

Zebulon Board of Commissioners
Minutes
October 2, 2023

Present: Mayor Glenn York, Quentin Miles, Larry Loucks, Jessica Harrison, Shannon Baxter, Beverly Clark, Joe Moore-Town Manager, Lisa Markland-Town Clerk, Chris Ray-Public Works, Jacqui Boykin-Police, Chris Perry-Fire, Sheila Long-Parks & Recreation, Bobby Fitts-Finance, Kaleb Harmon-Communications, Michael Clark-Planning, Adam Culpepper-Planning, Cate Farrell-Planning, Eric Vernon-Town Attorney, Sam Slater-Town Attorney

Mayor York called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by Pack 522.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Loucks to approve the agenda. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

SCHOOL RECOGNITION

Mayor York recognized student Daniel Antonio Velasquez and teacher Ashley Smith both from Zebulon Middle School.

PROCLAMATIONS

The Proclamation for Fire Prevention Week was read by Commissioner Loucks.

The Proclamation for National Community Planning Month was read by Commissioner Clark.

The Proclamation for Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month was read by Commissioner Harrison.

The Proclamation for 2023 Year of the Trail was read by Commissioner Baxter.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Comments from LaTonya McCabe were read about her desire for the Town to have a Christmas Parade.

Lawrence Burgen stated there would be a flag retirement presented by Cub Scouts Pack 522 on November 11, 2023 at 11:00am at Town Hall and encouraged those to come and show support.

Cub Scouts from Pack 522 spoke about the fire extinguisher ratings to promote fire safety.

CONSENT

A. Minutes

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve the minutes of the August 14, 2023 joint public hearing. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2023 regular meeting. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2023 joint public hearing. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. Finance

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve the Wake County tax report for July 2023. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

C. Police

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve Ordinance 2023-16. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

D. Public Works

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve Resolution 2024-05. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Planning

i. 1620 N. Arendell Avenue (Ordinance 2024-17)

Cate Farrell stated this was a conditional rezoning request for a 1.117 acre parcel from Residential Suburban (R2) to Heavy Commercial – Conditional (HC-C) District for the development of a Veterinary Clinic.

The standards under section 2.2.6.K for a conditional rezoning were:

1. Health, safety and welfare
2. Appropriate for location
3. Reasonable in the public interest
4. Concept plan consistent with regulations
5. Other relevant factors

The public hearing notification process was detailed. The aerial map, zoning map, future land use plan, timeline, concept plan and proposed elevations were shown. The applicant proposed the following conditions:

- Reduction in the distance the pet exercise zone could be from a residentially zoned parcel.
- Modification on a type D buffer

Cate Farrell spoke about the separation requirements and explained the applicant asked for a reduction from 200ft to 75ft for the separation of the outdoor pet exercise area and a six feet opaque fence to help with screening. The location of the outdoor area was shown being located on the side of Green Pace Rd and was screened from the main corridor of Arendell Avenue. It was explained the buffer was a modified type D buffer and the applicant was asking for a modification from a 40ft buffer to a 10ft on the southeast boundary and 20ft on the northeast boundary. An opaque fence was proposed along the frontage for additional screening.

The proposed road improvements included adding a second lane along the Arendell Avenue frontage and an addition of a sidewalk and planting strip. No Traffic Impact Analysis (“TIA”) was needed since the proposed use would not meet the threshold of 50 peak trips or 150 daily trips.

The applicant received 60 points under the Town’s Utility Allocation Policy. There were details given about the amenities where points were awarded.

The Planning Board unanimously recommended approval at their September 18, 2023 meeting with a suggested amendment to further reduce the buffer along the southern boundary to be consistent with heavy commercial abutting heavy commercial. The future land use plan shows the vacant church lot along Arendell Avenue as heavy commercial which requires a type A buffer.

Commissioner Loucks had concerns about the daily trips stating with five veterinarians working at the clinic it could be more than 200 trips per day.

Commissioner Baxter wanted more information about the reduction of the buffer. Cate Farrell showed the placement of the trees and shrubs on the map and spoke about the applicant’s intent in reducing density of the buffer and the recommendation of the Planning Board. The intent was to be more consistent with a commercial to commercial zoning of abutting properties.

The applicant’s traffic engineer, Jeff Wheeler, passed out the trip generation study and gave details about the study. It was explained trip generation studies were based upon the practice’s square footage not how many veterinarians would be in the practice and showed the equations used.

Steve Thomas, the President of Vets Pets spoke about the current operations. There were three veterinarians currently employed at Zebulon Animal Hospital and averaged 35 visits per day. Details of the plans for the practice were given.

There was discussion among the Board about wanting a traffic impact analysis to be done.

Commissioner Baxter was concerned with the reduction in the buffer and wanted to keep the type D buffer instead of allowing for the type A. If the type D buffer stayed, then reducing it to 10ft or 20ft would be acceptable.

Cate Farrell stated the Planning Board recommended a type A buffer and spoke about the rationale. Cate explained that the applicant asked for the reduction in the buffer to allow for the required parking and the building.

