

**Old Town Advisory Committee
September 10, 2015**

Minutes

I. CALL TO ORDER

At 7:04 p.m. Chairman Billy Wilder called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL

The following members were present:

Chairman Billy Wilder, Bernice Dupree, and Brandon McLean.

LURB Member Liaison present: Pete Mangum.

Town Council Members present: Councilor Randy Young.

Staff Members present: Jennifer Currin, Jason Brown, Donna Tierney, and Whitney Ledford.

Others present: None.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 13, 2015

Chairman Wilder noted a correction, two typographical errors on page 1 of the August 13, 2015 Minutes.

Chairman Wilder motioned to approve the August 13, 2015 Minutes noting the corrections, seconded by Brandon McLean, motion carried unanimously.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

Senior Planner Jason Brown introduced Donna Tierney as the new Planning Technician for Development Services.

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. Railroad Crossings

Jason Brown explained that the North Carolina Department of Transportation is paying for Robertson Street and assisting with Poplar Street railroad crossing repairs. The project is projected to be completed in the next two months. There are not funds at this time for Smithfield Road. However, this will be reevaluated once the State Budget is passed.

B. CrossTies Initiative (John Rex Endowment Grant) Update

Jason Brown reminded the committee that the Farmer's Market is up and running and will be in operation until October 10th. Mr. Brown explained that Staff is still working with the North Carolina Department of Transportation regarding the pedestrian crossing at the railroad.

C. Hair Junction Area Sidewalk Improvement Update

Jason Brown explained to the committee that the previous construction contract was never fulfilled. Total Construction from Garner has been contracted to complete this project and will hopefully begin construction soon.

D. Community Helpers Update

Jason Brown updated committee members regarding the previous complaint against the Community Helpers program. The program is reported as making great progress towards keeping cars off the road by starting later. Town Staff will continue to meet with Mr. Neal and monitor their progress. The committee agreed that this new system is working.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. Caboose Museum

Jason Brown shared information regarding the Caboose Museum plan and requested ideas from the committee on how the museum will look and for a motion to recommend it to council for funding.

Several of the members agreed with the idea of placing printed pictures under plexiglas cases to display artifacts. It was decided that several Town employees and committee members would visit the caboose on Wednesday, September 16 at 10:30 a.m. to assess what needs to be moved and fixed before moving forward with recommending it to Town Council.

B. Harper Park Master Plan Update

Senior Planner Jennifer Currin updated committee members on the Harper Park Master Plan. She explained that Town Council directed Development Services to begin looking at Harper Park in conjunction with the Knightdale Station Park Master Plan.

Ms. Currin explained to committee members that CLH Design has been hired, but no plans have been created, and they are purely gathering information and ideas at this stage. She also stated it is possible that any improvements to Harper Park, such as addressing storm water and adding additional tennis courts, could cause a change in the park's character. Ms. Currin explained they are seeking input from the Land Use Review Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, and Old Town Advisory Committee. The ideas of these three entities will then be used to develop a plan.

Chairman Wilder would like to see the park remain as a children's park and not forfeit trees for new tennis courts. He made the suggestion to lay piping in the drainage ditches and cover them with dirt to solve the storm water issue. He also recommended adding one or two additional picnic shelters.

Bernice Dupree exited the meeting unexcused at 7:31 p.m.

Land Use Review Board Liaison Pete Mangum strongly agreed with Chairman Wilder and added his own thoughts regarding access to the South East corner, adding grilling stations, making the playground handicap accessible, converting the old basketball court to tennis courts in order to disturb fewer trees, and either adding or converting one or two age 10 and under youth courts. Mr. Mangum explained with more tennis courts the Town could then advertise as having a tennis complex.

Councilor Young agreed with this suggestion and believes there is enough interest in the community to create a Knightdale team.

C. North First Avenue Speeding

Jason Brown recapped the speeding concern discussed last meeting. The speed limit currently drops from 35 to 25 on First Avenue while traveling downhill. Mr. Brown has spoken to Police Chief Lawrence Capps who thinks the speed could be reduced in the entire corridor. Town Engineer Fred Boone has put the stealth scanner out and will have data for the September 14 Planning and Engineering Committee meeting where the issue will be discussed further.

Mr. Mangum expressed concern with the lack of lighting at a crossing near the park. He wishes this to be looked into considering many people still use the park at night.

D. Old Town Investment Grants

After mentioning Bernice Dupree's unexcused exit at 7:31 p.m. would result in an affirmative vote, Jason Brown provided an update regarding Staff's wishes to create a discretionary grant program to help spur private investment. This topic will be taken to Council at the October 5 Town Council meeting. Mr. Brown clarified that he will speak to the Town Attorney regarding monetary amounts and that the grants would only be for commercial investments.

Chairman Wilder motioned to recommend item to Council, seconded by Brandon McLean, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Mangum explained that some may see this as the Town picking and choosing in a defined part of town rather than allowing all areas access to the grant money. He suggested using construction fees instead, and Jason Brown explained the economic development statutes do allow for crediting or forgiving permit fees.

Brandon McLean motioned that the OTAC committee endorses the concept of Old Town investment grants, seconded by Chairman Wilder. Bernice Dupree's vote was considered in the affirmative due to being absent.

VII. MEMBER INQUIRIES/REPORTS

A. Staff Follow-Up on Previous Month's Inquiries

a) Front Yard Parking

Jason Brown discussed information concerning parking. This will be taken to the Planning and Engineering Committee on September 14. It is still being considered and he will report more once it has been discussed.

b) Deceased Trees on Oakwood and at the Lion's Club Building

Jason Brown explained to the committee members that a purchase order has been completed and the trees are slated for removal next week.

c) Commercial Vehicle Parking in Old Town Enforcement

Jason Brown informed members that the Police Department tagged one of the commercial vehicles that was illegally parking in Old Town. He reminded committee members that the Police Department's non-emergency line can be called if problems persist.

d) Flowers Street Commercial Property

Jason Brown communicated to the committee that the Flowers Street property has received a Certificate of Occupancy and that the site had been cleaned.

e) Duke Progress Energy Easement Cutting

Jason Brown explained to the committee that Duke Progress Energy has a franchise agreement with the Town and can perform cutting without letting the Town know.

B. New Inquiries/Reports

Pete Mangum inquired about paving the sewer cut on Main Street. He explained it has been about three weeks and is creating additional problems by forcing people off the road to avoid hitting it. Jennifer Currin will check with Public Works and the City of Raleigh.

Brandon McLean inquired about adding a crosswalk button light on First Avenue due to the increased foot traffic. Jennifer Currin explained that this type of project must be done in conjunction with the Department of Transportation. With an estimated cost between \$35,000 and \$50,000, Ms. Currin explained the road does not have the existing infrastructure and that it is more cost effective when part of a larger project. She informed Mr. McLean that she will add his suggestion to the list of safety concerns that is being created.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Having reached the end of the evening's agenda and hearing no further discussion, Chairman Wilder motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m., Brandon McLean seconded, motion carried unanimously.



Attest, Chairman of the Old Town Advisory Committee, Billy Wilder



Clerk to the Old Town Advisory Committee, Donna Tierney