



MINUTES

The Holly Springs Town Council met in a workshop session on Tuesday, December 12, 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 established as the Mayor and five Councilmembers were present as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present in the room: Mayor Sean Mayefskie, Mayor Pro Tem Dan Berry, Council members Tim Forrest, Danielle Hewetson, Annie Drees, and Chris Deshazor

Council Members Absent: none.

Staff Members Present in the room: Randy Harrington, Town Manager; Daniel Weeks, Assistant Town Manager; Scott Chase, Assistant Town Manager; Linda McKinney, Town Clerk (recording the minutes); John Schifano, Town Attorney; Mathew Mutter, IT; Corey Petersohn, Director, Budget and Strategic Planning; Tina Stroupe, Director, Finance; Cassie Hack, Director, Communications and Marketing; Kendra Parrish, Executive Director of Utilities and Infrastructure; Aaron Levitt, Carrie Kennedy, Utilities and Infrastructure; Paul Liquorie, Chief of Police; Chris Hills, Director Development Services; Catherine Jacobs, Elizabeth Goodson, and Sean Ryan, Development Services; Irena Krstanovic, Director of Economic Development.

1. Overview – Randy Harrington, Town Manager, introduced new IT team member Kameron Womack and gave an overview of the agenda. He outlined a dozen potential topics and asked for input from the Mayor and Council.

2. Council Retreat Prep

a. Potential Agenda Topics

Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said the purpose of this item was to receive guidance on potential topics and policy consideration areas for the annual retreat in February. He outlined a dozen possible topics and asked Council for feedback on their priorities to discuss at the retreat.

Mayor Mayefskie said that the Council would need to narrow the list down, but it would need to be by majority rule, not individual ideas.

MPT Berry said that transportation was the top of his list, because traffic in the town is terrible. He wants to partner with industry to put pressure on state officials and the DOT to speed up transportation improvements. Also he said he wanted to discuss Strategic Plan, Citizen Satisfaction Survey results, Parks & Recreation (which could be tied in to Capital improvements overall) and budget outlook, Downtown Area Plan implementation, (and how to pay for it).

Council member Hewetson said her list was: transportation, citizen survey, economic development, particularly small business strategy, budget outlook and the future of recruitment and retention (including public safety)

Council member Forrest said his list was: transportation, Parks & Recreation, economic development, downtown area plan, and stormwater rate structure. He thinks that the citizen satisfaction survey should be combined with the demographics/disruptive trends. He would also

like to talk about recruitment and retention, but that might be better for a workshop. He thinks the budget outlook should be a specific meeting instead of the retreat.

Council member Drees said her list was: transportation, water/wastewater, Vision Zero initiative; micro transit could be included in the transportation discussion; Parks & Rec, especially senior programming, Economic Development, and the Citizen Satisfaction survey; She said she was interested in the demographics also.

Council member Deshazor said he would like Parks & Recreation first, because of the bond, traffic and transportation second; He would like to combine a couple - Strategic plan, budget, and economic development, and citizen satisfaction survey. He asked if Team Building could be an ice breaker rather than a session, and if the survey and disruptive trends could be combined into one topic. He suggested that the future of recruitment and retention could be discussed at a workshop.

Mayor Mayefskie said he was in agreement with combining topics. He said that transportation and Economic Development could be combined. His other choices were the Citizen Satisfaction Survey, Parks & Recreation, Budget, and Micro transit/senior transit.

Mr. Harrington said he thought he had enough to run with. What he heard was: Citizen Satisfaction Survey; Transportation; Parks & Recreation; Economic Development; the Budget Outlook; and the Downtown Area Plan. He said on the Strategic Plan, they were thinking about a refresh. If the current Strategic Plan still matches Council's expectations and is worded in a way that matches their expectations, then we might not need to pursue that.

b. Strategic Plan Update

Corey Petersohn, Director of Budget Innovation & Strategy, said the purpose of this item was to begin the process of reviewing or updating Council's strategic plan in advance of potential action at the Retreat. He said the Strategic Plan was first adopted in 2019 with annual updates to goals and initiatives, but no changes to the vision or priorities. He said that this is Council's plan and can be adapted to meet Council's vision for the community. He said that five years is a common period for reexamining if the current plan still meets Council's priorities and the community's needs. He outlined some of the many changes that Holly Springs has seen over the last five years, and some of the changes projected for the next five years. He asked Council to reflect on whether the current plan reflects their desired outcomes, and whether working with a facilitator would be beneficial.

