Mayor and Council Workshop
6 p.m. July 11, 2023
Law Enforcement Center, and livestream

MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in a workshop session on Tuesday, July 11, 2023 in the Law Enforcement Center and via livestreaming. Mayor Mayefskie presided, calling the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was not established as the Mayor and two Councilmembers were present as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present in the room: Mayor Sean Mayefskie, Council members Tim Forrest and Danielle Hewetson

Council Members Present via electronic means: MPT Dan Berry

Council Members Absent: Council members Aaron Wolff and Shaun McGrath

Staff Members Present in the room: Randy Harrington, Town Manager; Linda McKinney, Town Clerk (recording the minutes); Daniel Weeks, Assistant Town Manager; Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager; John Schifano, Town Attorney; Mathew Mutter, IT; Corey Petersohn, Director, Budget and Strategic Planning; Tina Stroupe, Director, Finance; Cassie Hack, Director, Communications and Marketing; Chris Hills, Elizabeth Goodson, and Sean Ryan, Development Services; Kendra Parrish, Seann Byrd, and Rachel Ingham, Utilities & Infrastructure; LeeAnn Plumer, Parks and Recreation.

1. Overview – Randy Harrington, Town Manager, gave an overview of the agenda.

2. Community Survey

Cassie Hack, Director of Communications and Marketing, said staff was preparing for the next iteration of the Community Survey and were requesting Council feedback on questions to enhance strategic planning. She outlined highlights of the 2021 Community Survey and residents' top priorities. She discussed the benefits of benchmarking our results against our region and the nation, as well as against ourselves from year to year. Therefore many of the questions would remain the same in order to measure progress. She said staff was requesting feedback on two possible questions where changes could be made. Question 33 in the last survey asked residents to rank the five strategic priorities in order of importance. She asked Council to consider whether they wanted to keep these categories and suggested an open question might be added as a follow-up. Question 34 listed several disparate topics and asked residents to rank them from Extremely Important to Not Important on a scale of 1 to 5. She suggested that these might be altered to include topics that were not included in 2021 such as traffic management, downtown as a destination, cultural experiences, opportunities for teens and seniors, neighborhood vitality and safety, and qualities that make Holly Springs unique.

Council discussed adding the Downtown area to the survey questions, separating questions about teens and seniors, traffic management, public art, and cultural questions. There were questions about the process of conducting the survey.

3. Unified Development Ordinance Update

Chris Hills, Director of Development Services, said the purpose of this item was to discuss aligning the UDO with Town Council's goals for development in Holly Springs. He outlined the process by which the UDO was developed and how it relates to other plans and policies approved by Council, and what the emphases of the plan were.

Mr. Hills described the implementation of the new UDO and the differing levels of influence Council has on projects based on the different types of decisions (legislative, quasi-judicial, and administrative).

Sean Ryan, Development Services, outlined the difference between Base District and Conditional Zoning District implementation and gave examples of when Conditional Zoning Districts were appropriate and when not. He outlined key questions Council could ask for each project presented to them and what Council could do if a project does not meet their standards. He said there have been successes in the Conditional Zoning District in getting a greater variety of uses within a development, increased sensitivity to adjacent properties, and improved site design. But there have been challenges including not seeing the uniqueness desired, added flexibility not resulting in higher quality, and master plans missing important design details for decision makers.

Elizabeth Goodson, Development Services, asked Council

1. What challenges they were having with Conditional Zoning Districts;
2. if they were satisfied with the level of detail provided? And
3. were they seeing unique and innovative developments?

Council discussed the challenge of not getting information until they are at the meeting, and their desire for more information sooner, desiring more specificity in Master Plans, and updating some base standards, including lot width and density.

Ms. Goodson said next steps could be quarterly development previews, increasing staff analysis with staff reports, and using the Land Use Advisory Committee for all legislative cases as a way for Council to see what is coming before them in advance. She asked if these steps would be helpful.

Council discussed height limits in the Downtown, density levels, and lot widths. Consensus was to limit height in the downtown district to four stories, and to limit density, but written in such a way as to give Council flexibility without allowing for unlimited density. Council expressed appreciation for the quarterly updates on upcoming projects and requested more information on cultural/historical impacts and traffic analysis prior to items coming to Council.

