

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
November 11, 2008
Whitsett Town Hall Building

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, November 11, 2008 at the Whitsett Town Hall. The following members of the Town Council were present: Mayor Richard Fennell, Mayor Pro Tem Andy Brown, Council members Jerry Rice, Ken Jacobs, and Cindy Wheeler. Also present were Town Administrator Gary Deal, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, members of the media, and over 15 residents from Whitsett or surrounding areas.

Mayor Fennell called the public hearing to order at 7:00 p.m., and noted that a quorum was present. Council member Rice offered the invocation.

Mayor Fennell explained that the purpose of the public hearing was to invite public comment and discussion on the three subjects as listed on the public hearing agenda. (Copy attached as part of these minutes and for the official record.)

All Council members received in their packets prior to tonight's meeting, copies of the agenda items proposals and/or supporting documentation.

1. Proposed Development Ordinance Amendment for Outdoor Storage

Mayor Fennell opened the floor to the public for comment on this issue. With no one coming forward, Mayor Fennell asked Town Administrator Gary Deal if had talked lately with Kevin Sasser [property owner to develop an outdoor storage operation united with his Brightwood Self-Storage facility]. Town Administrator Deal replied that he had; and even though the outdoor storage project was moving forward, Kevin Sasser was in no rush to bring it to fruition.

Additionally with respect to "conditional-use" outdoor storage business, Town Administrator Deal reported that he had contacted Les Eger of the Guilford County Planning Department to ensure that the County had no further concerns or issues with the Town Council's permission granted to Kevin Sasser. The County rests on this matter.

Mayor Fennell also asked Town Administrator Deal about PTCOG's involvement with clearing up the confusion with Town ordinances in this regard; and Town Administrator Deal reported that Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia and he had met with Ginger Booker of PTCOG yesterday, which became a very informative session concerning "special-use" and "conditional-use" permitting.

Deal summed up by explaining that it may take another couple of months before PTCOG and the Town would fully resolve establishing a better understanding of the ordinances and making them easier to apply to cases of “special use” and “conditional use.”

2. Proposed General Ordinance on Roadway Public Safety (Sheriff’s Office)

Mayor Fennell explained that a request presented to Council members by Captain Lawrence Straughn, the Sheriff’s Office Commander at Stoney Creek, is what prompted this proposed ordinance. The ordinance would grant authority to the Sheriff’s Office to remove abandoned vehicles within Whitsett boundaries that are parked in or alongside roadways obstructing traffic flow and/or creating public safety hazards.

The Mayor opened the floor for public comment; and there was none.

3. Request to Rezone Property at 580 Highway 100 from RS-40 to P&I

Mayor Fennell stated a rezoning request had been submitted to the Town Hall for review, discussion, and consideration by the Planning Board and the Town Council. He further explained that appropriately a sign had been posted on the property stating a public hearing, a notice had been published in a circulated newspaper, letters had been sent to neighboring properties, and finally a letter sent to Matthew Clapp, property owner and rezoning requester, advising him that all required steps had been taken to bring the matter to public hearing.

Mayor Fennell opened the floor for public comment, asking if any of the neighbors who would be affected by the rezoning were present; and Philip Burton, who lives across from 580 Highway 100 asked for clarification on whether it were two parcels or just the one at 580 that involved rezoning since Matthew Clapp owns both. The rezoning request at hand pertains to establishing a church ministry on the less than 1-1/2 acre lot at 580 only, with the main residence dwelling housing classrooms and the back building being converted into a sanctuary.

Council member Ken Jacobs asked Mr. Clapp if he had met with Guilford County to make sure that his church building would be compliant with County requirements, e.g., handicap accessible, etc.; and Mr. Clapp responded that first he would be applying for a Town development clearance permit; and then move on to the County for permitting and clearance. Jacobs also added that, he as a neighborhood resident, considers the efforts of Mr. Clapp so far to be a welcomed improvement to the neighborhood.

Mayor Fennell further stated that he understood that Mr. Clapp had received nothing but positive feedback from the neighbors; and that he [Mayor Fennell] had, in fact, received a letter expressing favor with Mr. Clapp’s plans.

With no further discussion on the items presented for public comment, Mayor Fennell invited a motion to adjourn the public hearing. A motion was made by Council member Jerry Rice to adjourn the hearing; motion seconded by Council member Ken Jacobs. Motion carried by unanimous vote; and the November 11, 2008 public hearing was adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

The Town Council would move on to its regular monthly meeting which would include voting on the issues before the Council members.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: December 9, 2008