Town of Walden
Special Called Meeting
Board of Mayor and Aldermen
October 22, 2025
6:30 PM

Call to Order of the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2025-385 Establishing Building Material Restrictions in the Town Center Zones

Mayor Lee Davis called the public hearings to order at 6:30 PM. He noted that all three of the hearings involve the newly-completed Design Review Standards (DRS). Mayor Davis invited any interested citizens to speak on this topic.

Mr. Bill Raines, owner of the property at 2315 Taft Hwy, noted that he is proposing 38 townhome units on his property. He stated that the standards for open space have been met through the use of allowable incentives. His concern lies in the fact that the updated DRS will potentially increase the cost as much as $50,000 per unit, or $1.9 million total. He feels that these homes may be "designed out" of affordability, and he asks for flexibility and expedited processing to ensure high-quality designs and affordable housing.

Mr. Colin Johnson thanked the Walden Planning Commission (WPC) for their hard work and diligence in completion the DRS. Mr. Johnson encouraged the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) to maintain the current format of the DSR, and he cautioned against adding too many architectural restrictions.

Call to Order of the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2025-386 Requiring Bird-Safe Glazing for New Windows in the Town Center Zones

There are no speakers on this topic.

Call to Order of the Public Hearing for Ordinance 2025-387 Adopting the Design Review Standards

Ms. Grace Mynatt stated that she has created a list of "mechanical" errors found in the DRS. She is concerned about content issues in the "Open Space" section, which she feels degrades the requirement for 50% open space as required in Walden's Land Use Plan. She further stated her concern that the WPC has not reviewed this final version of the DRS that is before the BMA today. Other issues include: incentives lead to false preservation, parcels less than five acres should not be allowed to use incentives; and she feels the equation ("unknown to determine known") is backwards.

Adjournment of Public Hearings

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the public hearings at 6:43 PM.

Call to Order of the Special Called Meeting

The special called meeting of the Walden Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BMA) was called to order by Mayor Lee Davis at 6:44 PM. The sign-in sheet listing interested citizens in attendance is attached as an exhibit to these minutes (Appendix A).

Prayer and Pledge to the Flag

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott opened the meeting with a prayer, and Town Attorney Sam Elliott led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott called the roll, noting the presence of Mayor Lee Davis, Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt and Alderwoman Angela Cassidy. Town Attorney Sam Elliott was also present, as was Ashley Gates – Walden's consultant with Southeast Tennessee Development District (SETD).

APPROVAL OR CORRECTION OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2025

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2025, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

REPORTS

1. **POLICE**

No report.

2. **FINANCIAL**

The Financial Report, given by Town Administrator Mariah Prescott, is attached as an exhibit to these minutes (Appendix B).

3. **WRES**

The WRES report, given by Ms. Tracy Thornton, noted the following calls in the last 30 days: eight fire-related, 12 emergency medical, and three assist-to-citizens. Ms. Thornton reminded everyone to change the batteries in their smoke detectors when the time changes.

4. **PARKS AND RECREATION – JOSEAY CHAFFIN**

Ms. Chaffin is a Life Scout working toward her Eagle Rank. The goal of her Eagle Project is to improve the health of creeks and streams in Walden. She is partnering with the non-profit group, Water Ways, led by Mary Beth Sutton. At the trailhead to Mabbitt Springs, she will place a sign with a QR code that will open a Google form for data submission. Hikers will be asked to record the number and type of salamanders that they observe while on the trail, as salamanders are indicative of a stream's health.

5. **PUMPKIN PATCH**

No report.

6. **CIVIC LEAGUE**

No report.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. CONSIDERATION OF FINAL READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-383 AMENDING THE TOWN OF WALDEN PLAN BY RECLASSIFYING PROPERTY LOCATED AT 2809 TAFT HIGHWAY (PARCEL 089J C 014) FROM THE CIVIL / INSTITUTIONAL PLACE TYPE TO THE TAFT HIGHWAY NON-RESIDENTIAL PLACE TYPE

Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that the public hearing for this proposed ordinance was held last month.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2025-383, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. CONSIDERATION OF FINAL READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-384 AMENDING THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP TO ZONE PARCEL 014.00 OF HAMILTON COUNTY TAX MAP 089J GROUP "C" FROM R-1 RESIDENTIAL TO TC-MU TOWN CENTER MIXED USE

Alderwoman Angela Cassidy asked the owner of the property, Justin Cox, if the verbal agreement regarding landscaping is still in place. Mr. Cox stated that rain barrels will be installed stormwater will also be re-routed.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2025-384, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

NEW BUSINESS

1. CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-385 ESTABLISHING BUILDING MATERIAL RESTRICTIONS FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FACADES WITHIN THE TOWN CENTER AS PART OF THE WALDEN DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

Alderwoman Angela Cassidy shared her appreciation for the hard work completed by Attorney Elliott, Ashley Gates, and the WPC in completing the DRS.

ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL READING OF ORDINANCE 2025-385, SECONDED BY VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

2. CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-386 REQUIRING BIRD-SAFE GLAZING FOR NEW WINDOWS IN THE TOWN CENTER AS PART OF THE DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THE FIRST READING OF ORDINANCE 2025-386. THE MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF A SECOND.