Mr. Ryan outlined the thresholds of decision making and the unique requirements of Quasi-judicial decisions. He outlined the key questions Council should ask, and what level of control they had over the decision. He said there have been successes in decision on larger projects with community impacts determined by Town Council and the increased public engagement and awareness. He said challenges have been that no Findings of Fact are in the Ordinance and community expectations on influence change.

Ms. Goodson asked Council what challenges they were having with the approval process and whether they thought they were considering projects at the right level.

Council discussed the base requirements and whether they were at the right level, having more specificity on master plans, and educating the community on what powers Council does and does not have in a quasi-judicial proceeding.

Ms. Goodson said staff recommendations would include development process updates and UDO updates to address the Quasi-judicial Findings of Fact. Chris Hills said that staff is looking at best practices hoping to compress the required timeline and update the process.

Mr. Ryan said that continued Comprehensive Plan and UDO alignment is important and he gave some possible areas for greater alignment. He said that several planning initiatives were completed either during or shortly after the UDO update and this posed some challenges. He said that revisiting the Future Land Use Map for alignment with Council expectations.

He outlined the successes and challenges in UDO alignment. Ms. Goodson asked if there were changes to adopted plans or policies that Council wanted to study further?

Council discussed the southwest part of Town and whether it should be SR: Suburban Residential instead of Mixed Use. There was discussion about Council development tours and a possible stakeholder committee. Council asked for more information on possible tours and committees.

4. East Regional Pump Station

Rachel Ingham, Utilities and Infrastructure, said this item was to update Council on the status of the Eastern Regional Pump Station and Force Main. She said the pump station was projected to have a peak pumping rate of 4,700 gallons per minute and is needed because of the increased development in that area of town and insufficient space to expand the Sunset Ridge Pump Station at its current site. She walked through the current wastewater collection system infrastructure on the eastern side of town and what steps had been taken since the 2010 study which showed the issues.

Ms. Ingham explained the issues around expanding the current pump station, showed the service area and flow for the proposed pump station, and said that engineers estimate was around $5 million for the pump station and $3.4 million for the force main construction. This was based on 2017 estimates, that were updated. She said that they would probably be higher. She showed how the Northeast Gateway area would be in this basin, and increased capacity was necessary to allow development in that area to proceed. Land in that drainage basin is currently 42% undeveloped. She explored various funding options and asked for feedback on Council's preference between the funding strategies.

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said that it is possible that the ideal situation would be if there was a developer who could master plan the area and partner with the Town. But when that would happen is unknown.

Council discussed costs and timeframes, as well as potential partnerships and grants. Ms. Ingham said the cost of design, so that the project could be ready for future development partnerships would be around $500,000.

5. Naming for Park on Cass Holt Road

LeeAnn Plumer, Director of Parks and Recreation, said the purpose of this item was to receive Council feedback on possible names for the park on Cass Holt Road and the recreation center at that park. She said the Policy on naming Town Facilities approved by Council in October of 2022 outlined general principles and categories for selecting names. Council has the formal naming authority with recommendations coming from Boards, Committees, and staff. She said that brainstorming themes come up with by staff were discussed with the Parks and Recreation Committee and narrowed down to a list of possibilities. Top picks for the Park were James Norris Park, Hollyview Park and Springside Park. Top picks for the Rec Center were Rise, REC / The Rec, and James Norris Center. She said the staff recommendation was to name the park Springside Park to recognize the history of the site with historic marker signs and/or a path to the historic spring(s), and not to officially adopt a name at this time for the Recreation Center and to seek potential sponsorship or naming rights opportunities.

Mayor Mayefskie asked if there is definitive information about the springs, and Ms. Plummer said staff had a high degree of confidence that the original spring and holly trees were near this location. There was discussion about the timing of choosing a name and whether it was ready to present at the next business meeting, and whether it was needed for the bond education materials. Council expressed the desire to wait on choosing the name until after the bond.

Open Discussion:

None that required action.

Closed Session: none.

6. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by Council member Forrest seconded by Council member Hewetson and passed with a unanimous vote. The July 11, 2023 workshop meeting of the Holly Springs Town Council was adjourned at 8: 55 pm.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, August 15, 2023.

Linda C. McKinney

Linda McKinney
Town Clerk