



# Town of Holly Springs Land Use Advisory Committee

## Minutes: *November 7, 2023*

### Agenda Item 1: ROLL CALL

The Land Use Advisory Committee (LUAC) met on Tuesday, November 7, 2023 in the Holly A & B Rooms of the Cultural Center at 3:00 p.m. when a quorum was established.

Members Present: Randy Harrington  
Scott Chase  
Daniel Weeks  
Dan Berry, Town Council Representative  
Chris Hills  
LeeAnn Plumer  
Thomas Urquart, Planning Board Representative  
Rick Madoni, Planning Board Alternate

Members Absent: Kendra Parrish  
Irena Krstanovic

Staff Members  
Present: Grayson Taylor  
Aaron Levitt  
Brett Gosney  
Sean Ryan  
Matt Beard  
Catherine Jacobs  
Cheryl Caines  
Chris Garcia  
Elliot Blonshine  
Kathy White (recording the minutes)

### Agenda Item 2: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes of September 5, 2023 as submitted.

Motion: Scott Chase  
Second: Dan Berry  
Vote: Unanimous

### Agenda Item 3: Development Petition(s)

#### **A. Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road Realignment and Development**

Applicants in attendance were:

Jason Barron – Morningstar Law Group  
Nathan Rhomberg - VHB  
Rob Rudloff - Pulte Group  
Leticia Shapiro – Morningstar Law Group  
Monty Steckler – SNR Group  
Mark Frederick – Parker Poe  
Andy Mills – Shenandoah Homes  
Nick Antrilli – Withers Ravenel  
Ed Tang – Withers Ravenel  
Rynal Stephenson – Ramey Kemp  
Lyle Overcash – Kimley-Horn

Sean Ryan, Development Services, stated that the purpose of this meeting was to confirm the Council's position on the Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road alignment, and to discuss potential partnerships, phased improvements, or other methods to meet shared goals. The role of the LUAC Committee is to provide the applicants with direction on development applications and the realignment of Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road.

Mr. Ryan gave a brief overview of the existing traffic and connectivity issues for east/west travel. He showed the current corridors, as well as the proposed West/East Connector from Avent Ferry Road to NC 55. He said this corridor has been a long priority in the transportation plan, going back to 2001. But it's an improvement that's approaching quickly, with all the development that is going into the Town's southwest jurisdiction. The Town's goals for this corridor are to improve the existing operating conditions at the intersections at Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road at Piney Grove Wilbon Road, and also to create that west/east connector to help relieve traffic from Avent Ferry Road, Cass Holt, as well as Piney Grove Wilbon Road. It is also intended to promote safety, helping to reduce the impacts on property owners that are around the corridor as well as support the planned development that we know is going to happen in this area. He explained why the realignment is the locally preferred option for the Town.

Mr. Ryan then gave an overview of the three projects that are being discussed today:

22-REZ-09 - 1100 Piney Grove Wilbon is in the review process. The current zoning is RR Rural Residential. The proposed zoning is NMX-CD Neighborhood Mixed-Use CD. The proposed uses are 173 Dwelling units (detached and attached dwellings, apartments and some commercial), and the proposed density is 4.8± units per acre.

22-REZ-10 Symphonia is pending a public hearing. The current zoning is RR Residential. The proposed zoning is NR-CD, Neighborhood Residential CD. The proposed uses are 152 detached and attached dwellings, and the proposed density is 3.12± units per acre.

23-REZ-05 Wade Nash North is in the review process. The current zoning is RR Residential. The proposed zoning is NR-CD Neighborhood Residential CD. The proposed uses are 230-240 detached and attached dwellings. The proposed density is 3.7± units per acre.

Chris Hills stated that there have been several iterations of what this could look like, and we think that we've found a way to try to accomplish that goal through this process. There are three developments that are concurrently moving forward in an opportunity to try to align their investment.

Jason Barron thanked the committee for hosting the meeting, and said it was a fairly unusual situation to have three different developers trying to build the same general area. All three of these cases have been tied together by the fundamental question of what happens with Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road. They're all trying to work with staff to determine what works for the Town, and what works for the developers, and what is feasible for everyone. He stated that this meeting was meant to be a discussion, not a debate about what's right or what's wrong. He then gave an overview of the three proposed projects. He pointed out there are significant frontage improvements that are coming out in the development of each of these developments. He continued by talking about the Honeycutt Road dilemma and how this affects all the projects. He hesitates to consider the dual signalization at Honeycutt Road and Wade Nash Road as a temporary or interim fix, because 2045 sounds like a long time from now. Also, he and the other developers believe that the cost of doing nothing far outweighs the cost of hoping that someone will come along and spend \$10 million dollars to connect these two roads.

