



# City of Jonesboro

Municipal Center  
300 S. Church Street  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes Metropolitan Area Planning Commission

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Tuesday, August 12, 2014

5:30 PM

Municipal Center

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### 1. Call to order

### 2. Roll Call

### 3. Approval of minutes

Approval of the MAPC Meeting Minutes for July 22, 2014

**A motion was made by Jerry Reece, seconded by Beverly Nix, that this matter be Approved . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

### 4. Preliminary Subdivisions

Preliminary Subdivision: Harrison Hills Subdivision

McAlister Engineering, on behalf of Mr. Bob Harrison requests MAPC approval of the Harrison Hills Subdivision (A Replat of Griffin Subdivision), located on Neely Ln. at Neely Road, for 48 lots within the R-1 Single Family District.

**A motion was made by Kevin Bailey, seconded by Jerry Reece, that this matter be Approved . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

Preliminary Subdivision: SouthBend Phase 5 Subdivision:

Engineer / Surveyor: McAllister Engineering, on behalf of the Applicant/Owners: Mr. Bob Harrison/Todd Wilcox, requests consideration of approval by the Metropolitan Planning Commission on August 12, 2014 for property located adjacent to Viney Creek & Southbend Cove within the Southbend Subdivision for a total of 14.43 acres, having 38 proposed lots.

**A motion was made by Jim Scurlock, seconded by Beverly Nix, that this matter be Approved . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

### 5. Final Subdivisions

### 6. Site Plan Approvals

Fencing Height Variance Request: 1001 S. Caraway Rd.

The City of Jonesboro requests MAPC approval of a perimeter fencing at the rear of

the new Police Station located on S. Caraway Rd. for the purpose of providing buffer screening to abutting residential property to the west. The maximum height of said fencing shall not exceed 10 ft.

**A motion was made by Jerry Reece, seconded by Jim Scurlock, that this matter be Approved . The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

## **7. Rezoning**

Rezoning Case:

MARMAC Construction, LLC requests MAPC's approval of a rezoning of property located at 2201 Needham St./SE Corner of Spence Circle, for 0.26 Acres; a change in zoning boundaries from R-1 Single Family to RM-8, L.U.O., for 1- Duplex.

**Applicant: Attorney Jay McCleod, MARMAC Construction, LLC presented the case describing the site and the surround conditions. The hope to turn the frontage along Spence instead of Needham.**

**Staff:**

**Mr. Spriggs gave Staff comments summarizing the Staff Report. Consistency with the Land Use Plan as recommended for Transitional Residential. The previous home was destroyed by fire. The owner agrees to comply with the Master Street Plan. There are no negative impacts. The proposal will provide good infill development. There are no opposing comments from the departments and agencies.**

**The conditions were read.**

**Public Input: None Present.**

**Commission Action:**

**A neighborhood Meeting was offered, no one attended. Motion was made to recommend approval to City Council subject to recommended conditions by Mr. Perkins. Motion was seconded by Mr. Scurlock.**

**Roll Call Vote: 8-0 Unanimously to approve. The motion PASSED with the following vote.**

Rezoning Case: RZ 14-11-

Greensboro Investments, LLC request approval of a rezoning from R-1 Single Family Medium Density District and C-3 General Commercial District Limited Use Overlay to (TC-O) Town Center Overlay District for 201.23 acres of property located at 750 ft east of Red Wolf Blvd / Stadium Blvd on north side of Johnson Avenue (Hwy 49 North), extending north to Greensboro Rd., and east to Hwy. 351/Old Greensboro Rd..

**MAPC Record of Proceedings: Hearing Held on August 12, 2014**

**Applicant: Mr. Chuck Downham, Little John Engineering Associates, Nashville, TN: Appeared before the Commission stated that he represents the applicant. He introduced Jerry Halsey, with HTH, and Randy Tolbert, Traffic Consultant with Peters & Associates who have been hired to do a Traffic Impact Study.**

**Mr. Downham:** He is presenting a change in Zoning from the existing zoning to a TC-O Town Center Overlay District. If you recall recently, the city adopted a new set of Zoning standards that included the addition of a TC-O, Town Center Overlay District to complement the existing small village residential code.

**Mr. Downham:** The Town Center Overlay District's purpose is to promote the development of a pedestrian oriented, mixed-use district in which a variety of retail, commercial, office, civic, and residential uses are permitted.

**Mr. Downham:** The Town Center Overlay District has key design elements that:

- Embrace Open Space and Gathering Places
- Compact Concentration of Uses
- Encourage a Sense of Place to live, work and play
- Aesthetic Design – Attention to Detail
- Reduce Dependence on Automobile –Creating a walkable environment.

**Mr. Downham:** We feel that this property provides excellent site opportunities in regards to its:

- Proximity to ASU
- Gentle Sloping Topography
- Road Access to help diffuse traffic around the property.

