

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT PLANNING BOARD
August 6, 2019
Whitsett Town Hall

The meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board was held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at the Whitsett Town Hall. Those in attendance were Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, Vice Chairman Tyler Harris, Board member Joe Wheeler, Board alternate Ken Jacobs, and Council Member liaison Jerry Rice. Absent were Board members Ella Efird and Craig York.

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia called the meeting to order at 6:04, noted that a quorum was present, seated Board alternate Ken Jacobs as Board member, and asked Council Member liaison Jerry Rice to offer the invocation.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Adoption of Minutes

Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia asked for any changes to the minutes from the Planning Board meeting on Tuesday, February 5, 2019. With none made, Chairman Maccia asked for a motion to accept the minutes. A motion was made by Board member Joe Wheeler to adopt the minutes as written; motion seconded by Board Chairman Bob Maccia. Adoption of the February minutes carried by unanimous vote of those present.

2. Any Other Old Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other old business; and there was none.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Suggestions for Walking Track

Discussion opened with specific questions posed to those present for opinions and ideas relevant to the undeveloped one-acre parcel purchased by the Town last budget year. Current plans are to clear and grade the lot leaving mature trees; and install a walking track and possibly other enhancements.

Town Administrator/Board member Ken Jacobs mentioned that the original pergola for the academy and then institute still exists on its slab, and asked if it should be rehabbed and preserved as a historic structure. All agreed it should be saved. Council Member Jerry Rice asked if any of last year's \$25,000 grant, per NC Representative Jon Hardister, could be used for the project; affirmative. Jacobs added that, furthermore, he learned from NC Senator Rick Gunn that another \$25,000 may also be available to the town once the state budget is passed and set in place.

Jacobs then turned to Board member Joe Wheeler, whose property adjoins the newly acquired parcel, for his preference on fencing materials to run down one side of the driveway. Wheeler stated he would prefer split-rail fencing for just enough partition to deter wanderers.

In conjunction with the walking track, those present gave consideration to establishing exercise stations and locating two or so park benches for resting. Board Chairman Bob Maccia suggested that the projects sounded perfect for Boy Scouts involvement. All ideas were logged; yet Board consensus was to first get down a good walking track, and other expansion could be a work in progress.

2. Widening of US 70 Impact on Town's Neighborhood Business (NB) District

With respect to the anticipated widening of US 70, Town Administrator/Board member Jacobs distributed copies of the minutes from the initial feasibility study meeting for those present to keep and peruse conveniently. The feasibility study stretches from Greensboro to Alamance County. The Town's concern, however, is from University Drive to Rock Creek Dairy Road with particular focus on the Town's land-use plan Neighborhood Business (NB) district.

With this in mind, it was recommended that the Planning Board rethink Town architectural standards relative to the NB zoning district along US 70, primarily between NC highways 61 and 100. This would lead to the development of a conceptual design of the Town's vision for its commercial corridor, which would be submitted to the Burlington-Graham Metropolitan Planning Organization, as the prime advocate for the Town on highway matters.

3. Ball Field Future; How to Get Something Sustainable to Use Field

The Town lately has purchased improvements for the ball field, e.g., backstop replacement, fencing replacement, new seats to be installed, new bases, etc.; and what is so disappointing is that the field is underused. (The current contract for girls' practices is not consistent, has gone by the wayside; plus reimbursement to the Town for maintenance and the lights according to the contract, has become neglected.)

Town Administrator Jacobs continues to upkeep the field by mowing once a week; and intends to fertilize and plant turf seed in the fall. Jacobs asked for Board assistance, outreach, and direction on how to make better, sustainable use of the field, possibly producing long-term commitment for a league with about four or five teams on a regular basis. The one caution is that it is a short field naturally made for short people; and, therefore, prohibiting adult use—power hitters not allowed. Board members will brainstorm and seek ideas for improvement.

4. The Push for Bike and Pedestrian Accessibility

Jacobs introduced the subject of the state-wide thrust for constructing bike and pedestrian availability along main and secondary thoroughfares. Jacobs put the Board on alert in the event that the Town would be subject to these endeavors.

5. Any Other New Business

Board Chairman Maccia asked for any other new business; and there was none.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, Chairman Maccia invited a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Vice Chairman Tyler Harris made the motion to adjourn; motion seconded by Board member Joe Wheeler. By unanimous vote of those present, the August 6, 2019 meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 p.m.

The next meeting of the Whitsett Planning Board will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 3, 2019 at the Town Hall.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Bob Maccia, Planning Board Chairman

APPROVED: September 3, 2019