Mayor Mayefskie asked for thoughts about the strategic priority areas. Council member Deshazor asked how many of the 50,000 residents have seen these. He said they could be tweaked, but he thinks that we should market them more and get the word out to the public so that the residents understand them. He thinks we're on the right track. It's more about getting the message to the people. Mayor Mayefskie asked Cassie Hack, Director of Communications and Marketing what has been done to send this out to the public other than in the water bill. Ms. Hack outlined all the ways it has been communicated to the public.

Mayor Mayefskie said it sounds like this could be combined with some other topic to be reviewed at the retreat. Randy Harrington, Town Manager, said one observation at the staff level is that it has been very helpful to focus the actions of staff. But is it getting too weighty – the number of goals and initiatives. So if Council wanted to keep the core elements, how could we trim it in a way that makes sense to Council.

Mr. Petersohn outlined possible next steps, including updates at the January workshop and/or retreat, possible engagement with a facilitator, and the expected Citizen Satisfaction Survey results.

3. Development 101

Chris Hills, Director of Development Services, said the purpose of this item was to outline the development process. Sean Ryan, Development Services said that the first laws that

affect planning are the United States Constitution and the North Carolina General Statutes. He said that in states like North Carolina that do not have “home rule” a local government can only act on a matter if a statute authorizes local action. This authority is evolving, as the General Assembly modifies statutes and court cases further refine town authority. He said that every community has a different zoning ordinance, but each must be consistent with state statutes.

Mr. Ryan said that after the Constitution and General Statutes, were Town Ordinances and Policies. These include the Comprehensive Plan (CTP), Unified Development Ordinance (UDO), Development Procedures Manual (DPM), and Engineering Design and Construction Standards (EDCS). From these flow other plans such as the Land Use and Character Plan, and small area plans such as the Northeast Gateway Plan. All of these plans flow from the Strategic Plan which outlines Council’s direction for the Town. From that Comprehensive Plan the UDO, DPM and EDCS are developed. He said that continued alignment of the Comprehensive Plan and policy documents is important.

Mr. Ryan outlined what the UDO is trying to accomplish and what it regulates. He gave an overview of the Development Process from the first inquiry from an applicant to the final Certificate of Occupancy. He explained the types of decisions (legislative, quasi-judicial, administrative, and advisory) and whether Council, Board of Adjustment, Planning Board or staff are responsible for the decision. He reminded Council of the level of influence they have over each type of decision.

Mr. Ryan said that the primary legislative decision Council makes is zoning, and that Conditional Zoning Districts offer the highest level of influence. He explained the benefits to the Town and the developer of the Conditional Zoning District, and explained when it was appropriate to use.

Elizabeth Goodson, Development Services, explained the role of the Development Procedures Manual and what it regulated. She said one of the policies included in the DPM was traffic study policy. She then gave an overview of the typical traffic study process. The outcome of the study is a Transportation Mitigation Agreement (TMA). It is a summary and tool, to bring all the information to one place. She explained the thresholds that triggered different types of studies and sizes of the study area. She outlined the factors in building a traffic study and how that determined the required mitigations or improvements from a developer. She said that a background growth rate of 5% is standard. While Holly Springs’ growth rate is higher, using a higher number would decrease the perceived impact of a project and thus result in fewer improvements coming in with that project.

Ms. Goodson explained the difference between the Comprehensive Transportation Plan vs. Traffic Studies and what each is meant to do. She explained that on-site improvements were identified by a local plan such as the CTP, whereas off-site improvements were identified with a Traffic Study Policy, and both of these are guided by NC General Statutes. She gave examples of each.

Mr. Hills asked what questions Council had at this point. He said we are limited in what we can do by state statute. For conditional zoning districts, the conditions have to come from the developer as a voluntary condition, not be requested by Council. AD asked about sidepaths. CH said that a sidepath would be multimodal and could connect greenway sections. And Sidepaths are 8-10 ft wide as opposed to 5 foot wide sidewalks.

Mr. Hills said that other development topics that had received interest lately included elements that contribute to Character, such as street and block patterns, street trees, parking locations, building placement and private frontages. He identified two primary neighborhood designations in the CTP and discussed the character created by differing parking areas. He said that Conditional Zoning Districts allowed deviation from the base standards if exceptional design

is still provided. He showed examples in the same neighborhood of front loaded driveways vs. rear driveways and the different character produced by each.

