

SANFORD CITY COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
Tuesday, January 9, 2018
SANFORD, NORTH CAROLINA

The City Council held a work session on Tuesday, January 9, 2018, at 6:00 p.m. in the West End Conference Room at the Sanford Municipal Center, 225 E. Weatherspoon Street, Sanford, North Carolina. The following people were present:

Mayor T. Chet Mann
Council Member Sam Gaskins
Council Member Charles Taylor
Council Member James Williams
City Attorney Susan Patterson
Deputy City Clerk Vicki Cannady

Council Member Byron Buckels
Council Member Jimmy Haire
Council Member Norman Charles Post, III
City Manager Hal Hegwer
City Clerk Bonnie Davis

Absent:

Mayor Pro Tem Rebecca Wyhof Salmon

Mayor Mann called the meeting to order. He announced that Mayor Pro Tem Wyhof (now Rebecca Wyhof Salmon) was away after her recent marriage.

Consider Report from Clark Patterson Lee Regarding W.B. Wicker School Traffic Impact Analysis (Exhibit A-1)

City Engineer Paul Weeks reminded Council that staff had consulted with an engineering firm, Clark Patterson Lee, to analyze how the Wicker Street greenway and sidepath projects will affect the County's upcoming W.B. Wicker School project and how the school will impact the roadway network. Lorenzo Ritalli, a traffic engineer with the firm, explained that a traffic count was conducted on November 30 (for the W.B. Wicker School traffic impact analysis and for Carthage/Wicker Street corridor analysis) incorporating all the intersections along Wicker and Carthage Streets. Using industry-standard software, they considered background growth, capacity analysis, signal timing, signal volumes, and roadway configurations to analyze the system and grade it to create a benchmark level of service for measurement. Information was sent to a clearinghouse agency for statistical analysis to estimate the number of new trips that will be made to the school based on the number of students. This was layered with other information to indicate which intersections should be analyzed further and what type of mitigation, if any, is required.

Mr. Ritalli commented that schools have a morning and an afternoon peak and confirmed that the evening rush hour period (4:00 p.m. through 6:00 p.m.) would include some spillover school traffic; however, the critical peak is the morning when 14 buses and an estimated 220 vehicles will be coming to and going from the school. They assessed entry and exit routes for these vehicles to determine the path of least resistance and considered two options: (1) maintain the existing roadway with existing controls (traffic lights, stop signs); or (2) make Pershing Street one-way, for entry to the school only. They concluded that the first option worked better since making Pershing one-way would push all traffic to the Vance/Saunders intersection. In order to prevent vehicles from backing up into the school driveway and to avoid overwhelming the Vance/Saunders intersection, they recommended converting it to a four-way stop. He acknowledged that this may require vehicles to stop as long as 20

seconds, but it would make that intersection much safer. They also recommend a three-way stop at Pershing Street and the new school drive.

Sideroad volumes at Vance and Gulf Streets on Wicker Street are very light and even with the new school, the study indicated that capacity is adequate to handle new traffic. They recommend leaving the traffic signal at Vance Street for safety, since buses will be navigating the turn and there may be young children walking to school; however, traffic on Gulf Street is light enough that we could consider removing the traffic signal. The only intersection with a slight issue was Washington Avenue and Horner Boulevard, where turning left onto Horner Boulevard or going straight across was a problem but Mr. Ritalli noted that the volume of traffic is not very high in this area. Washington Avenue flares out near Horner Boulevard, offering additional area for vehicles turning right onto Horner. Traffic volume is currently very low from Pershing to Wicker Street and according to Mr. Ritalli, even with the additional school traffic existing Pershing onto Wicker Street, the traffic lights at the Wicker/Carthage and Wicker/Vance intersections create gaps that make it very easy to find openings between vehicles. There may currently be a 10-second delay to get out and even in the future, he didn't anticipate it being more than about 20 seconds. Mr. Scales added that he was somewhat surprised by initial reports on the Pershing/Wicker intersection but the analysis indicated an adequate level of service. Council Member Buckels expressed concern about the increase in traffic and safety at the Washington/Horner intersection and the nearby Stewart Manor Apartments and Mr. Ritalli agreed that if it becomes an issue, we could consider striping Washington Avenue and making it two-lanes to increase vehicle storage capacity and pull right-turning vehicles out of the flow. Council Member Taylor suggested making Dudley Street one-way only, to limit the flow of traffic near Stewart Manor.

