

MINUTES OF JOINT MEETING OF THE MIDWAY TOWN COUNCIL AND THE MIDWAY PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD HELD ON SEPTEMBER 16, 2013 AT 5:00 P.M. IN THE MEETING ROOM AT THE MIDWAY FIRE AND RESCUE BUILDING LOCATED AT 228 MIDWAY SCHOOL ROAD IN MIDWAY, NORTH CAROLINA

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Norman Wilkes called the meeting to order.

Councilors present were: John Byrum, Mike McAlpine, Robin Moon, Todd Nifong, and Sue Stephens.
Absent: None.

Planning Board members present were: Chairman Charles Waddell, Jackie Edwards, Lynn Griggs, Keith Leonard, LeeAnn Thomas, and Alternate member Jamie Hester. Absent: None.

Town Manager Ryan Ross and Town Clerk Linda Hunt were present.

Town Planner Andy Goodall of Benchmark CMR, Inc. was also present.

No members of press were in attendance.

PURPOSE OF JOINT MEETING

The purpose of this joint meeting of the Midway Town Council and the Midway Planning and Zoning Board/Board of Adjustment is to continue dialogue about a master site plan and town hall location.

Town Manager Ryan Ross informed Council that the closing for the land swap between the Town of Midway and Iola Thomas is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2013 at 2:00 p.m.

Other highlighted notes from Mr. Ross included:

- Surveyor Brad Coe has prepared a draft of the master site plan with town hall plus 10 (ten) acres marked off as requested by Town Council.
- Per Mark and Sherry Thomas (owners of the tree farm adjacent to the Town's property), one acre of land could yield 170 trees.
- Potential lease of a portion of the Town property to Thomas family for operation of a tree farm

Mr. Ross advised Council that Town Planner Andy Goodall would review the thoughts he has for the survey that will be going out to Midway residents requesting their ideas for use of the property.

REPORT FROM COMMITTEE HOUSE RENOVATION COMMITTEE

Councilor Todd Nifong, Committee Chair, gave the following House Renovation Committee report:

- All Committee members met and went together to go through the house to explore the feasibility of using the structure as a temporary town hall.
- It was the consensus of the committee to hire an architect to provide an opinion as to the practicability of the idea of renovating the house.
- There was some slight termite damage to the house, but the Committee understands it has already been treated.
- The Committee wanted to know if the house would be used for administrative offices only? (Reception area, office for Town Manager, office for Mayor.)
- Councilor Nifong met with Beau Chollett, Commercial Plan Reviewer for the Davidson County Inspection Department, to discuss what would be involved in turning the house into a town hall.

For commercial construction, there is a long list of requirements that must be met and to convert a house into a public building would create its own set of problems as well. Listed below is a short list of some of the requirements for commercial construction:

- Rezoning of property
- Commercial Plan Review Requirements
 - Site plan
 - Floor plan
 - Structural details
 - ADA Guidelines (2010) – Minimum of ADA bathroom and ramp. Although the basement of the house may not be usable, an elevator from the basement would be required. At a minimum, a handicapped accessible restroom and a ramp would be needed.

Councilor Nifong added that Mr. Chollett strongly urged the Town to not try to cut any corners if the Town decides to convert the house to commercial use.

Councilor Nifong said the Committee needs more direction from Council before proceeding further, such as:

- How much money is the Council willing to spend to fix up the house?
- Does the Town need the services of an architect to get a better idea of what it would take to fix up the house? Contractor for cost estimate?
- Would the house be used for administrative purposes only?
- What will the Town do in the short-term? Long-term?

Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine said he envisioned the house serving as administrative offices only.

Town Manager Ryan Ross stated the contractors he had talked to had advised him that the house needs a new roof and new windows. Mr. Ross said the question that needs to be answered is if the Town should continue to rent the current Town Hall space or if Council wants to “go all out” and fix up the house as a temporary town hall.

Planning Board member Jackie Edwards emphasized that the Town needs to be able to explain to the people how the Council came to whatever decisions are made.

Councilor Byrum said the Town needs to know solid costs to upfit the house, asking how much Council is willing to spend on it and if the house would be for office space only. Councilor Byrum said Council needs to make sure it has done its due diligence in making its decision.

Councilor Sue Stephens reminded Council that exploratory funds were included in the current year’s budget for the purpose of investigating the viability of using the house for town hall.

Town Planner Andy Goodall asked Council if anyone had thought about building a town hall the same size as the house. He stated the house is in a great location and would be a perfect place to build the town hall. Mr. Goodall pointed out that it is an expensive endeavor to change the type of occupancy from residential to commercial.

Councilor Robin Moon agreed with Planning Board member Jackie Edwards that the Council should be able to explain how and why the Council made its choices. Councilor Moon added that it appears the Town would be spending more money on upfitting the house for a temporary town hall than paying the rent at the Town Hall’s current location.

