

July 11, 2011

Board of Commissioners Meeting

The Wendell Board of Commissioners held its regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, July 11, 2011 in the Courtroom of the Wendell Town Hall with Mayor J. Harold Broadwell presiding. Also in attendance at the meeting were Commissioners Carol Hinnant, Sid Baynes, Christie Adams, Ira Fuller and Virginia Gray; Chief of Police Vance Johnson; Lieutenant Bobby Langston; Planning Director Teresa Piner; Planner David Bergmark; Attorney Jim Cauley; Economic Development Coordinator Maggie O'Neill; and Brian Slattery, editor for the Eastern Wake News.

Mayor Broadwell called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chief Vance Johnson and the invocation was given by Bennie Collins of Wendell Baptist Church.

Adjustment and Approval of the agenda

Commissioner Fuller made a motion to remove Item #6: Resolution of appreciation to the Wake County Board of Commissioners for approving the extension of the Town of Wendell Extraterritorial Zoning Jurisdiction. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Adams made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 1 - Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

Item 2 - Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the Minutes from the June 27, 2011 Board of Commissioners meeting

Commissioner Fuller made a motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 3 – Public Hearing –Zoning Text Amendment for Section 1.5 and 19.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance as they relate to farmland operations.

Mayor Broadwell opened the public hearing at 7:03 pm.

Mr. Bergmark presented information about farmland operations in the Town of Wendell. The modifications to the Unified Development Ordinance came with the discussion to extend the Extraterritorial Jurisdiction. He said the purpose was to address developments in rural areas. He said that farm ordinances could be created by identifying specific parcels or by creating actual exemptions.

He said that the Town of Wendell used the Town of Knightdale's ordinance as a model and it closely matched Wake County's farm standards. He said that swine farms were prohibited under the farmland amendment because there were negative impacts on the town.

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Mr. Bergmark said that Senate Bill 263 allowed Towns to reduce the standards for accessory buildings. He said that House Bill 168 exempted all bona fide farms in the ETJ from zoning standards.

Commissioner Baynes asked if staff knew all the ramifications of the House Bill. Mr. Bergmark said there were a lot of questions from planners around the state and several meetings had been scheduled to review the implications.

Commissioner Baynes said that the Town would be better off to wait until it knew more about the ramifications. He said there could be changes to the amendment due to the House Bill and would like to allow people the opportunity to speak about the changes.

Mayor Broadwell asked if Mr. Cauley had any comments. Mr. Cauley said that the House Bill did what the ordinance intended. He said there were wording differences, but the intent was the same. He recommended the ordinance be modified to directly parallel state law language.

Mayor Broadwell said the House Bill sets up specific guidelines for both the Town and what was considered a farm.

Mr. Cauley said he was unsure on how long it would take to determine what was needed to change the ordinance. Commissioner Hinnant asked if the Town could still consider farms less than 10 acres. Mr. Cauley said yes because less than 10 acres would be less restrictive. For this bill, the Town could not be more restrictive. Mr. Bergmark asked where Mr. Cauley found the 10 acres in the legislation. Mr. Cauley said that there were more guidelines for bona fide farmers. Mr. Bergmark said the legislation only applied to the ETJ, where the UDO applied to the entire Town and ETJ. Mr. Bergmark asked Mr. Cauley if the Town could still prohibit swine farms because they were not specifically prohibited. Mr. Cauley said the Town could prohibit the swine farms.

Commissioner Hinnant asked when the information would be available for another public hearing. Mrs. Piner said the information would be available by the second meeting in September.

Commissioner Hinnant made a motion to recess the public hearing and reopen it at Board's first meeting in September (September 12, 2011).

Mayor Broadwell asked if the public hearing could remain open for citizens to include written comments.

Commissioner Hinnant made a motion to leave the public hearing open through September 12. In the interim, written comments may be submitted to Town Hall.