Regarding options for the intersection of Wicker and Carthage Streets, Mr. Ritalli explained that options include traffic signals, stop signs or roundabouts. The study includes a recommendation list but if there are factors or themes other than traffic to consider, options could be mixed and matched, which is a luxury since their typical recommendation to build more roadways. He confirmed that their staff met earlier with Board of Education staff and they appeared pleased with study results. Mr. Ritalli noted that the site plan was well-designed with a simple loop of the school and we are fortunate to have roadway capacity and a good street system.

Consider Report from Clark Patterson Lee Regarding Carthage Street/Wicker Street Corridor (Exhibit A-2)

City Engineer Paul Weeks explained that the second part of the Clark Patterson Lee traffic analysis addresses the Wicker/Carthage Street corridor (Exhibit A-2) in connection with plans for the roadway diet and Carthage Street, which will also involve DOT. Using traffic counts and turning movements taken on November 30, Mr. Ritalli explained that the overall network operates well, even during the busiest hours; however, there were issues with three locations:

- Carthage/Wicker: The study indicated that the proposed roundabout worked here, just as the DOT indicated in their preliminary concept plan for this intersection, with only one difference: they recommend a splitter island to channelize vehicles making right-hand turns so that they do not even enter the roundabout.
- Carthage/Carbonton: This intersection, which is already fairly busy, especially during the morning rush when left turns are particularly difficult, currently has no traffic signal. If volume increases over the next 20 years, the current system will not serve this intersection, so their recommendation is to consider a single-lane roundabout; however, growth is difficult to predict, so other options may be considered: monitoring this intersection to determine when, and if, changes are needed; including it with other DOT

plans for the area; or considering a four-way stop (which may not be popular for those travelling on Carthage).

- Carthage/Horner. They recommend adjusting signal times (always their first tool) for this busy intersection.

Mr. Rittali explained that in addition to the analysis, they also did abbreviated signal warrant analyses to determine whether traffic signals are “warranted” for several intersections, since there are maintenance and energy costs for them and they found that all four were unwarranted based on volumes. He stressed that he wasn’t recommending that they be removed but that they could be removed based strictly on volume. There may be many other compounding factors for keeping them and even if there is only one factor, it may be a good reason, such as having a school nearby, buses trying to make left turns, trying to do coordination along the road. The study concluded that while Vance Street, at both Carthage and Wicker, technically didn’t meet a warrant, it should be kept for safety purposes. However, the signals on Gulf Street, at both Carthage and Wicker, could be removed due to light volume. They found that the two-way stop worked best at Gulf/Carthage since the traffic lights on Horner Boulevard and Vance Streets create gaps in the traffic. He commented that one of the advantages of using stop signs, rather than signals, is that vehicles on the busier streets are not stopped for the few vehicles on the side streets.

Regarding the roadway diet, the study confirmed that one lane in each direction on Carthage Street can more than handle traffic, which is their recommendation, along with a two-way center turn lane.

Mr. Scales explained that there are a number of things going on in this study area and the analysis showed that the intersections will function adequately. They provided some recommendations to maximize traffic operations but suggested that we also consider the area from a comprehensive planning standpoint tying it all together: we have a downtown area that is still evolving and developing, a nearby historic district, and DOT will be making improvements along Carthage Street. We should consider how to leverage what we have against these other projects. From a concept perspective, we have a DOT planned roundabout at Carthage/Wicker roundabouts, so we could consider others in the study area, which he called the “quad”. If we look at the corridor not as disparate or different sections but as a unit, we could begin to leverage programmatic opportunities and position ourselves for potential funding at the state and federal level, including TIGER grants and other similar programs.