Commissioner Loucks asked about parking spaces and if the electric vehicle stations would be open all the time. Staff confirmed the EB station would be open 24/7 and gave details about the parking requirements being based on the number of veterinarians at the practice. Cate stated that there were 32 parking spaces on the lot and the requirement was 20.

Commissioner Miles stated residents in the area had concerns about the reduction of the buffer from 40ft to 10ft. Commissioner Baxter stated she was ok with the 10ft buffer as long as it stayed a type D buffer and not a type A.

Jeff Weller stated there were not enough daily trips to require a traffic impact analysis. Even if one were to be done it would show that there would be a minute impact.

Mike Clark explained that the Board had recently amended the UDO to lower the threshold for a TIA and that Zebulon had some of the higher requirements for a TIA. The amendment also based the requirements and how they were to be done on the manual used nationally. Mike also stated that he had no concerns from a planning perspective about the impact on traffic.

Commissioner Harrison asked how long a traffic impact analysis would take. Mr. Weller stated it would take approximately four to six weeks. It was further stated that the veterinary clinic was a low use and there would not be a substantial difference in traffic.

Commissioner Clark made a motion to approve Ordinance 2024-17. The motion died for lack of a second.

There was discussion about tabling the matter to have a traffic impact analysis done and to talk about the buffer more. Cate Farrell stated the residents were only to the north and the buffer the Planning Board made a recommendation on was to the southeast and buffered the church.

There was discussion about requesting the buffer to be changed from a type D to type A. Commissioner Baxter again stated that reducing the buffer was fine as long as it stayed a type D buffer.

Mr. Weller explained how a trip generation study was performed and stated the veterinary practice would not make a significant difference in trips.

Commissioner Loucks stated he was concerned about traffic but wanted to follow the guidelines of the UDO and the manual.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Clark to approve Ordinance 2024-17 removing the Planning Board's recommendation of changing the buffer along the southeast boundary.

Commissioner Miles asked what changed Commissioner Harrison's mind. Commissioner Harrison stated hearing the logic, reasoning and the Town of Zebulon UDO helped her make her decision. The decision has to be based on facts and information from the subject matter experts.

Commissioner Loucks stated Arendell was being widened and the traffic light would also help relieve traffic at the intersection. The traffic should flow smoothly in and out of the location.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed 4 to 1 with Commissioner Harrison, Clark, Baxter, and Loucks voting in favor and Commissioner Miles voting in opposition.

Mayor York stated there would be a 10-minute break.

The meeting reconvened at 7:38pm.

B. Administration

a. Strategic Plan Grant Policy (Resolution 2024-06)

Joe Moore presented the Strategic Plan Grant policy.

Commissioner Baxter asked for clarity on a sentence in the policy that stated grants were for operating costs and another that read the Town would not fund purchase, maintenance, or repair of capital assets in excess of \$5,000. Joe Moore stated this the policy was from 2007 and the intention was the funds would not go to major purchases to repair capital assets. An example was given.

There was discussion about grants for operating costs vs. capital expenses.

Commissioner Baxter suggested making the language clearer in the policy.

Commissioner Harrison stated she was ok with a non-profit using the funds toward capital expenses if they were providing a service to our community.

There was further discussion about the policy and how funds should be used.

Commissioner Harrison made a motion, second by Commissioner Loucks to approve Resolution 2024-06.

Commissioner Baxter asked to clean up the verbiage to make it clearer. Commissioner Loucks stated the applicant should make the point to them about how the funds were to be spent.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Finance

i. American Rescue Plan Required Policies (Resolution 2024-07)

Bobby Fitts presented the policies regarding use of the American Rescue Plan funds that the Town received.

Commissioner Loucks made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to approve Resolution 2024-07. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

ii. American Rescue Plan Funds – Grant Project (Ordinance 2024-14 and Ordinance 2024-15)

Bobby Fitts presented the amendment to the ordinance which established a special grant project fund for the American Rescue Plan funds that the Town received.

Commissioner Baxter made a motion, second by Commissioner Loucks to approve Ordinance 2024-14 and Ordinance 2024-15. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

BOARD COMMENTS

Commissioner Clark stated Rock the Block was scheduled for October 13.

Commissioner Miles thanked Pack 522 for leading the Pledge of Allegiance, thanked Public Works for their Government 101 class, and was looking forward to the Government 101 class at the Fire Department.

Commissioner Baxter spoke about the Building Homes for Heros event, the Faith and Blue event was scheduled for October 6 and expressed concerns over the environmental impacts from the Braven facility.

Commissioner Loucks spoke about the federal debt and how it will trickle down locally.

Commissioner Harrison thanked everyone who gave to the coat drive, reminded everyone about the Faith and Blue event, and read a statement about the Christmas parade.

Mayor York stated former Mayor Ralph Lewis passed away and gave condolences to his family.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Joe Moore stated Lisa Markland was attending the OMPO conference and would provide a Human Resources update at the October 19, 2023 work session.

Michael Clark gave a monthly development update.

Joe Moore spoke about the monthly financial report addendum.

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Commissioner Miles made a motion, second by Commissioner Harrison to adjourn. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Adopted this the 4th day of December 2023.




Glenn L. York—Mayor


Lisa M. Markland, CMC—Town Clerk