



City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center
300 S. Church Street
Jonesboro, AR 72401

Meeting Minutes Public Works Council Committee

Thursday, December 5, 2024

5:00 PM

Municipal Center, 300 S. Church

NOTICE: MOVED TO THURSDAY DUE TO RUN-OFF ELECTION

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL (ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE) CONFIRMED BY CITY CLERK APRIL LEGGETT

Present 8 - John Street; Mitch Johnson; Chris Moore; Charles Coleman; LJ Bryant; Ann Williams; Janice Porter and Anthony Coleman

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[MIN-24:075](#) Minutes for the Public Works Committee meeting on August 06, 2024

Attachments: [Minutes](#)

A motion was made by Mitch Johnson, seconded by Chris Moore, that this matter be Passed . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 7 - Mitch Johnson; Chris Moore; Charles Coleman; LJ Bryant; Ann Williams; Janice Porter and Anthony Coleman

4. NEW BUSINESS

[ORD-24:035](#) AN ORDINANCE AMENDING SECTIONS 9.1 AND 9.2 OF THE STORMWATER DRAINAGE DESIGN MANUAL WITH REGARD TO STRUCTURES IN ZONES AE, AH, AO, AND A

Sponsors: Engineering

Councilmember Chris Moore said, Mr. Chair, I didn't, in the reading, what was the percentage of improvement on an existing house that would trigger that? Chairman John Street said, Craig you want to address that? I don't think I read a percentage of improvement. It just said a substantial. Engineering Department Director Craig Light approached the podium and said, the substantial improvement requirement is over 50%. Councilmember Chris Moore said, 50% of the appraised value of the structure, as completed or as existing? Director Craig Light said, the existing structure. So, if you're increasing the value of the structure by more than 50% then that would trigger it. Now, the Stormwater Board has the ability to grant variances for instances that might be triggered because of that, in an existing structure. It's discouraged to grant variances every time something comes up, but if there's a substantial damage to a property there's the variance policy for that. Councilmember Chris Moore said, I know after the last tornado we had, all down Prospect Road, that came into being an issue. The base flood plain elevation certificates on a lot of those were pretty iffy, and if we

had another example of, maybe the roof was blown off a house, would that require them to bring the whole house up? Director Craig Light said, it could potentially, but there is a variance process for those. That they could possibly get a variance. And I know that there were some variances granted during that time, during that tornado period, for some of the other structures. Councilmember Chris Moore said, so roughly 50% of the appraised value of the home would be the trigger? Director Craig Light said, yes. Councilmember Chris Moore said, ok. Director Craig Light said, but with events like that, without having this two-foot free board requirement, there are no grant opportunities available for those people if their property doesn't meet the requirements. There's an improved Cost of Compliance Grant up to \$30,000, if we don't have that adopted as a community then those people would not be eligible for that extra funding, if there was a tornado or something that damaged their property and they had to bring it into compliance. And also, we could potentially lose some FHWA or FHA loans in flood zone areas. Most of our properties that are being built on or not residential housing that are not being built in flood prone areas, but we do have some. So, it's not going to affect every house that goes into Jonesboro, just those that are building in flood prone areas. Which we need to be protected of those areas and those future homeowners in those areas. Councilmember Chris Moore said, we have a pretty substantial amount of new construction off Race Street and stuff that is built at the 12-inch mark. So, if something happened down there, you know, it would be you'd pretty much have to replace all those to get them up to two feet. And I couldn't hear everything John read, but is there a provision in there for commercial or was that strictly residential? Director Craig Light said, one of the federal agencies did identify the two-foot free board for commercial properties as well, and then the other agency did not. The Stormwater Board's recommendation is for commercial and residential properties. The two-foot of free board has been around since the model ordinance back in the 2008, 2009. The City of Jonesboro lowered that to one-foot, and it's been one-foot ever since, but the model that the feds have wanted us to adopt all along has been two-foot. Now they're essentially making it mandatory to do it. Councilmember Chris Moore said, the reason I was thinking about that, we have a pretty good swath of commercial property off Red Wolf, right along the Race Street corridor and on toward the bypass. Some of it falls borders flood zone. and I was thinking about when somebody comes in and remodels the building to change from one business to another, would that trigger the two-foot free board on a commercial property? Director Craig Light said, it shouldn't. If the improvements that are required for change of use are triggered by a city requirement, then I believe there is an exemption in the 51% rule. So, the improvements that you're making to a property to bring it into compliance for some other rule is not included in that 51% calculation. Councilmember Chris Moore said, what I was thinking was like, you take the Red Lobster restaurant, they go out of business then somebody else comes in and they'll spend 50% of the appraised property value. They may use to remodel the building and rebrand it into a different restaurant. I want to make sure that wouldn't trigger automatically a two-foot free board. Director Craig Light said, I can't imagine that they would update that facility so much that it would be 51% of the value of the structure. But I understand what your concern is and there's a variance process for that. And the thing with commercial properties is, there's a floodproofing that is not available for residential. And so, you have the opportunity on commercial properties to basically allow flood waters to inundate property as long as you don't damage it with that, and they do not allow that with residential properties. Councilmember Chris Moore said, and I can understand the reasoning on that, and I'm all about it on new construction. I just want to make sure we don't get into a situation with a large group of commercial properties that are all of a sudden out of compliance and have to be built up. Director Craig Light said, right. There is a variance process, and the board can grant variances. When we had the tornado, I know there were some variances granted just to bring it to the one-foot, so

I'm sure that would be the case again if there was another incident like that, that would be taken into account during that. It's really meant for new construction.

Chairman John Street said, Craig, does this need to be walked on? How quick do we need to get it through? Director Craig Light said, we have another City Council meeting this month, so the rule goes into effect in January. We're looking for those structures that we issue a permit on after January 1. So, it doesn't have to be walked on this evening.

A motion was made by Mitch Johnson, seconded by Anthony Coleman, that this matter be Recommended to Council . The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 7 - Mitch Johnson;Chris Moore;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant;Ann Williams;Janice Porter and Anthony Coleman

5. PENDING ITEMS

6. OTHER BUSINESS

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Chris Moore, seconded by Mitch Johnson, that this meeting be Adjourned. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

Aye: 7 - Mitch Johnson;Chris Moore;Charles Coleman;LJ Bryant;Ann Williams;Janice Porter and Anthony Coleman