Public Works Director Victor Czar reminded Council of the plans for the study area: the Planning Department’s ideas for a street diet on Carthage, between Horner and Wicker, DOT’s plans for Carthage Street in front of the hospital, the sidepath along Wicker Street; the W.B. Wicker School. Clark Patterson Lee provided the advice we requested in order to ensure they we don’t make short-term decisions that aren’t wise for the long-term. Noting that there are expenses to keep the traffic signal at Vance/Wicker (new mast arm, underground power, maintenance costs), he asked Mr. Rittali for an estimate of the cost to install a roundabout at Vance/Wicker. He also stated that in conjunction with the Wicker Street sidepath, staff recommends eliminating the signal at Gulf/Wicker. Annual maintenance costs are roughly between \$5,000 and \$10,000 but problems can increase that substantially. He commented that there had been very few negative comments about removing the traffic light at Wicker/Steele downtown and it has worked well, giving the area a more pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. If Council reaches consensus on moving forward with a “quad” concept or

something along those lines, it should be part of the planning. Mayor Mann noted that there appears to be consensus among Council to remove the traffic light at Wicker/Gulf.

Consider Feasibility Study for Traffic Calming along North Gulf Street between West Weatherspoon and Carthage Street

Consider Feasibility Study for Improving Intersection Operations at North Gulf, West Weatherspoon and Spring Lane

Reggie Scales, principal with Clark Patterson Lee (“CPL”) commented that he did not have an answer to this problem. While speed humps will certainly slow traffic down, he questioned whether that was the real answer for this neighborhood and recommended a process that provides a consensus answer, so that we don’t have to revisit this issue repeatedly in the future. Those particular intersections and the corridor could be reviewed, traffic counts (volume, turning movements) could be taken, and a team of stakeholders, including people from the community, Emergency Management, Fire and Police Departments, DOT, members of the Historic District, Downtown Sanford, could be assembled as a steering committee to develop alternatives through a process. CPL could help develop those alternatives within a time frame of four to six months so a consensus could be reached and a plan made to address and resolve the issue. There are many options but without buy-in from residents and key stakeholders, we are essentially “kicking the can down the road”.

Brandy Horner, who lives at the corner of Gulf/Bracken, commented on the number of vehicles that simply drive through the four-way stop sign and expressed support for speed humps, although she acknowledged that other residents do not. Council Member Taylor commented that many residents are in favor of increased enforcement; however, City Manager Hegwer suggested, and Mr. Scales agreed, that we cannot solve the problem with enforcement. Greg Stoch, a spokesman for the neighborhood, who lives at 220 North Gulf, confirmed that neighborhood residents would welcome a holistic approach to the situation in order to develop a solution that also meets the needs of people travelling through the neighborhood.

Public Works Director Victor Czar suggested that we consider more than just speed humps: going through a process with stakeholders who have different perspectives would help find the best, long-term solution and not just a short-term fix. He agreed with Mr. Stoch that installing speed bumps would cause vehicles to use another street to cut through the neighborhood and would only relocate the problem to another area. Mr. Hegwer commented that DOT has helped but they can’t provide in-depth alternatives for a long-term solution, and questioned whether Council would be agreeable to a different approach by considering a proposal from CPL to guide us through this process through an in-depth analysis. Mr. Czar suggested that the proposal could be included on the next meeting agenda and Council could then decide whether to vote on the proposal or to only consider it.