Commissioner Baynes asked Mr. Cauley if people could make comments to the Board during regular Board meetings between now and September 12, 2011. Mr. Cauley said yes.

Commissioner Hinnant's motion passed unanimously.

Item 4 – Presentation by Ms. Annemarie Maiorano, Administrator of Wake County Housing and Community Revitalization on programs and services provided by Wake County.

Ms. Maiorano said she managed Wake County's affordable housing, HOME program and Community Development Block Grants.

Ms. Maiorano said the housing program began in 1994 and it was located in the Human Services Department. She said they had an \$11 million budget with \$4 million from Wake County and \$7 million from the federal government. This year, the department lost \$200,000 in CDBG funds and \$90,000 in HOME funds. The department has created a five year consolidated plan. She said the department had several community meetings to develop the consolidated plan. She said there was a one year action plan associated with the annual budget. The department also holds quarterly meetings with town planners.

Ms. Maiorano said the programs currently offered were housing rehabilitation, affordable housing development and public facilities improvements benefiting low income households.

Ms. Maiorano said the housing rehabilitation produced three different products loans and grants to repair homes for low-income households, one time emergency grants for immediate needs and housing for seniors. The repair loan recipients had an average income of \$18,000 and an average age of 66 years old. The senior housing provided grants to seniors to make improvements to their houses or to make it possible seniors to move into assisted living facilities.

The Affordable Housing Development Program provides assistance to developers to add affordable housing. She said the grants were very competitive and the applicants must prove that they would be open for 20 to 30 years. She said all the units were privately owned and all the residents must pay rent. Currently, there are 663 units for seniors and 300 for homeless and disabled persons.

The Public Facilities Improvements included items such as sidewalks and community centers that benefit low-income families. She said the municipality match was 20 percent for infrastructure improvements and 75 percent for public facilities. Non-profits who receive grants must show a strong organization that will be able to operate over a long time.

Ms. Maiorano said last year in the corporate limits of Wendell, four emergency grants were given out, three rehabilitations were completed, several infrastructure improvements were made, a facility grant was given to the East Wake Education Foundation, and one housing development was constructed, Sandy Ridge.

Ms. Maiorano said the rental needs were 10,440 existing subsidized units, 21,224 affordable units, 333 additional senior units annual and an additional 1564 substance abuse units. The main challenges were in addressing the large demand for affordable housing, moving families along the housing continuum and the inherent conflicts between operating as both a real estate program and social welfare program.

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Ms. Maiorano said the other housing programs included vouchers, South Wilmington Men's Center, the Supportive Housing Program including "Ready to Rent" classes teaching how to be a good renter, Cornerstone, and the McKinney Program for those with mental illness and substance abuse issues.

Commissioner Hinnant asked how the department identified houses that were substandard. Ms. Maiorano said that the Wake County Revenue Department provided information on the units that did not have heat or plumbing. She said it was hard to reach the property owners with information about the various programs because most of the substandard housing is heir property or people who were happy with their substandard units. Commissioner Hinnant said when the Town looked at creating a rental housing ordinance, the information was not available.

Commissioner Baynes asked if there were minimum standards for property owners to receive rent vouchers. Ms. Maiorano said the properties must meet HUD and housing quality standards. Commissioner Baynes asked if the HUD standards discouraged property owners from taking advantage of the rent subsidies. Ms. Maiorano said that the property owners participate in the program because they knew they would have a stable source of rental income and that the property owners were given reasonable rent rather than fair market value.

Commissioner Gray asked about the development process. Ms. Maiorano said there were two different requests for proposals tax credits and gap financing. Wake County received 12 different RFPs this year. She said the first step was a staff review for sustainability, appropriate zoning, number of units and gauging the municipality's support. The next step was to take the RFPs to the Housing Committee of the Human Services Board to make recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. The non-profits were scrutinized for capacity of the developer and operational concerns. Commissioner Gray asked who was on the Housing Committee. Ms. Maiorano said the participants were community members, representatives from the various municipalities, members of the Human Services Board, and a large representation from the real estate and engineer community. Commissioner Gray asked why a developer would want to participate. Ms. Maiorano said the developers were able to make money and that nonprofits received general revenue and developers fees.

