

City of High Point

Municipal Office Building
211 S. Hamilton Street
High Point, NC 27260

Meeting Minutes - Action Only Manager's Briefing

*Jay W. Wagner, Mayor
Christopher Williams, Mayor Pro Tem
Jason P. Ewing, Jeffrey J. Golden,
S. Wesley Hudson, Victor A. Jones,
Britt W. Moore, Monica L. Peters,
Donald A. Scarborough*

Monday, August 20, 2018

4:00 PM

3rd Floor Lobby Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

Mayor Wagner; Mayor Pro Tem Chris Williams (Ward 2); Council Member Britt Moore (at large); Council Member Don Scarborough (at large); Council Member Jeffrey Golden (Ward 1); Council Member Monica Peters (Ward 3); Council Member Wesley Hudson (Ward 4) Council Member Victor Jones (Ward 5) and Council Member Jason Ewing (Ward 6)

Staff Present:

Greg Demko, City Manager; Randy Hemann, Assistant City Manager; Eric Olmedo, Budget and Administrative Director; Jeron Hollis, Director of Communications and Public Engagement; Loren Hill, Economic Development Director; Lee Burnette, Planning and Development Director; Heidi Galanti, Planning Administrator; Andy Piper, Senior Planner; Angela Kirkwood, Human Resources, Director; JoAnne Carlyle, City Attorney; Lisa Vierling, City Clerk; and Sandra Keeney, Deputy City Clerk

Others Present:

Judy Stalder, TREBIC

News Media Present:

Pat Kimbrough, High Point Enterprise

Mayor Wagner called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and turned the floor over to Greg Demko, City Manager. Mr. Demko introduced Heidi Galanti, Planning Administrator.

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Presentation on Comprehensive Plan

The Planning Department will present a Planning Process Assessment for a Comprehensive Plan.

Attachments: [Planning Process Assessment](#)

Ms. Galanti stated it is truly an exciting time to be in High Point. She said other communities are talking about High Point in a positive way. However, to keep the momentum going the City of High Point needs to keep planning ahead in a focused and coordinated manner. In the Mayors' recent State of the City Address he mentioned that the current downtown revitalization started in the Core City Plan back in 2005. Along with that plan, the City adopted a Community Vision Mission Statement, these two policy documents have been in the City's plan for 13 years. In a brief time period there have been a lot of accomplishments that were listed in the plans. Below is a list of those accomplishments:

- Adopted two downtown zoning districts; one for showrooms and one for the downtown mixed-use district*
- Created a new development ordinance with different development standards for the Core City verses the Suburbs*
- Prepared a small Area Plan for the Washington Street Area*
- Comprehensive Zoning Map provisions which will come to Council for approval in September*
- Developing Greenways in and outside of the Core City*
- One way pairs with English and MLK*
- Extending bus services that will hopefully be in place this fall*
- Established a Core City entity which is now called Forward High Point*
- Study the feasibility of an arena, convention center, hotel complex which has become today's catalyst baseball stadium project.*

Ms. Galanti stated for the City to continue to grow and to move forward the City needs a Comprehensive Plan. She gave different examples of zoning documents from the past, as well as shared a list of planning documents which dated back to 1928.

She explained the current Land Use Plan adopted in 2000 is out of date with goals and objectives that are very generic and lacks an implementation strategy. She stated a Comprehensive Plan is important to ensure management of substantial assets, investments, and to provide helpful guidance for decision making. She explained how the comprehensive plan

differs from other plans noting a Land Use Plan focuses on use of land and not enough on infrastructure and capital planning; Long-Range Transportation Plans focus on roadways and other modes of transportation and the 2017 Strategic Plan has a shorter time range and is focused on specific task. She listed some of the benefits of having a comprehensive plan:

- Better coordination of the planning, timing, and installation of infrastructure, facilities and services to serve areas where future growth is most likely to occur;*
- Ensuring that all elements of the built environment work together to create a high quality of life while recognizing the value of protecting natural resources;*
- Improving economic development opportunities to maintain a resilient local economy;*
- Streamlining decision making by clarifying the City's policies;*
- Saving money over the long term through greater efficiency.*

Elected and appointed officials, City administration and staff, residents, businesses and developers as well as anyone with an interest in the future of High Point will use the plan. She stated staff has identified eight main tasks in creating a comprehensive plan and it starts with Community inventory and assessment analysis of existing conditions to inform the planning process. We need to understand where we've been and where we are, so that we can best direct on how we get where we want to go. Staff will be reviewing demographic and household trends, employment trends, and existing and proposed facilities. Staff will also be conducting policy audits to determine which ones to keep, update, merge or redirect to other documents. She said the next steps would be public education series, updating the Community Growth Vision Statement, scenario planning, drafting and adopting a plan, implement an action plan, and public engagement.

She stated the process will take about 3 years with a potential start in the spring of 2019 and a potential completion date of December 2022. The approximate cost will be \$250,000 - \$300,000. She explained staff has reviewed several other cities plans such as Raleigh, Greensboro and Winston-Salem noting that Oklahoma City has a web base for planning.

Council Member Ewing asked if there is grant money that the City could utilize for this project. Ms. Galanti stated none that she was aware of; federal grants are great but they would extend the process.

