

**TOWN OF WEDDINGTON
SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL AND PLANNING BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2012 - 6:00 P.M.
MINUTES**

The Town Council and Planning Board of the Town of Weddington, North Carolina, met in a Joint Session at the Weddington Town Hall, 1924 Weddington Road, Weddington, NC 28104 on August 9, 2012, with Mayor Walker F. Davidson presiding.

Present: Mayor Walker F. Davidson, Mayor Pro Tem Daniel Barry, Councilmembers Werner Thomisser, Pamela Hadley and Barbara Harrison, Planning Board Members Rob Dow (Arrived at 6:06 p.m.), Janice Propst, Jennifer Romaine and Jim Vivian (Left at 7:10 p.m.), Town Planner Jordan Cook and Town Administrator Amy S. McCollum

Absent: Chairman Dorine Sharp, John Giattino and Jeff Perryman

Visitors: Hughie Sexton, Ed Howie, Ann Guerin, Brad Guerin, Chris Rea, John Houston, Randall and Jane Groves, Joe and Mary Revels, Robert Wadsworth, Sam Lowe and Bob Rapp

Item No. 1. Open the Meeting. Mayor Walker F. Davidson called the Special Town Council Meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. There was a quorum of the Town Council present.

Item No. 2. Kickoff the Development of the 2013 Weddington Land Use Plan. Mayor Davidson advised that the current Land Use Plan was developed in 2002 and is due to expire this year. He stated, “We have two members of the Council from 2002, Ed Howie and Hughie Sexton, that helped develop the 2002 Land Use Plan. I asked them to come to this kick-off meeting to go through this process with us.”

Vice-Chairman Rob Dow arrived at 6:06 p.m.; therefore, there was now a quorum of the Planning Board. Vice-Chairman Dow opened the August 9, 2012 Special Planning Board Meeting.

Mayor Davidson went through the following scope and asked members to note anything that was missing from the outline:

Scope of the 2013 Land Use Plan

Infrastructure

- Water (County/Wells), Water pressure
- Sewer (County/Septic), Access to lines, Access to capacity, Perk
- Floodplain/Storm water/FEMA
- Transportation (NCDOT, MUMPO, County, Local – Powell Funds, LARTP)
 - Within town, through town, access, congestion

Government Services

- Schools (County) Capacity
- Sheriff (County, Town)
- Fire Suppression (Town)
- EMS (County)
- Library (County)
- Public Parks and Recreation (County)
- Economic Development

Private Services

- Houses (One Acre, RCD, Retirement)
- Electricity
- Natural Gas
- Telecommunications
- Trash Pickup
- Grocery
- Gasoline
- Medical
- Pharmacy
- Pets
- Office Space
- Restaurants
- Places of Worship
- Parks and Recreation (WCWAA and WSRC)

Data Collection

- Infrastructure (Current maps, Future plans)
- Inventory of current projects
- Wish list for undeveloped parcels
- Build out scenarios and Demographics
- Opinions of citizens (education, meetings, surveys)
 - What needs are missing? Entity responsible
 - What wants are missing? Entity responsible
 - What are the threats to Weddington?

Implementation (Written 2013 Land Use Plan)

- Prioritize issues
- Create goals/policies
- List of land uses/zoning
- Apply land uses to map
- Create text to support map

Timeline (tentative)

- Thursday, August 9th – Joint meeting (discussion)
- Monday, August 13th – Town Council meeting (discussion and consideration)
- Thursday, September 6th – Joint meeting (discussion)
- Monday, September 10th - Town Council meeting (discussion and consideration)
- Thursday, October 4th – Joint meeting (discussion)
- Monday, October 8th - Town Council meeting (discussion and consideration)
- Monday, November 5th*– Joint meeting (discussion)
- Monday, November 12th - Town Council meeting (discussion and consideration)
- Thursday, December 6th – Joint meeting (discussion)
- Monday, December 10th - Town Council meeting (discussion and consideration)

Mayor Pro Tem Daniel Barry – If the outcome of this process is that we want to implement some strategy are we going to more aggressively pursue that? The Land Use Plan has been a passive document.

Mayor Davidson - One of the things that has been brought up is being more specific. We can address things that are currently being asked about and somewhat anticipate for the next five years.

