**Town of Walden**

Meeting Minutes

October 13, 2020

**call to order of the regular meeting**

Mayor William Trohanis called the regular monthly meeting of the Town of Walden to order utilizing the Zoom online platform. Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that the meeting was being held via the online platform based on Governor Bill Lee’s executive order, allowing for online-based meetings due to the COVID crisis. There is no opposition from the council.

**roll call**

Fern Lockhart called the roll and noted the presence of Mayor William Trohanis, Vice Mayor Lee Davis, Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie and Town Attorney Sam Elliott.

**Approval / Correction of Minutes from Previous Meeting**

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF AUGUST 25, 2020 AND SEPTEMBER 8, 2020 AS SUBMITTED, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

**communications from the mayor**

Mayor Trohanis kept his comments brief, noting only that the application for a bed-and-breakfast on East Brow Road has been withdrawn.

**roads report**

The Roads Report from engineer Mack McCarley is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**Police Report**

The Police Report from Officer Gregg Carson is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**financial report**

The Financial Report has been completed and is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**codes enforcement**

The Codes Enforcement Report is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**WRES Report**

No report.

**Bachman council**

The Bachman Council Report from Katy Murphy is attached as an exhibit to these minutes.

**pumpkin patch**

No report.

**McCoy farm & gardens**

Mickey Robins noted that the Walden Candidate Forum was held successfully at McCoy Farm and Gardens, with all candidates participating. Attendance was excellent at the Forum and at the “Southern Exposure” dramatic presentation by local artist Peggy Douglas. Lastly, the McCoy Board has decided to forego any private events in the near future due to COVID concerns – but the trails and McCoy grounds are still open for use, with appropriate social distancing.

**dog park**

No report.

**land use study committee**

Dawson Wheeler spoke for the committee, noting that all proposals are due November 1, 2020. All questions should be submitted two weeks prior to that date.

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. **proposed resolution # 2020-537, a resolution granting permission to chattanooga gas company to use an unopened right of way from northern avenue to wilson avenue**

Town Attorney Sam Elliott has prepared a resolution that he feels includes several reasonable conditions for granting the use of the right-of-way as requested. If approved, the resolution would not go into effect until Chattanooga Gas Company agrees to the conditions.

There is much discussion regarding the pending approval of a natural gas line being installed through the right-of-way near Wilson Avenue and Northern Avenue. Some Wilson Avenue residents (the Lawsons) are opposed to this, as they own the property on both sides of the right-of-way. Tim Burns and Linda Norwood are among the residents who are in support of the gas line installation. A meeting is scheduled at the Lawson’s property in the afternoon of October 14, 2020, with a representative from Chattanooga Gas (Socrates Alvarez) and impacted residents to further discuss the project.

1. **maintenance items for the pumpkin patch**

Vice Mayor Lee Davis noted that New Business agenda items #2 and #3 would be discussed jointly. He further noted that there was concern over two stumps on the playground that were reported as tripping hazards. Those stumps have been removed. There are other maintenance items at the Pumpkin Patch that will need to be addressed in the future. Lastly, Vice Mayor Davis will speak to Kate Morrison prior to the next meeting in order to finalize the list of maintenance needs.

1. **discuss recommendations from kate morrison regarding the pumpkin patch**

See agenda item #2.

1. **discussion on budget for the puppy patch**

Town Recorder Fern Lockhart stated that, with the updated quote for landscaping, this would exhaust this fiscal year’s allocated budget for the Puppy Patch. This is due to higher-than-expected water costs and other purchases (ie: $750 for a sign) that were not included in the original budget. In order to meet the newly-expected costs of the Puppy Patch, monies would need to be re-allocated from another line item. Mrs. Lockhart will research other line items for a potential shift.

1. **consideration of quote from absolute landscapes for grass seeding / labor at the**

**puppy patch**

Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie introduced the seeding / labor quote from Absolute Landscapes. The original quote ($450) included 50 pounds of seed and 43 pounds of fertilizer. After revisiting the dog park property, Absolute Landscapes feels that 100 pounds of each is needed. This increases the quote to $550 total, and the landscaping company will donate the labor for the spreading of the materials.

ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE MOVED TO ACCEPT THE BID OF $550 BY ABSOLUTE LANDSCAPING, TO INCLUDE MATERIALS / LABOR TO AERATE, SEED, AND FERTILIZE THE PUPPY PATCH, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS, AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN BY ROLL CALL VOTE.

1. **any other new business**

There is no other new business.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. **discussion on traffic study for lop, requiring a turn lane**

Vice Mayor Lee Davis began the discussion by noting some concerns. First, when the report was received by Mr. Davis and Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie on September 10, 2020, Mr. Davis noted that the actual traffic counts were not completed after the COVID shutdown was over and schools were back in session, as discussed. This was also the recommendation of the company completing the report. During a conversation with a member of the traffic study team, Vice Mayor Lee Davis was told that Mayor Trohanis had contacted the company in July and requested that they go ahead with the counts. Further, on August 21, 2020, the completed traffic study was sent by Mayor Trohanis to Town Attorney Sam Elliott, with instructions to forward the report to the LOP developer, John Anderson. Lastly, Vice Mayor Davis expressed his concern over the fact that there was no mention of the completed traffic study at the monthly town meeting on September 8, 2020.