Council Member Peters asked if the three-year time frame is typical. Ms. Galanti stated yes, especially with the community inventory and assessment which is the first step, that will take almost a year. There is a lot of data from different departments which would need to be compiled and there is some data that we do not have such as an existing data base of the

City's land use.

Council Member Moore asked where this idea stemmed from. Ms. Galanti responded it was primarily stemmed out of Planning and was presented to the City Managers last month.

Mayor Wagner asked having gone through the Core City Plan process is this going to be the same process. Ms. Galanti stated it would be determined partly by the consultant and by staff, but it would be a similar process. Mayor Wagner inquired about the budget for this plan. Eric Olmedo, Budget Director, stated the cost would be spread out over the three years and would depend on different components.

Council Member Peters asked if the Community Inventory could be performed before spring of 2019. Ms. Galanti answered with the current work load of the Planning Department spring of 2019 would be the earliest.

Council Member Jones asked where the bulk of the money would go. Ms. Galanti answered on those issues that would require a Consultant which are the policy audit, scenario plan, drafting the plan, community engagement and public education etc.

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Discussion on Planning/Zoning Board Procedures

The Planning Department will continue discussions regarding Planning/Zoning Board Procedure changes.

Lee Burnette, Planning and Development Director, gave an overview of the discussion conducted at the last Manager's Briefing regarding the role of the Planning and Zoning Commission and Quasi-Judicial hearings. He stated he provided the requested School of Government information as well as the information as it relates to what the City sends to the applicant when a neighborhood meeting is held, as well as updated information regarding Special Uses. He stated legally there needs to be a change. The City has to change the role of the Planning and Zoning Commission in the Special Use process or remove them from the process.

Mr. Demko asked Mr. Burnette to list some pros and cons of each. Mr. Burnette stated if the Planning and Zoning Commission is removed from the process, it would be more streamline. The case would go straight to City Council and there would be one public hearing process. If the Planning and Zoning Commission is part of the process the Commission can make recommendations to the citizens and applicants and focus on the standards of the Special Use Permit process. It would also give the opportunity for the Commission to help educate the citizens of the process before it goes before City Council.

Council Member Hudson asked if the Planning and Zoning Commission would be Quasi-Judicial? Mr. Burnette stated no it would not and there would be no decision made. Mr. Burnette stated staff is reviewing some of the Special Use requirements.

Council Member Jones asked if some of the benefits of removing the Planning and Zoning Commission from the process would be to streamline the process and free staff to give instruction on what the process is to the citizens. Mr. Burnette stated staff will have the same role. Staff receives calls after notices are sent, and that time Staff answers and directs questions and concerns accordingly.

Mayor Pro Tem Williams asked even though it would not be a Quasi-Judicial hearing at the Planning and Zoning Commission level, if they would give advice, would that expose the Commission to legal concerns, especially if the City Council decides differently than Planning and Zoning. JoAnne Carlyle stated she has consulted with Fred Baggett former City Attorney, and they agreed that if there is some direction given or advice given at the Planning and Zoning Commission level it could pose some legal concerns.

Council Member Moore asked how Council could help the citizens be better informed of the procedures. Mr. Burnette stated to refer them to staff. Council Member Moore asked how many correspondences did staff and/or the Planning and Zoning

Commission receive regarding the last Quasi-Judicial hearing. Mr. Burnette stated the applicant holds a neighborhood meeting before it gets to the Planning and Zoning Commission. After that, the applicant sends letters to the citizens that live within 300 feet of the site, notifying them of the hearing before the Planning and Zoning Commission then the process is repeated for the public hearing before City Council. He stated at each step there is correspondences to the public in which staff tries to answer questions, address concerns and inform the citizens of the process.

Mayor Pro Tem Williams requested that a document be given to the public explaining in laymen terms the policy and procedures for the Quasi-Judicial process. Council Member Ewing suggested having that document beside the sign in sheets before the City Council meeting. Mr. Burnette stated he updated the document that is being sent to citizens and it does reference the process. One of the goals of staff is to write a document regarding the Quasi-Judicial proceedings to help give guidance to other Commissions. He reminded Council that staff is reviewing the Special Use process to try to streamline the requirements of a Special Use permit.

Council Member Peters asked how the Planning and Zoning Commission felt about the changes. Mr. Burnette stated they would be acceptable to whatever decision the Council decides.

Mayor Wagner stated that he believes the Planning and Zoning Commission should be removed from the Quasi-Judicial process as they cannot make recommendations, it adds a month to the process and is costly for the applicants as well as the citizens to hire an attorney to attend both Public Hearings. He cautions everyone including staff that information can and should be provided however, giving legal advice is not permitted.

Council Member Moore moved to direct staff to move forward with a text amendment to be brought to City Council removing the Planning and Zoning Commission from the Special Use (Quasi-Judicial) proceedings. Council Member Peters seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously with a 9-0 vote.

Greg Demko, City Manager mentioned there was another homicide in the city making this the 14th. He reminded Council of the High Point Violent Crimes Task Force Notification (Call In) that would be held Tuesday evening from 5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Wagner requests quicker and direct notifications be given to himself and City Council regarding newsworthy events. Council Member Ewing requests the Mayor and City Council receive a copy of all media releases.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:59 p.m. upon motion duly made and seconded.

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ADJOURNMENT