Rynal Stephenson talked about the traffic study hot spots and the options that are available. He said one scenario is to have two T-intersections. He doesn't feel that the potential realignment option is something that should never happen. He believes they're just trying to figure out what should be done in the interim, how does that work, and why does that work. One of the reasons that the two T-intersection idea works, is that it allows the side streets to move simultaneously, which doesn't happen if you have one large intersection. Eventually there will need to be some improvements, but it does work well for a period of time.

Lyle Overcash discussed the traffic flow demand, stating that the demand lies in the north/south traffic flow. Approximately 75% of the traffic goes north, and 25% goes east west. He showed TIA's of the area at 2026, 2045, and 2050 for both AM and PM drive times.

Chris Hills asked for clarification on what the developments would do to the east west flow volume.

Mr. Overcash discussed that it's not always the best solution to connect intersections and stated that there really isn't a safety problem at Wade Nash Road, but there were more at Honeycutt Road. The bigger issue is the amount of traffic flow itself on Piney Grove Wilbon.

Rynal Stephenson compared the RCI or superstreets on Hwy 55 and how this is sort of the same concept. After the analysis, they concluded that fundamentally, a roundabout wouldn't work for this area.

Randy Harrington asked Mr. Stephenson if what he was comparing this to is what happens as you enter Apex off of North Williams Street. Mr. Stephenson stated the main thing he wanted to point out is that that in widening the frontage, it would accomplish the goals of the Town.

Jason Barron said that in other zoning cases, there's always some sort of a trade-off. You come to the table trying to demonstrate that you're trying to make something else better, even if you're not checking every box. In this situation, in his opinion, for this particular traffic discussion, there is no trade off in going with the dual signalization. They're proposing a solution that achieves the Town's goals and their goals at the same time.

Chris Hills asked for any questions or comments.

Mark Frederick stated that the Wade Nash situation is a little more removed from the main issues that are being discussed today.

Chris Hills asked for clarification on the \$10 million investment. Mr. Barron said it doesn't include ROW acquisition or environmental permitting. It's a rough number to show the magnitude associated with this line item. He believes that it will actually be a lot more than that, once you get into the ROW acquisition and environmental permitting.

Randy asked what the estimation is for dual signalization costs. Jason said it would be around \$200,000 on standard DOT wood poles. Mr. Overcash said wood poles would be a better way to allow for future improvements. Mr. Harrington asked if they are considering this to be more of a permanent solution, why not use metal poles? Maybe this would be a discussion at a later time. Jason Barron said he doesn't want to throw good money over bad if the Town doesn't want to use wooden poles. Chris Hills explained that the Town is thinking long term goals. He wants the developers to consider that when they are making proposals to the Planning Board and Town Council.

Aaron Levitt, Utilities and Infrastructure, asked for clarification on the traffic counts – how is going through two signals better than going through one signal? Mr. Stephenson explained the timing of the signals. Mr. Levitt questioned that explanation. Mr. Overcash said there aren't many people turning left off of Wade Nash to go south on Piney Grove Wilbon. Mr. Levitt asked for clarification on comparing this method to a superstreet. Mr. Stephenson said that before Avent Ferry changed, it was a nightmare. He explained how this is a better way, because by stretching it apart, you don't have all the movements at one location. It's not as efficient as an RCI or superstreet, but it's somewhere in between. Mr. Overcash said DOT has a toolbox on how to fix four lane intersections. This is just one possibility.

Catherine Jacobs said if they were to get stopped at both lights, the timing is very comparable. Mr. Overcash said it's like an interchange ramp.

Matt Beard, Parks and Recreation, expressed concerns regarding bicycle/pedestrian safety in this area. Mr. Overcash said that they would provide a pedestrian sidewalk to the school. Mr. Beard expressed concerns with the dual signalizations, connectivity and gaps in safety around the school. We have to think about future developments and the families that will be bringing their kids to school.

Mr. Hills stated that staff works with DOT, but we don't have confirmation that synchronized signalization is approvable at this time. Mr. Overcash said that they didn't propose the signal originally, because they really don't have that much traffic going south from Wade Nash Road.

Mr. Harrington asked about the possibility of synthetic TIF partnership on costs associated with the new development. Would developers be willing to share in the utility costs? Jason Barron said he doesn't want to speak for the developers, but he thinks the upfront costs of having to shoulder that and wait to be reimbursed is a non-starter.

Mr. Stephenson asked if they could avoid the frontage widening work at the start of the project? Can they put that part off and avoid those costs? Mr. Hills said maybe they could run some math to reduce some of those costs. Mr. Levitt explained a situation in Holly Meadow where they did something similar.

Rick Madoni expressed concerns about the traffic studies. We're trying to get people to go east and west, and off the main streets. He also asked if it's better for the Town to be pulling other intersections apart, as they're suggesting with this project, are there other areas where we should be considering this? Mr. Overcash said that they're trying to accommodate the best of both worlds. Mr. Stephenson said that if you have them too far apart, it doesn't work. He feels this area is the best area possible to pull them apart. There aren't a lot of driveways on Piney Grove Wilbon in this area. He explained that this will avoid a great deal of problems in years to come. He went on to say we have a great opportunity to get infrastructure in the area, they're not excluding or doing anything to stop the realignment in the future. He believes this is the best possible solution.