Town Manager Ryan Ross suggested Council may want to consider looking at the long-term and begin to set aside funds each budget year and designate the funds to be used specifically for construction of a new town hall. He proposed Council consider allocating \$100,000 each year for the next five years to accrue the necessary funds. Mr. Ross also advised that things such as walking trails, picnic areas, etc. could be funded and constructed in the short-term.

Councilor Moon asked the Planning Board what they thought about the matter.

Planning Board Chairman Charles Waddell said he agreed with the Town Manager's suggestions.

Planning Board alternate member Jamie Hester questioned what the house would look like if it is renovated and if it would be an eyesore.

Mayor Wilkes asked if any of the Council had thought about offering the house to someone to be used for a good purpose with the stipulation that the cost for moving the house would be paid by the new owner.

Councilor Stephens commented that Committee member Bonnie Wishnietsky had suggested donating the house for a good cause.

Planning Board Chairman Waddell suggested Council may want to consider selling the house at a silent auction stipulating that the winner would be responsible for paying to have the house moved within an agreed upon time. Mr. Waddell stated his church had sold a building it owned using that process and it worked really well for the church.

Planning Board member Lynn Griggs commented that nobody uses picnic tables anymore.

Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine pointed out that the farm trees located on the Town's property could be sold and the Town would realize some income from the sale of the trees. The Thomas family has agreed to facilitate the sale for the Town. Mayor Pro Tem McAlpine said the Council needs to keep the cost of maintenance of the Town's property in perspective.

Planning Board member Lynn Griggs stated Town Planner Andy Goodall had raised some good points earlier in the meeting.

Councilor Nifong said there are a lot of things to think about and asked what the Council thought about using the preliminary funds to further explore the feasibility of renovating the house for a temporary town hall.

Planning Board member Jackie Edwards proposed moving forward with getting the architect drawings and taking them to Davidson County's Commercial Plan Reviewer Beau Chollett for his review.

Councilor Nifong asked for the Council could agree on what the Committee is to do, stating they just need direction.

Town Manager Ryan Ross noted that currently the house is costing the Town just a minimal amount of money for utilities.

Planning Board member LeeAnn Thomas asked what the end result would be.

Councilor Byrum said use of the house as a temporary town hall would be short-term (1 to 3 years) but a decision on the house needs to be expedited. Councilor Byrum said he agrees with putting money aside for a new town hall and with going ahead with the walking trail, picnic area, etc.

Planning Board member Keith Leonard said the way he views the situation is that the Town bought the property and a house just happened to be on the property.

Councilor Moon said he is not interested in putting any money into the house.

Planning Board alternate member Jamie Hester said she felt the same as Councilor Moon.

Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine said the Town did not buy the property for the house and the house is not for long-term use.

Councilor Stephens said she is in favor of staying in the current town hall until the Town has the funds to build a new town hall.

Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine agreed that Council should be accountable to Midway citizens for decisions made by Council. Mr. McAlpine said he is in favor of using the money set aside for exploring the viability of using the house as a temporary Town Hall to have a structural engineer and architect to inspect the house and report their findings to the Council. The information obtained from the report could help determine a more accurate cost for upfitting the house.

Planning Board member Jackie Edwards said she felt like the Town is just guessing at the numbers for the house and she would want definite numbers to be able to explain the decisions made one way or another.

Planning Board member LeeAnn Thomas said the Council and the Planning Board have to think about what the people want and have to be very careful in making decisions.

PUBLIC INPUT SURVEY

Town Planner Andy Goodall suggested the following questions for the survey that will be going out to Midway residents requesting their ideas for use of the Town property and asked for Council's input on the questions asked:

1. Would you like to see a park on the property?
2. Would you like to see a walking trail on the property?
3. What kind of recreational facilities would you like to see on the property?
4. What other types of facilities would you like to see on the property?
5. Would you like to see a road on the property that connects Gumtree Road to Country Lane?

Mr. Goodall noted the unless the Council wants to make changes or has any concerns about the survey, the survey will be sent out by the end of next week and a date will be set for the first public input meeting.

MASTER SITE PLAN

Town Manager Ryan Ross distributed copies of the master site plan prepared by Surveyor Brad Coe to the Town Council and Planning Board for their review.

Councilor Todd Nifong requested a copy of the plan be included with the surveys when they are sent out.

Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine remarked that the trees need to be cleared out and the property needs to be fenced in.

There being no further discussion, Mayor Pro Tem Mike McAlpine made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Robin Moon seconded the motion and Council voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.

Norman Wilkes, Mayor

Charles Waddell, Chairman of Planning and
Zoning Board

ATTEST:

Linda A. Hunt, Town Clerk