Councilwoman Barbara Harrison discussed that in 2005 smart growth planning started and advised that she has not had an opportunity to research but felt it was a topic the Town should pursue.

Councilmember Werner Thomisser expressed concern that according to the timeline, it appeared that the Council was going to vote on items before hearing from the citizens from the survey.

Former Mayor Ed Howie and Councilmember Hughie Sexton talked about the process used for the last Land Use Plan. Mr. Howie stated, "You are working at a disadvantage. Most of the years that I served there was good press coverage. It is tough for the citizens of Weddington to know what is going on in the Town. You have a harder task than we did of getting the information out and asking for input from the citizens. The environment and economy was different in 2002. Land prices were high. Union County was the fastest growing county in the country. The councilmembers that I served with supported the vision of the founders of our Town which was a sanctuary from high density development and from large commercial complexes. I would encourage you to listen to those who you serve."

Councilmembers added the following items to the outline: ETJ, Annexation, Density, Legal, Dry Hydrants and Storm Drains.

Vice-Chairman Dow – In this Land Use Plan, hopefully it will be more specific. I would like some kind of format or procedure if the Council is going to go outside of the Land Use Plan, how do you do that? If done correctly, this Land Use Plan gives the Town a whole lot more strength.

Mayor Davidson - We can invest a lot of time and resources but this Land Use Plan can be changed by three councilmembers at any time. The only suggestion that I can make is to put as much effort into it and an equal amount of effort to have people on the Council that will adhere to it.

Mr. Jim Vivian asked that some type of consideration or discussion occur regarding multi-family housing. He also felt that the Council should be aware of actions taken by surrounding areas and questioned when the off ramp at Weddington-Matthews Road is opened how that is going to impact Weddington.

Town Planner Jordan Cook gave the group an inventory of current projects in the Town and advised that there are 600 to 700 approved but un-built houses either in the sketch, preliminary or final plat stages. Town Planner Cook reported that the Town is probably 50% developed at this time.

The group had a lengthy discussion about whether to invite individuals owning undeveloped parcels in the Town to share if they have plans for their property over the next five years. The following items were discussed relative to this subject:

- Members did not want to send the message that Weddington is open for business.
- The Council is just listening to ideas with no obligation. Now is the time for these large landowners to be heard.
- What is the goal by bringing landowners to the table with their plans?
- How do we stop people who are going to hear what the developer is proposing and assume that the Town is automatically going to approve it?
- We have an obligation to get in front of as many people as possible because of the lack of participation and media coverage in Weddington.
- The more input you get the stronger the plan.
- The process has to be transparent.
- By right a landowner can develop their property as residential.

- The survey is to figure out what the Town’s goals are and then shape around that.
- Is a fully developed Town with one acre lots what the Town wants?
- Need to define what is commercial.
- Need to determine where the Town wants commercial and how much.
- Former Mayor Howie’s effort with R-CD development was to try to maintain the property value for the owner, keep the same density and create larger areas of open space.
- Town survey is going to everyone that owns land in the Town.
- If the landowners are interested, they will be involved in the process.
- The message to the large landowners is you are a member of the community and we value your input and would like you to be involved in this process.
- Even smaller parcels can be combined with other parcels to make a larger development.

Mr. Vivian left at 7:19 p.m.

The group talked about the survey and felt there was no way to make a survey unbiased. Town Planner Cook sent the previous three surveys to COG with the Council’s comments. Mr. Cook will request COG have a draft survey ready by September 6 and attend the meeting that night to discuss.

Item No. 3. Adjournment. Mayor Pro Tem Barry moved to adjourn the August 9, 2012 Special Town Council and Planning Board Meeting. All were in favor, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Councilmembers Thomisser, Hadley, Harrison and Mayor Pro Tem Barry
 NAYS: None

Ms. Jennifer Romaine moved to adjourn the August 9, 2012 Special Town Council and Planning Board Meeting. Ms. Janice Propst seconded the motion, with votes recorded as follows:

AYES: Propst, Vivian, Romaine and Vice-Chairman Dow
 NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Walker F. Davidson, Mayor

Rob Dow, Vice-Chairman

Attest:

Amy S. McCollum, Town Clerk