Commissioner Baynes said affordable housing was important but providing housing without everything else, like medical assistance and jobs, was counterproductive. Ms. Maiorano said they looked at everything when building developments.

Commissioner Adams asked if projects were funded by all sources of funding. Ms. Maiorano said yes.

Mrs. Piner said that more than \$900,000 had been spent in the area including water and wastewater improvements and pump station removal.

Item 5 – Review of Town of Wendell's "Security Check Policy" and update on student drop off rerouting possibilities as presented by Chief Vance Johnson.

Chief Johnson said the Security Check Policy was a form that people fill out when they were going on vacation or were going to be away from their house for an extended period of time.

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The resident fills out the form and the police stop by the house to check on everything. He said for more information on the program, call the Police Department at 919-365-4444 or the form was also available on the Town's website.

Chief Johnson said the last discussion on the student drop off was to close Academy Street and reroute drop-off from the elementary school. After contacting the public and the residents who use Academy Street, the Police Department determined that closing it was not feasible. The Fire Department has hookups on Academy Street that they need access to use. He said getting traffic off of Wendell Boulevard was very important.

Commissioner Gray asked about limiting traffic on Academy Street for a few hours in the morning and afternoon. Chief Johnson said that would be confusing. Commissioner Gray said she thought the street could be one way and then block it off the other way. Then traffic would be limited. She said that once the traffic was rerouted through the back parking lot. Chief Johnson said that was an option. He said the biggest issue was people waiting to turn into the school. He said several years ago the traffic flow was functioning and it was changed and that he would like to get back to the original flow. Commissioner Gray asked about a timetable. Chief Johnson said he was meeting with the principal this week.

Commissioner Hinnant said she hoped Academy Street was one way from Marshburn Road because of the intersection. Chief Johnson said there may be options where police would not need to make it one way.

Commissioner Baynes said the problem was cars that are in the street preventing cars from going down Wendell Boulevard. He said staging could be on Magnolia. Chief Johnson said the worry was someone would be run over by a car.

Commissioner Gray asked if the drop-off times could be staggered. Chief Johnson said he suggested staggered times, but that was not an option.

Chief Johnson said he was hoping to find something that benefitted the most people.

Fire Chief Tom Vaughn said he agreed that the cars should not line up on Wendell Boulevard. He said the traffic pattern changed several years ago because the school did not want the buses in the front of the school.

Item 6 – Resolution of appreciation to the Wake County Board of Commissioner for approving the extension of the Town of Wendell's Extraterritorial Zoning Jurisdiction. Presentation from Mrs. Teresa Piner, AICP, CZO, Planning Director.

The Board of Commissioners removed this item.

Item 7 – Presentation of a "Town of Wendell Economic Development Strategic Plan." Miss Maggie O'Neill, Economic Development Coordinator.

Miss O'Neill presented the Board of Commissioners with the statistical analysis of the Town of Wendell demographics and Plan of Work for the Economic Development Department. Miss O'Neill presented the income profile and the leakage report. She presented five different areas in

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the Plan of Work - marketing and public relations; industrial recruitment; downtown development; workforce development; development projects from the 2007 Master Plan.

Commissioner Adams asked if the trade areas from Knightdale and Zebulon were taken into consideration when developing the leakage report. Miss O'Neill said they were not specifically taken into consideration but for the different leakage percentages, there was enough opportunity to Wendell.

Miss O'Neill discussed the different opportunities with industrial recruitment specifically BRAC and clusters. She said due the availability of land and the proximity to the major interstates, defense contracting would be a great opportunity.

Miss O'Neill talked about the Merchants Association during the Downtown Development portion of the Plan of Work. The Merchant's Association has been meeting regularly and plans to become a part of the Wendell Chamber of Commerce.

