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MINUTES OF A PUBLIC FORUM HELD BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL
OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL, MUNICIPAL BUILDING,
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1985, 7:30 P.M.

Mayor Joseph L. Nassif called the meeting to order. Council Members present were:

David Godschalk
Jonathan Howes
Beverly Kawalec
Nancy Preston
R. D. Smith
Bill Thorpe

Council Members Marilyn Myers Boulton and David Pasquini were absent, excused. Also present were Town Manager David R. Taylor, Assistant Town Managers Sonna Loewenthal and Ron Secrist, and Town Attorney Ralph Karpinos.

Public Forum on Capital Improvement Program

Manager Taylor gave a brief presentation on the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and the purpose of the forum. He said the CIP was a way to identify capital needs, set priorities, and identify potential funding sources. He said that capital needs fell into two categories, small short term projects which could be paid for as they occurred and for which the Town was setting aside approximately \$500,000 per year and long term, large items which the staff felt needed bond financing. He said four of these projects had been suggested recently, a southern park, southern fire station, library expansion, and meeting room/office space. Manager Taylor said that the purpose of this forum was to hear public sentiment on the short and long term capital needs.

Ms. Lisa Price, speaking as a resident of the North Forest Hills neighborhood, spoke in support of a bikeway between North Forest Hills and Estes Drive. She introduced a petition in which the reasons for having a bikeway were included. (For copy of petition see Clerk's Files.)

Ms. Katherine Emerson, speaking as a resident, spoke in support of further greenways, entranceways, and open space acquisition. She expressed concern that the current CIP proposal only included \$150,000 presumably for the acquisition of a park in the North Forest Hills area and only \$50,000 for greenways acquisition next year. She had been under the assumption that Council had agreed to set aside approximately 25% of the annual \$500,000 Capital Budget for greenways, entranceways, open space acquisition.

Mr. Grainger Barrett, speaking as a citizen, asked Council to have the staff investigate the possibility of having a referendum to see if the citizens were interested in a bond referendum to finance further implementation of the Thoroughfare Plan. He suggested 3 or 4 laning of Weaver Dairy Road, Erwin Road from Sage Road to 15-501, and funds to match the State so that they would come in and work on the 15-501 Bypass.

Mr. Henry Whitfield, speaking as a citizen, spoke in favor of further greenway acquisition of lowlands. He also suggested that the University of North Carolina should move their maintenance facility from the north side of town to the south side, closer to their central location in the town. He said if the University were to do that then the Town might negotiate with the University for the present University maintenance site in order to move the entire Municipal operations to that site. He indicated that if this were to happen the Library could use the present Municipal Building as a central library.

Manager Taylor asked that a petition from the Downtown Chapel Hill Association which had arrived that day be entered into the record. He said the Association was requesting additional street lights. (For a copy of the petition see Clerk's Files.)

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Mayor Nassif expressed concern that a study on the street lighting system in the Town had not been completed. He said he had asked for additional lights along Airport Road several years ago and that he had not had any response. Manager Taylor replied that a staff study had been done but that he had not approved the report and had asked that it be redone. He indicated that there were problems associated with adding more lights. He said these included having to use overhead wiring, what type of lights to use, what kind of lights (for comparison purposes) would be used in Rosemary Square, etc.

Mayor Nassif said that the first priority should be citizen safety and if more lights were needed then the Town should provide them.

Council Member Thorpe said he felt there needed to be a sidewalk along Willow Drive from 15-501 to the bridge.

Mayor Nassif said there needed to be a better sidewalk along Columbia Street near Cameron Avenue.

Council Member Godschalk asked if the traffic signal system could be upgraded. He said a coordinated, integrated system would probably help ease traffic congestion.

Mayor Nassif suggested Town vehicles use existing two-way radios to notify the Police and Engineering Departments when construction or utility crews were working and blocking streets and traffic at improper times or without proper signage and traffic control.

Council Member Kawalec asked that sidewalks be placed along 15-501 between Eastgate and University Mall, as well as on Elliott Road from the Harris Teeter to 15-501. She asked if there was a study on the traffic signal system already in motion and if so would it result in a change in the timing of certain signal lights. Manager Taylor replied that there was a study underway and that it would probably result in the change of some of the timings of some of the signal lights but would also show the need to replace the signal system with a more up-to-date, possibly computerized system.

Council Member Howes asked that the staff investigate the possibility of resurfacing, not patching, Hillsborough Street. He said in its present state it was dangerous to cyclists.

Mayor Nassif asked the staff to ask NCDOT to look into the possibility of a traffic signal at the intersection of Church Street and Franklin Street. He said that with the new parking lot (Lot #5) it would further increase the need for a traffic signal at that intersection.

Council Member Kawalec said that if a traffic signal was placed at that intersection it should include a pedestrian cycle, due to high volumes of pedestrians in the area.

Council Member Preston asked what was the standard for placing street lights in residential neighborhoods. Manager Taylor replied that generally it was one street light per block at intersections, but if a block were over 400-500 feet long then another light could be placed in that block.

Council Member Preston asked on the status of the Library Bookmobile. Manager Taylor said that the Bookmobile had had some repairs and was still being used. He said the question of its future use was still under consideration partly due to the question of whether or not there would be a new main or branch Library facility.

Council Member Preston requested that the staff look into further acquisition of greenways. She suggested the Town investigate the possibility of a tax on real estate transfers (similar to a program in Vail, Colorado) as a means of generating funds for such acquisition. Manager Taylor replied that, at present, North Carolina law did not provide cities with that authority. Council Member Preston said that the Council might be interested in proposing the introduction of a Local Bill into the Legislature.

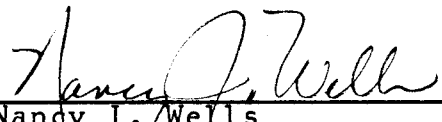
Council Member Preston concluded by saying that there needed to be continuing storm water management.

Council Member Smith asked that the staff study a way to display maps, etc. in the Council Meeting room so that the Council and public could better see and understand. He also asked the staff to look into a facility to shelter the Landfill equipment. He concluded by asking that the traffic signals be synchronized.

A MOTION WAS DULY MADE AND SECONDED TO ADJOURN. THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, (7-0).

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Mayor Joseph L. Nassif


Nancy J. Wells
Town Clerk

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