**Mr. Downham:** In terms of the master plan we are creating:

- Mixed-Use, to blend land use for sufficient traffic movement
- Density by Design
- Connected to Community
- Pedestrian Friendly.

**Mr. Downham:** We wanted to give you a bird's eye perspective (3D view was shown) with different building types and land use patterns, all with the intent of creating a walkable sustainable development. The master plan shows the residential area and all housing types with different price points. Mr. Downham cited an example in Nashville, where people tend to move from one part of the neighborhood to the other, while staying in the same community. We created a mix of uses with ground floor retail, and opportunities for office with residential above, to create economic vitality. Mr. Downham focused on the core retail area where there will be restaurants that focus on the village green, positioned directly across from the college campus, on which you can have festivals and pre-game activities; and, it will also serve as a common area adjacent to dining where people can watch their kids play. This provides all eyes on the park. We have done this development practice, and it has worked incredibly well in a couple of other settings. Mr. Downham went through the various plan documents, including the creation of a walkable and transit supportive community.

- Sidewalks & Pathways on both street edges.
- Pedestrian-Oriented
- Transit Supportive Design

The Street Circulation Hierarchy was described:

- Hierarchy of Streets including alleys
- Interconnected Streets with some on-street parking.
- Pedestrian-Friendly Intersections

Mr. Downham: The open space plan was described: Usable Open Spaces with common green, Gathering Places, and Connection to Community, including a lot of hard-scape plaza and gathering areas are provided.

Mr. Downham: An array of development guidelines and standards are provided in the document. A detailed list of uses by category and types are listed. Yards, bulk, and height requirements are also listed. Streetscape, signage, lighting design are also included.

Mr. Bailey asked for an explanation of the storm water detention. Mr. Downham: One area of focus is the village-green, which will be a wet weather detention area. Associated Engineering is working on those details and will assure compliance with the best management practices and the City's Stormwater Regulations. Several areas of open spaces are denoted, and will serve as storm water quality measures, as well.

Staff:

Mr. Spriggs: Summarized the staff report findings focusing on some of the main issues. The Current/Future Land Use Map recommends this location as a Commercial Node along the central core of the site and the area along the Johnson Ave./Hwy. 351 corridor, and Single Family for the northernmost portion of the site. The proposed rezoning is consistent and in compliance with the adopted Land Use Plan.

Mr. Spriggs: The criteria for approval of a rezoning were evaluated. Compliance is achieved on all levels in terms of impact on the surrounding community. This will enhance the area from an access management perspective and land use perspective.

Mr. Spriggs noted that staff has visited a number of similar developments as close as Conway, Arkansas, Franklin, Tennessee, and Atlanta, Georgia as well where folks are choosing to live in these types of self-sufficient neighborhoods.

Mr. Spriggs: A pre-meeting was held by the departments and the utility companies. Several questions were answered regarding phasing and infrastructure. During the Final Development Plan stage a number of detailed issues will be addressed. Pedestrian safety was also addressed in the pre-meeting. A traffic impact study is being done on behalf of the applicant. The agency reviews: there were no opposing comments received from the departments or agencies. The HOA/POA will handle most of the maintenance and management of the development. The Jets/Transportation Director has been in conversation with the developer and the transit plan is also being coordinated.

Mr. Spriggs: The permitted uses were listed within the Staff Report. The age-in-place component will lend a positive impact on the area and will allow for housing for all types of residents. This is also a first effort for the City to see development that will hold to design standards as adopted. The phasing plan is provided and the developer is hoping to complete out the development in 5-10 years. The conditions of the report were recognized which would be recommended to Council for consideration.

Public Input: Eight (8) individuals stood; some of which only had questions or concerns for more information.

Debbie Pelley: 2209 Indian Trails: There is a lot more that meets the eye with this complex development. Ms. Pelley stated that this is classic United Nations Agenda 21 Development. Ms. Pelley referenced Jonesboro Vision 2030. Ms. Pelley made a number of quotes from Gary Harpole from the press release she wrote to the Sun Newspaper. She stated she objects to Government Master Plans through public/private partnerships. Behind the Green Mass book was recommended for reading on Agenda 21. EPA is responsible for pushing Agenda 21 and this type of Village Community. Resolution examples were cited against Agenda 21.

Iris Stevens: 2714 Turtle Creek, Commented on a lack of transparency. Stated that she is very concerned about the new development, Greensborough Village. This development has sprung-up overnight it seems, and we have been deluged with a media blitz about how wonderful it is. Yet we've gotten very little factual information about the components of this "village." She has questions and demanded answers:

- Upscale Development: Half Commercial- What kind of density?
- What is average size of the houses/apartment/townhomes?
- Size of the lots?
- Whether these residences are essentially "zero lot line" homes?
- Proof of the NEED for such a development rather than just a developer's whim?
- How the tax money (whether grants or other) used will be recouped?