Consider Discussion Regarding Central Carolina Enterprise Park Spec Building (Exhibit B)

SAGA Economic Development Director Bob Joyce expressed regret about the announcement that the Toyota-Mazda plant would be located in Alabama, not North Carolina, noting that logistics were a major factor in their decision (Toyota already makes engines in Alabama). He explained that we have very few large industrial buildings available for prospective clients. The availability of industrial buildings brings traffic to an area and in order to attract business to our community, we have must have product. Research shows that about 80 percent of inquiries to the Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC) are for existing buildings; they typically don’t want to buy property and go through the entitlement and building process. About 60 percent of those requests are for buildings larger than 100,000 square feet. Samet Corporation, who will partner in the proposed project, has told Mr. Joyce

that the Industrial Center in Mebane often has buyers who tour their spec (speculative) building but ultimately build in their park, because the spec doesn't quite meet their individual needs; it works as a "floor model" that is shown and even though it doesn't sell, it draws clients. Constructing a spec building on the lot proposed (the first lot on the left, entering Enterprise Park from Colon Road) establishes an expectation of quality and will show the type of investment that we expect in the park.

Mr. Joyce reviewed the proposed partnership structure: CC Enterprise Park, LLC (the group of investors who own the land) will pledge the land as collateral and subordinate their interest to the bank loan. SAMET Corporation will obtain the bank construction loan and construct the building. The project would be managed by Kirk Bradley, the managing member of CC Enterprise Park. Their request is for the City and County to pay the carrying costs while the building is marketed, for a two-year lease term to begin at the end of construction. A third year has been discussed but not formerly included in the request at this time. The lease rate would be approximately \$3.25 per square foot per year, divided equally between the City and County. This rate, which is comparable to local rates, is substantially below commercial lease rates in the Triangle area, which are in the \$6.00 to \$6.50 per square foot range. A Memorandum of Understanding would summarize terms to be agreed to by all parties and a lease agreement would follow, after the formal structure is determined (whether one or both governments and/or SAGA as parties). The project, if approved, could begin in February and be complete around July, which means funds would not be needed during this budget year.

The completed building will be valued between \$6.5 to \$7 million, according to Mr. Joyce, which would generate approximately \$42,000 in city taxes and \$55,000 in county taxes (based on \$7 million valuation and current rates). It would be a "Class A" building with tilt-up concrete walls and priced nearly 20 percent below Triangle market prices. A building of this size is anticipated to include a payroll for 75 to 100 people, which at \$38,000 (Lee County's average wage according to the State Department of Commerce), would generate a payroll of \$2.8 to \$3.5 million annually and approximately \$8.5 million in local spending.

City Attorney Susan Patterson explained that because this project is considered to be an economic development incentive, a public hearing would be required prior to entering into a Memorandum of Understanding. The public hearing has been advertised and is scheduled for the January 16 Council meeting. If Council elects to move forward, a resolution would be adopted.

Consider Discussion Regarding Email Addresses

City Manager Hal Hegwer noted that some Council members have questioned whether they should use a city email address or their personal account, so he asked Amy Gordon with the Information Technology Department to review options and offer pros and cons on each. Mrs. Gordon advised Council members that it is a matter of personal preference which email account to use, but emails must be kept for a minimum of five years and longer if the material is relevant. If a public records request is made, City staff can search city accounts for archived correspondence, which is indexed; however, if a personal email account is used, the Council member must provide the requested material. Council Member Charles Taylor advised fellow members that he, as a member of other commissions, has pushed for email to be handled by the State or municipalities since storage and access to personal accounts is handled differently for personal accounts, and he recommended using the city service. Mrs. Gordon confirmed that using Outlook in connection with some service providers offers permanent copies but using online versions remotely does not. She advised that Microsoft Exchange, a whole server software package, "syncs" emails but that program cost about \$25,000 to \$30,000 when they last checked, not including additional annual costs. We have the online Kerio

version that can be accessed through an app to receive emails anywhere but when responding outside the network, an open VPM app is needed. She confirmed that the biggest issue is when the service is not synced: you see only current content when you go online. Mr. Gaskins, who expressed support for a syncing program, noted that he wasn't aware that his responses done remotely were not being received because they were just being held in his outbox. Mayor Mann recommended Council members use city email service but acknowledged that it was cumbersome if it was used outside City Hall.

