

MINUTES OF THE WHITSETT TOWN COUNCIL
April 13, 2010
Whitsett Town Hall Building

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 13, 2010 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, Cindy Wheeler, and Lee Greeson. Also present were Town Administrator Gary Deal, Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia, two members of the media, and seven others.

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

Mayor Fennell explained that this public hearing was to address the issue of and hear public input on the proposal to allow a type of retail business on highway business (HB) zoned property that is not currently included in the Town's permitted-use schedule. The new retail trade up for discussion would be the sale of new utility buildings and carports with certain conditions set forth.

At this point, Mayor Fennell asked Planning Board Chairman Bob Maccia to preside who explained that area resident Denny Stroud had leased the commercial property at the corner of highways 61 and 70 from Huffman Oil with the intent of operating a small business to sell utility buildings, and understood from Huffman Oil that no permits would be required. Stroud carried out his plan by placing several metal buildings on the lot, only to learn from the Town that this type of retail business was not permitted in Whitsett, and he would need to follow a usually lengthy process involving the Planning Board, the Town Council and a public hearing.

As required, Stroud approached the Planning Board to explain the situation, and asked if anything could be done to accelerate the process. The Board deliberated and determined that this type business would be a good fit for the parcel since it required no lighting and no water or sewer to run. It would, however, require ordinance changes; and the Board was amenable to (1) recommending to the Town Council that the selling of utility buildings and carports be added to the permitted-use schedule and (2) asking the Council to consider calling a public hearing earlier than the standard June hearing to expedite progress on this matter.

In addition to adding the use to the schedule, the Board would need to formulate certain development conditions for this retail trade; and did so by calling a special meeting on March 17 to brainstorm and compile those terms. Those proposed

ordinance amendments were presented to the Council members during tonight's public hearing for their consideration and action. [A copy of the proposed standards is attached as part of the official file.]

Planning Board Maccia asked Denny Stroud for added comments, and after reiterating his case briefly, expressed his appreciation to the Council, the Board, and Town staff for assistance in moving this process along.

To wrap up, Mayor Fennell asked if anyone in the audience had any comments, concerns, or questions; and Eric Barber who resides adjacent to the residentially-zoned Huffman Oil parcel asked Denny Stroud if he would be situating the buildings only on the paved area or would he be using the grassy stretch before the chain link fence. Stroud said that he may be placing some free-standing carports on the lawn that he mows as stipulated in the contract. He also mentioned that according to contract he will be maintaining the area behind the chain link fence as well; but will not be using it for anything.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further discussion on the one item scheduled for public comment, Mayor Fennell made a motion to adjourn the public hearing. Council member Jerry Rice seconded the motion; and the public hearing was adjourned at 7:12 p.m. to proceed with the regular monthly meeting where the Town Council would vote on action to be taken on proposals and recommendations.

/s/

/s/

Jo Hesson, Town Clerk

Richard Fennell, Mayor

APPROVED: May 11, 2010