3. CONSIDERATION OF FIRST READING OF PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2025-387 AMENDING TITLE 14 OF THE WALDEN MUNICIPAL CODE BY ADDING CHAPTER 4, "DESIGN REVIEW STANDAR4DS," AND INCORPORATING SAID STANDARDS BY REFERENCE ADOPTING WALDEN'S DESIGN REVIEW STANDARDS

Mayor Lee Davis noted that two citizens had submitted speaker slips to address this agenda item.

Ms. Grace Mynatt reiterated her concern that the WPC has not publicly reviewed this final version of the DRS. She also asked who would be accountable for the landscape requirements. Alderwoman Angela Cassidy, also a member of the WPC, confirmed the WPC's approval of the final DRS document. Mayor Lee Davis noted that any typos or clerical errors would be corrected prior to the final reading.

Ms. Catherine Colby shared her concern about a lack of land disturbance permits on properties under an acre. She further noted that Hamilton County can review and rule on this issue. Town Attorney Sam Elliott stated that Walden must work through Hamilton County as a partner on this issue.

4. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2025-635 MORATORIUM EXTENSION FOR BUILDING PERMITS IN THE TOWN CENTER ZONES

Town Attorney Sam Elliott noted that he does not recommend this extension. He stated that there is legislation that recognizes pending ordinances, and he feels that the DRS are close enough to cover this. The resolution fails for lack of a motion and a second.

5. CONSIDERATION OF PETER HETZLER FOR RE-APPOINTMENT OF 5-YEAR TERM TO BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Mayor Lee Davis appointed Mr. Peter Hetzler for an additional five-year term to the Board of Zoning Appeals.

6. CONSIDERATION OF SCOTT SHORT FOR RE-APPOINTMENT OF A 5-YEAR TERM TO BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Mayor Lee Davis noted that Mr. Scott Short has rolled off of the Board of Zoning Appeals, so there is currently a vacancy. Applications to fill this spot are now being accepted, and an appointment to fill this vacancy will be on the agenda for the November meeting.

7. CONSIDERATION OF 3 QUOTES FOR NEW TOWN WEBSITE

Communications Director Ellen Young has reviewed the three quotes for updating the Town's website, and she recommends "REVIZE" for a five-year contract.

MAYOR LEE DAVIS MOVED TO APPROVE CONTRACTING WITH REVIZE FOR A PERIOD OF FIVE YEARS, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

8. CONSIDERATION OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REQUESTING BIDS FOR CROSSWALK OVER ANDERSON AVE AS A PART OF THE HAMILTON COUNTY COMMUNITY GRANT

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott summarized that these bids will be for the installation of a crosswalk that will connect the McCoy property to Town Hall and the Pumpkin Patch playground.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR MARIAH PRESCOTT REQUESTING BIDS FOR THIS PROJECT, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

9. CONSIDERATION OF CURB CUT PERMIT AT 5029 WILSON AVE

Town Administrator Mariah Prescott noted that the Town's engineer has approved this curb cut, with a specific culvert design required.

VICE MAYOR LIZZY SCHMIDT MOVED TO APPROVE THIS CURB CUT WITH A SPECIFIC CULVERT DESIGN, SECONDED BY ALDERWOMAN ANGELA CASSIDY AND UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN.

10. UPDATE ON TAFT HWY PROPERTY

Mayor Lee Davis updated the citizens on the status of a potential property purchase of 40+ acres across Taft Hwy from Town Hall. He noted that a partnership with Hamilton County and the construction of a school on the property is just one idea. Vice Mayor Lizzy Schmidt and Alderwoman Angela Cassidy

both stated that they would prefer that the Town of Walden purchase the property outright. Mayor Lee Davis noted that he will contact Commissioner Chip Baker and Mayor Weston Wamp to let them know that the Board is interested in acquiring this property on their own. This item will be placed on the agenda for the November meeting of the BMA for further discussion.

11. CONSIDERATION OF NOVEMBER TOWN HALL MEETING DATE CHANGE

Mayor Lee Davis noted that the November meeting of the BMA falls on Veterans' Day. None of the BMA have a scheduling conflict on this date, so the meeting will be held as scheduled.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS

Mayor Lee Davis invited comments from the citizens. Ms. Kristin Allen noted that more traffic is coming from East Brow Road through Lake to avoid the speed tables on Wilson. She inquired as to the status of installation of speed tables on Anderson Pike. Mayor Lee Davis stated that this issue should be placed on the November agenda – with input from the Town's engineer – and discussion on the liability of placement on East Brow Road.

Mr. Bill Raines noted his long-time experience in commercial real estate, and he encouraged the Town to pursue the outright purchase of the property across Taft Hwy.

Mr. Ted Tumelaire encouraged the placement of speed table on East Brow Road near Altura. Town Attorney Sam Elliott encourage the Town to check with our insurance carrier prior to other installations.

Mr. Greg Collum stated that the Town should not enter into speculative risk with taxpayer dollars.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Lee Davis adjourned the meeting at 7:38 PM.

Respectfully submitted:
Stacy Stewart, Town Recorder

Approved:
Mariah Prescott, Town Administrator

Approved:
Lee Davis, Mayor