Further discussion of the study results included the recommended addition of a deceleration lane on southbound Taft Highway, and also a longer turning lane on northbound Taft Highway, to begin prior to the Timesville Road Intersection. The study did not support a traffic light or roundabout being added at the entrance.

Town Attorney Sam Elliott confirmed that any future ownership of the LOP would also have to adhere to the monetary responsibilities as written in the ordinance – item #15.

No further action is needed at this point.

1. **review / approval of elevations-materials for the grocery store at lop**

Mayor Trohanis began the discussion by making a motion to approve the elevations submitted on 9/29/2020, including the materials and color palette for the Walden Town Center grocery store outbuildings and pavilion, and proposed parking easement with the following amendments.

1. The front elevation of the grocery store be revised to move one sidewalk on the right of the image like the site plan going to the pavilion and be submitted to the town for our files
2. The stone pattern on the grocery store be changed from stacked mountain stone to random laid, rough cut mountain stone, and the revised elevation showing this be submitted to the town.
3. The metal roof(s) on the grocery store building be changed to architectural shingles and the revised elevation be submitted to the town.
4. The metal roof(s) over the porches and retail shops be allowed to remain as they are shown.
5. Although they are not required, the rendering showing the relationship at the gas pump canopy to the store and the small cashier’s building be with the same random-laid mountain stone and siding under the canopy, and be submitted to the town for our files.
6. Although not visible from the right of way, the rear elevations of the grocery store should be submitted to the town for our files.

Vice Mayor Lee Davis noted that, on the Town of Walden website, the tabs at the top of the page include McCoy Farm and Gardens, The Pumpkin Patch, Bachman Community Center, and (newly-added) Village Center Updates. The Vice Mayor’s concern is that this appears to be in support of or an endorsement for the center just as we support the town’s non-profit organizations. It is recommended that this information be removed from the header and placed as regular text within the website.

Mr. Bob Franklin shared and summarized the drawings for the center. LOP developer John Anderson confirmed that what is seen in the renderings is exactly what will be built.

MAYOR WILLIAM TROHANIS MOVED TO ACCEPT HIS MOTION, WITH AMENDMENTS, AS NOTED ABOVE, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND APPROVED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE OF 2-1, WITH VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS VOTING NO.

1. **resolution #2020-538, an easement for parking at the lop, 1823 taft highway**

VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS MADE A MOTION FOR RESOLUTION #220-538, AN EASEMENT FOR PARKING AT THE LOP, 1823 TAFT HIGHWAY, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN SARAH MCKENZIE, AND APPROVED BY A ROLL CALL VOTE OF 2-1, WITH VICE MAYOR LEE DAVIS VOTING NO.

1. **any other unfinished business**

There is no other unfinished business.

**COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CITIZENS**

1. Dawson Wheeler asked from where the additional roadway width for the deceleration lane and extended turn lane would come. Mayor Trohanis responded that this would be a TDOT decision. Mr. Wheeler also asked that, if the additional width would come from the LOP, would the renderings have to be redrawn to show the re-positioned buildings.
2. Tony Wheeler stated his concerns regarding the fact that, while we have heard much about the aesthetic qualities of the center, we have heard little about the geology and engineering designs of the proposed stormwater and wastewater management systems. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie clarified that these particular details would be determined during the next phase of development.
3. Mickey Robbins asked for clarification on the stop sign at the intersection of Key Hulse and Fairmount. Mayor Trohanis confirmed that only the traffic on Fairmount was required to stop.
4. Earl Hereford expressed his concerns over the waiver of many of the requirements within the zoning ordinance for the Town Center. He asks for assurances going forward that the zoning ordinance will be followed as written. Mayor Trohanis reminded the citizens that the Land Use Committee is working on an update of the zoning plans for Walden, and those will be followed.
5. Joe Davis stated that he was disappointed to hear that, regarding the traffic study, Mayor Trohanis was “working around the other two board members.” This commentary was immediately refuted by Mayor Trohanis, who asked Town Attorney Sam Elliott to clarify that he sent the completed study to him. Attorney Elliott confirmed that he had received the traffic study via email from Mayor Trohanis, with instructions to forward it to John Anderson. Mayor Trohanis stated he felt that Mr. Anderson should have it since he paid for it, and apologized for any error.

Joe Davis further stated his disappointment in the traffic counts being completed in July, which was not what had been agreed-upon by the board, as he understood it. Mayor Trohanis noted that the contract for the traffic study was completed in March, and he wanted it completed as soon as possible since there was no set date for schools to re-open.

1. Jeannie Seagle asked if the traffic study was available for citizens to view. Mayor Trohanis invited Mrs. Seagle and any other interested citizens to visit Town Hall during regular business hours to view the study. Alderwoman Sarah McKenzie also suggested that the pdf version of the study be placed on the town’s website.
2. Joe Davis asked for clarification on the 10-year projected growth rate at 2%, as stated in the traffic study on page 19. He is concerned that this growth rate is not being taken into proper account in regards to the traffic study numbers, and he feels the numbers are too low.

The meeting adjourned by motion and unanimous roll call vote.

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Respectfully submitted:

Fern Lockhart, Recorder

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Approved:

William Trohanis, Mayor