NC (WBTV) - City officials have announced that Charlotte will invest millions of dollars into the city's professional football stadium for upgrades and renovations.

Charlotte's Mayor, city council members and department heads are having their annual retreat and the discussion is about Charlotte's future.

On Friday, Carolina Panthers owner Jerry Richardson met with council members in a closed session to discuss public funding options for requested improvements to Bank of America Stadium.

The city agreed to invest \$143.75 million into Bank of America Stadium over the next 15 years, according to a press release from the city of Charlotte.

The Carolina Panthers will contribute \$96.25 million over the same time frame as the city.

The organization has asked the state for \$62.5 million.

The city plans to pay for its share of the upgrades by a proposed increase of one-percent to the Charlotte's prepared food and beverage tax.

"If we had not made this decision, at some point in the future the team would've been sold and moved away..we would've felt that loss, economically. We would feel it from the standpoint of the psychology this community has enjoyed over the years," Mayor Foxx said.

Talks on Friday were only one step in the process. The mayor points out this is not a done deal and the public will have a chance to weigh on. "The city is requesting help from the General Assembly. We had some positive conversations with the governor and state house and state senate. The ball is now in the General Assembly's hands...and if they in fact approve the revenue stream from the city and the money to help us from the state perspective, we would then have an agreement that would have to be approved by the city council," Foxx said.

The first day of the retreat started out with talks about the Charlotte's economic health, and videos about major projects in each district.

The afternoon discussion deteriorated with heated exchanges among city council members who say "there is a lack of trust" on the council.

Members say a divide developed on the council when discussions started last year about the street car. Some council members believe colleagues let the talks pit neighborhood against neighborhood.

Earlier in the day council members were asked to think about whether they want "Charlotte to be a top tier city or a second tier city?"

"What we have to be about is thinking not just about next year or two years from now" says Mayor Anthony Foxx, "we have to think 20 years from now. Where is Charlotte going to be? Where do we want it to be and how do we back our way into thinking how we get there?"

The \$119 million street car project dominated a significant part of the day's talks.

Mayor Kasim Reed of Atlanta addressed the group and told them "Atlanta is where it is because people made tough decisions." He says he came to share lessons with Charlotte "as you all go through some of the issues that look and feel a lot alike."

Mayor Reed says "you are dealing with some issues around street car and we are building a \$100 million street car in Atlanta. You are dealing with issues around stadium facility and we're working through some of those issues right now."

According to Mayor Reed, the Atlanta Falcons have asked for help building a new stadium. In a deal that is still being worked out, the Mayor says the Falcons will pay \$860 million. The city of Atlanta will kick in \$200 million through hotel and motel tax. If an agreement is reached, the deal will keep the Falcons in Atlanta for 30 years.

Mayor Reed says "no mayor or city council have played the stadium game and won." He says a city without an NFL team will likely languish.

Mayor Foxx says he's concerned about "poachers". He says there are cities that are building stadiums but don't have NFL teams.

In other reports delivered during the retreat, Council members and the Mayor heard that fiscal year 2013's budget is doing "okay". Revenues are projected at \$0.4 million above budget and expenditures at \$2.9 million below budget.

In June a 2-year budget cycle will be adopted. For fiscal year 2014, a report says sales tax revenue will likely see a 3.5% growth. And property tax should have 1% growth. City officials say there is some uncertainty because of the county's revaluation problems. According to the city's finance department, about \$10 billion worth of property is still under review - that's an estimated \$100 million the city is missing because of Mecklenburg County's troubled revaluation.

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by Taboola



Breakfast Club 2/6



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March 2, 2012

This is the estimate for rinks in a typical situation. First the prices are figured for Texas. Costs tend to go up a bit in the mid-north, even more in the northeast, and the west coast.

In every case a feasibility study is well worth the cost. It allows the owner to know what they are getting before they commit to construction. It also provides budgets and preliminary plans to help with financing.

Construction estimate based on conceptual design and comparison with other similar completed projects. Budget prices only.

	Square Feet	Shell Only	Finished Low	Finished Medium
Single Practice Rink 124' x 228.75' Caterpillar	24,628	\$1,600,000	\$2,900,000	\$4,000,000
Monolithic Dome Core 80'	5,026	\$300,000	\$600,000	\$800,000
Monolithic Dome Core 120'	11,310	\$700,000	\$1,500,000	\$2,000,000
Monolithic Dome Core 150'	17,671	\$1,100,000	\$1,770,000	\$2,250,000
Simple Arena 222' x 55.5' (space for 1000 seats)	38,708	\$1,700,000	\$3,500,000	\$4,500,000
Simple Arena 222' x 55.5' on 10' stemwall	38,708	\$2,200,000	\$3,700,000	\$4,500,000
Professional Arena 320 x 115'. (6500 seats)	80,425	\$5,000,000	\$14,000,000	\$35,000,000

The estimate does not include land, site, utilities, A&E fees, and parking lot costs.

Monolithic will do a feasibility study for a one-time fee of \$7,500. The study includes:

- Preliminary Design
- Code Check
- Site Plan
- Budget
- Simple Rendering