Mrs. Gordon advised Council that the IT department has received several requests from staff to use Microsoft Exchange (which also manages the address book and provides calendar syncing options) or a similar service. She also noted that there were two issues: whether to have the ability to sync and view all emails, no matter how they are accessed, and whether to have the ability to respond without going through a VPM, which is a security issue (to prevent spammers from accessing information and sending spam). City Manager Hegwer agreed to research details and costs, and Mrs. Gordon requested that any Council members who want to use city email service advise her or City Clerk Bonnie Davis.

Consider Discussion Regarding Deer Season (Exhibit C)

Management Analyst Holly Marosites advised Council that there has been some interest in changing Lee County's hunting season. Currently the State, under the NC Wildlife Resources Commission ("WRC"), has four distinct zones which determine when each season begins. The WRC is currently proposing changes to its hunting season for the 2018-2019 year, including season duration and revising the map that determines zones, with a proposal to divide the eastern season zone into two separate zones. The County Commissioners requested the change after the City asked them to but no changes were approved by the state; however, with the WRC's currently proposed changes, it may be a good time to request changing our zone from the central zone to the newly designated southeastern zone. This would extend the length of the gun season, which begins after black powder season, from our current eight weeks to eleven weeks, with an earlier start date (gun season ends on January 1 for all zones). Council Member Taylor stated that County Commissioner Doc Oldham expressed support and agreed to present the request for changing our zone to his board, and State Representative John Sauls also agreed to present and support the request.

County Manager Hegwer noted that there appeared to be consensus among Council to send a written request to the County that Lee County be assigned to the southeastern district.

Other Business

Council Member Taylor complimented staff for their work during the recent snow event and several days of unseasonably sub-freezing temperatures, and questioned whether the cost would affect budget operations. City Manager Hegwer responded that overtime hours were required for snow plowing, repairs to waterline breaks and sewer overflow issues, but nothing extraordinary. Mr. Taylor also noted that the shelter at the Bread of Life had served up to 13 people on one night and that InstaCart delivery service will be offering delivery service from the local Food Lion grocery stores.

City Manager Hegwer noted that social media helped tremendously with updates on how the snow affected scheduled services such as trash pickup.

Council Member Haire commented on the announcement that the local K-Mart would be closing, noting that locating that store there helped open the Highway 87 South corridor, which has developed tremendously since that time.

Mayor Mann agreed with Manager Hegwer that the public information effort was a great help during the recent snow. Information was made available on the city's website and Facebook page, and he was able to share information on his Mayoral Facebook page and Twitter account. Several citizens had expressed thanks to him for the Public Works departmental efforts in clearing the city streets. He announced that the next Citizens Academy will begin on February 6 with one expanded session, rather than two, to be held this year. He advised that an investor has expressed interest in the Kendale Shopping Center property and lastly, he requested that Council hold an off-site retreat this year for a Visioning and Planning Workshop. He proposed beginning on a Friday around 1:00 and working until dinner, staying overnight, continuing on Saturday and wrapping up around noon. The other option would be holding many separate workshop meetings over several months, such as the six sessions held last year which took more than two months. He proposed the weekend of February 23 or a date that would work for a majority of Council members.

Closed Session

Council Member Buckels made a motion to go into closed session in accordance with NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4), to deal with matters relating to the location or expansion of an industry or other business in the area; and 143-318.11(a)(5), to establish the position to be taken on behalf of the public body in negotiating the price or other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange or lease. Seconded by Council Member Post, the motion carried unanimously.

ALL EXHIBITS CONTAINED HEREIN ARE HEREBY INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE AND MADE A PART OF THESE MINUTES.

AJOURNMENT

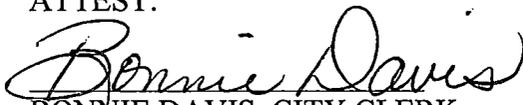
Council Member Post made the motion to adjourn the workshop. Seconded by Council Member Taylor, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



T. CHET MANN, MAYOR

ATTEST:


BONNIE DAVIS, CITY CLERK