Miss O'Neill went over the different types of Economic Development and the workforce development aspect. Part of Economic Development specifically focuses on creating jobs that match the skills of the population and also training the population with new job skills.

Miss O'Neill said that setting up performance measures to be realistic was very important to the program.

Miss O'Neill went over the "Top Ten Things Elected Officials Should Know About Economic Development" from the National Association of Cities. She said that every decision that was made has an impact on Economic Development. She also said that all groups in Town could be our economic development partners.

Commissioner Baynes said the second category should be changed to "Industrial and Business Development." He said Wake Economic Development has said "Class A" Building Space. He said most of the businesses in Wendell are not located in downtown Wendell and that we need to support businesses in the entire town. Commissioner Baynes also suggested that financial or program resources be given to the Downtown Merchant Group. He said we should also look at foreclosed property for business development. Miss O'Neill said the downtown area was used as a trial run for the property database and Mr. Bergmark provided her with the addresses for commercial and industrial properties. Commissioner Baynes said there have been four different merchants associations and we needed to make sure everyone was working together.

Commissioner Hinnant said Wendell needed to find its niche. She also said if we could recruit a large employer then there may be more disposable income. Miss O'Neill said that rooftops and disposable income were crucial to recruitment. Commissioner Hinnant said we should look at residential development as economic development.

Commissioner Adams asked about recruitment packets and marketing pieces. Miss O'Neill said there were marketing pieces throughout the Plan of Work, but the main recruitment packet was under industrial recruitment.

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Commissioner Gray asked about any evaluation of rent compared to other towns. Miss O'Neill said that question was on the property survey sent to the different property owners. She also said several property owners did not want to share that information.

Commissioner Gray asked about the demographics 5 miles, 10 miles and 15 miles out. Miss O'Neill said she could send it to the commissioners. Commissioner Gray said Wendell needed to take on a large public relations campaign. She said she would love to have a hotel on the highway.

Commissioner Gray asked about creating an inspections department to look at an historic rehabilitation code. Miss O'Neill said the North Carolina Downtown Development Association is working on different education opportunities for applying the historic rehabilitation code.

Commissioner Gray asked about incentive packages. Miss O'Neill said, as an example, the Town of Benson had four different types of grants for small businesses. She said façade improvement grants and marketing incentives were very good, but rental assistance sometime was counterproductive. Miss O'Neill said she had looked at the town's incentive policy and it might be beneficial to rewrite it because of the gray area with property tax incentives. Commissioner Gray said that it is important to have a community kiosk. Miss O'Neill said she met with Food Lion and IGA on getting a permanent kiosk.

Commissioner Gray said the group should have an economic development summit to look at everything.

Commissioner Hinnant asked if the different recruitment packets were based on who we were recruiting. Miss O'Neill said yes.

Commissioner Adams asked about funds being available. Miss O'Neill said she had a list of federal programs and CDBG economic development funds. Commissioner Adams said the School of Government just received \$1.6 million for community development assistance.

Mayor Broadwell suggested the Board not take action at this meeting.

Commissioner Hinnant said marketing should reflect the Town's heritage and that we should also look at getting a shelter for the Farmers Market.

Adjournment.

Commissioner Hinnant made a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous.

J. Harold Broadwell, Mayor

Attest:

Jim Cauley, Town Attorney

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WORKSESSION MINUTES

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- 1. Discussion of the impact of recent legislation relative to compliance of bona fide farmlands with the Unified Development Ordinance of the Town of Wendell. Presented by Mr. David Bergmark, Town Planner.**

The Board of Commissioners discussed this item during Item #3 of the regular agenda: Public Hearing – Zoning Text Amendment for Section 1.5 and 19.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance as they relate to farmland questions.

J. Harold Broadwell, II, Mayor

Attest:

Jim Cauley, Town Attorney