MPT Berry asked when we have told a developer that they could put in this condition. He said that development teams complain to him. They tell him that staff does not accept the condition. CH said that what staff has seen is not an exception for context, they ask for entire neighborhoods of front loaded. Sean Ryan said Elliott Farm was an example where staff offered suggestions of options that would maintain that character. He said there have been other projects where staff helped identify where alleys might be more appropriate in certain areas. They walk through those scenarios with the development community. But the latest developments are coming in with alley-loaded townhomes. DB said he's not a fan of the mixed-use neighborhood, and that's what has been put in the southwest part of town. If the southwest is going to become a more urban feel then it flows, but he didn't envision that part of town looking like that. EG said staff has some outreach opportunities and can help educate the development community.

Mr. Hills said that Development Services is proposing roundtable check-ins with the development community twice per year to let them know about things that are going on. There is also a Development Breakfast in January to hear from them to hear what they are liking and disliking about the UDO. He said staff would share updates and seek feedback from Council.

4. Parks and Recreation Bond Overview and Next Steps

LeeAnn Plumer, Director of Parks and Recreation, said this item was to provide a recap of the 2023 Parks Bond projects and the anticipated timeline for project delivery, and to provide a status update on the Middle Creek Greenway project. She said that the bond referendum passed with a 63.4% approval rate, higher than the last parks bond. She outlined the six bond projects: the new park on Cass Holt Road, theater seating for the Cultural Center, dugout replacement and basketball courts at Womble Park, a Program Pavilion at Sugg Farm and Greenway design and construction grant match.

Ms. Plummer updated Council on the progress so far on the new park. She showed the latest schematic and design and explained the Construction Manager at Risk model. She talked about the public art component, which came out as very important to the public in the engagement period. She said that the 2021 Parks, Recreation and Greenways Master Plan recommended that 1% of a project budget to be spent on public art, and the 2022 Cass Holt Road Park Master Plan allotted .5%, which was \$250,000 when the park was anticipated to be \$50 million. The cost of construction has risen, making that amount now less of a percentage, but the budget is holding that number steady. She spoke about the public engagement with the artist to design the public art experience.

Council discussed public feedback and collaboration regarding the public art, other potential venues for public art in the future, and the process of approving the final designs.

Ms. Plummer showed the anticipated timelines for design and construction of the various bond projects. She said that the greenway connections would be started later and the funding would be used for leveraging grants to construct them. Council member Deshazor asked which greenways were being considered as part of the bond. Ms. Plummer said they are looking at regional connections and the connection from Ting under 55 to Bennett Knoll. The full scope will not be known until more research is done of the constructability of specific greenways.

Ms. Plummer reminded Council that the Parks and Recreation Committee had discussed possible names for the park, following the Town Facility and Asset Naming Policy, and shared six names that had risen to the top in their discussion. She said staff was not looking for a decision on the name tonight but wanted to get Council thinking about names. She said that

next steps would be an update at the Retreat, where a name might be chosen, and a development petition presented to Council in March.

CM Drees requested that staff regularly track the spending and build progress of the bond in a way that could be shared with Holly Springs' residents.

Ms. Plummer next gave an update on the Middle Creek Greenway project, which is currently under contract. She said completion was estimated in the summer of 2024. She shared photos of the progress made so far.

5. Holly Springs Citizens Academy

Cassie Hack, Director of Communications and Marketing, said the purpose of this item was to provide an overview of the new Holly Springs Citizens Academy. She outlined the benefits of offering an academy, and the topics that would be covered. The first session would be an overview of Town Government with the Council, Administration, Town Attorney, and Clerk. Future session would include Shaping Holly Springs, Safety, Keeping the Town Running, What's Next for Parks and Recreation, and Money Matters & Tackling Traffic.

Ms. Hack said that applications would open in January of 2024. It will be limited to 25 people, which will be selected at the staff level for geographic and demographic diversity. The sessions will run on Thursdays from February 20th to April 4th from 5:30 – 8:00 with graduation at the April 16th Town Council meeting. She said that Council would be given the link to the application in a briefing so that they can share it.

Open Discussion:

None that required action.

Closed Session: The Council entered into closed session, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss an economic development project and N.C.G.S. 143-318.(a)(3) to consult with the Town Attorney.

Motion by: Forrest

Second by: Hewetson

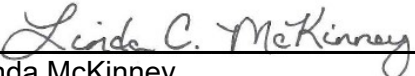
Vote: Unanimous

Motion to leave closed session was made by MPT Berry seconded by Council member Forrest and passed with a unanimous vote.

6. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn was made by MPT Berry seconded by Council member Forrest and passed with a unanimous vote. The December 12, 2023 workshop meeting of the Holly Springs Town Council was adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.


Linda McKinney
Town Clerk