MPT Berry stated he understands they're all trying to find solutions, but there are a lot of people who don't want 850 new homes in this area. Traffic on Piney Grove Wilbon is heavier than it's ever been. He doesn't believe adding traffic lights will help with all the north south traffic. There's probably one project here, by itself on its own merit that could make some sense. But for all three projects, there has to be some kind of meaningful contribution to a long-term solution. The short-term solutions sound good, but 20 years from now, none of us are going to be here, and the Town is on the hook for these improvements, we get no fees in lieu, nothing is put away, and it falls on the taxpayers. He gets the right-of-way and the signalization, and if they came with something like fees in lieu, or something we can hang our hats on, because in 2045 or 2050 there's a possibility, because we have "X" from all three of these parties. Then you've got a whole bunch of other land that's around here, and maybe in the future we collect more fees. Then there's a hope to get that improvement done. But there's got to be some sort of meaningful contribution to make this a starting conversation for me. He continued, "for us to do nothing is worse than to do something"? I don't know about that.

Mr. Harrington said there are three levels of political acceptability. The one at the lowest percentage is the one being proposed, and the Council has taken action on, is the dual signalization. That's a tough pill to swallow. Does the needle change if there is a full acquisition of right-of-way for future road widening? If there are mast arms? Maybe, maybe not. But you've heard from Council that that alone doesn't push them over the line. Then moving up in the political acceptability of chances would be dual signals with CTP right-of-way alignment reserved in some form or fashion. And MPT Berry mentioned fees-in-lieu or something that can solidify the future and minimize the impact on future taxpayers. The third one, which has the highest percentage, if you want to say it that way, is to construct the long-term alignment now. We've talked about the challenges with that, but that's the one that's been in the conversation from the beginning.

Dan Berry continued saying it takes three people from my seat in the business to get anything done. I know I'm going to be biased because I live there, but we've held these discussions in Workshops and Planning Boards, the votes aren't there right now. One of these things that Randy laid out is yes, the dual signalization thing works for 20 years, but what are we going to do in order to make the 2045 /2050 work? Because for me, if we sell out now and say yes, we have to make all of these developments performers work for everybody, and everybody comes in, builds their projects, and then 2045 comes and there's no ability to actually see that vision. We're all joking ourselves here, if we don't actually feel serious about trying to make this happen. So, we need some sort of indication or commitment to that to make it seem like that future improvement is a reality, and that it's not something that's just on paper.

Mr. Barron said that in respect to Symphonia, not only are they showing the greenspace where the future alignment is going, but their proposed development agreement will grant the Town the option to acquire that property for \$1 (the right of way through the section of their property that is impacted by the “realigned realignment”) when and if the Town desires to extend/connect the right-of-way. Mr. Harrington asked if this agreement was time bound, and it was determined that in the development agreement it was 10 years. Mr. Barron said that they have no problem with making sure that they’re not doing anything that prevents the Town from doing what you’re talking about.

Mr. Hills offered an overall analysis of today’s discussion:

- If they are going to continue to explore dual signalization, even as a temporary measure, one concern Town has concerns about is the use of wooden poles.
- The dual signalization might not be much different from a queuing perspective than a single signal.
- The super street concept is one that the Town doesn’t want to see replicated.
- Pedestrian connectivity to the schools is of critical importance, and they need to work with DOT’s position on this.
- Is there a way to accelerate the final proposal? Synthetic tax grant? How can the Town help partner with that? Improvements to right-of-way?
- Density of homes in the area.
- The effects of hourglass shape of road improvements on other corridors.
- More traffic lights are not necessarily a good solution, even if the level of service might seem to indicate that it works.
- To move all of these projects forward, some type of solid contribution developing infrastructure in the corridor is really important.
- Mr. Harrington noted that there are a few options that they might be testing as they move forward. Certainly, the one being proposed now has very limited support from staff and elected officials. The temporary dual signalization, the potential for future right-of-way and fee in lieu for the alternate corridor, or construction of the long-term alignment now, in some way, shape or form were also discussed.

Mr. Hills continued, our goal from here is to work with the applicants on how do we move this forward. Traffic is the number one concern in this community. Certainly, we’ve worked with all of you at various points in the past and you’ve all brought quality development to the community. This is something that we’d like to continue to see, but we have to do it in the way that we address the local issues, which in this case, the number one is traffic.

#### Agenda Item 4: OTHER BUSINESS

None

Mr. Hills asked if there were any other questions, and hearing none, asked for a motion to adjourn.

#### Agenda Item 5: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:34

Motion: Dan Berry  
Second: Randy Harrington

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Kathryn L. White". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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Kathryn L. White  
LUAC Clerk