Scott Darwin, 807 Sylvan Hill Dr.: Lives a mile away from the development and he fully supports the planned development village. But his only concern is for the trees that align Greensboro Road, where you have your development. These trees arch over the road and provide a beautiful canopy, which is unique to the City limits of Jonesboro. It would be a tragedy to cut these trees and replace them with a straight line of Bradford Pears, which is commonly done. Speaking for these trees, I request that you preserve these trees and create not a speed bump, but not a beauty bump that will naturally slow down the drivers that want to relish the moment of this ideally stretch of road. Obviously, these are the words from super annulated hippy from the 60's, he added.

Cheryl Cheshier, 205 Hillpoint Cove. My husband and I own the adjoining property. Concern is that sometimes people start these large scale developments and they don't get the tenants they originally planned for. They have to abandon the project with things are left half finished. She cited examples of developments in West Arkansas, where they stopped the development and houses were started in all stages of development, and the developer just left and the insulation blew all over the neighborhood. Also, there was a news story in New York, where the developer built a high-rise condo, a few people moved in and they couldn't sell more units and they abandoned the project at 90% completion. The people couldn't get their money back. She stated concern that their home (modest 3 bedroom) over 60 years old, will go up in value, and their property values will go out the roof. The house will actually be a detriment if we actually want to sell the property, she added. It will be more valuable without it. What guarantee does the City have that they won't get stuck with a big uncompleted mess, if and when these

people bail? I hope it turns out great. I suggest you go ahead and let them have the commercial, and see how that goes before you let them have anything else, she concluded.

Jeff Spenser, 615 W Matthews: If you had a house that was walking distance to this development, it would probably be easy to sell.

Mr. Spenser: Stated that he considers himself a conservative person and it doesn't surprise him if this thing favors something that is in Agenda 21. The United States is the world's super power and if they signed on to something like that, it shouldn't be too shocking that they would try to implement some of it. This is really is not a move towards anything new in my opinion. This is a step back a few thousand years perhaps, because this is the way human beings have lived for most of our existence. There are public places in there and there are sidewalks; So far no evidence of the United Nations.

Mr. Spenser: If you would like to see the great grandmother of this development, there she is. We have the sidewalks and the public places, library, medical and all we need is people to buy into this, the real stuff can never be replaced, i.e. architecture around here. His main concern is that we have taken our focus off the tons of sidewalks out here. Who is going to maintain the sidewalks? Who is going to make me feel better about ours continuing to decay, while we are maintaining these over here. If there are any builders and developers within the sound of my voice, I hope they will take another look and see how difficult it is to produce some of these houses, that some people actually really love. And, maybe we will start coming back downtown.

Rick Cheshier, 205 Hillpoint Cove. As my wife said, we own the property just north of this development. My biggest concern is the traffic, as it now, and what this will bring into Jonesboro. Highway 49 is one of the major feeders into the City. Unless you have been out there early in the morning or late in the afternoon, it is tough out. Traffic has backed up as far as the Equine Center, and has had difficulty turning onto Hwy. 351. Stated he is not sure how this fits into the plan of the north bypass. He can barely see how these 5 lanes (proposed), which are curvy will be a feeder to Hwy. 351, which is tough right now. That is my biggest concern, apart from what my wife said about the project being abandoned. He suggested the use of some form of bonds posted in case something happens to fulfill in terms of bringing the property back up to a usable state.

Mr. Spriggs: Suggested that the Commission open up the conversation in addressing some of the questions posed. He also echoed some of the concerns that were raised in the pre-meeting such as what assurance or mechanisms would the City have in terms of the project phasing, that if the project is not completed, that the City would not be burdened or overloaded by infrastructure that was not completed. He pointed to Mr. Chuck Dunham, who has previously addressed the question similarly as the previous gentleman. Each phase would be presented as part of the phasing and subdivision process, and we do have the ability of bonding the improvements from a completion standpoint.

Jerry Halsey: appeared before the Commission, of Halsey, Thrasher, Harpole. We started this process two years ago, we did what we thought was right, we

included everyone that this involved including the City and City Water Light, we hired engineers and traffic engineers, to make sure that we realize what 200 acres, this magnitude of a development, would take. We have hired all the people that we know to hire, and we have included all the people who have a seat at the table that will be putting in that infrastructure, to say- what do you need, what is need for the future outlook; and, we have all put in our comments. We have meetings every day, to discuss traffic, detention and drainage. It changes based on different scenarios. There is nothing in here that is concrete tonight; we are asking for a rezoning. I think it is going to be a wonderful community. It is one that I would actually like to live in. We have spent a lot of time and investment and regardless of what people think, we are trying to do a good thing for the City of Jonesboro. We all have families here and we are raising kids, and have grandparents and parents. We want this place to be a good place to live like everyone else does. A lot of the concerns are valid, and we are trying to plan around them. We don't have those answers tonight or two years ago, but we are much closer tonight than we were two years ago. Through the process, we will take each phase over the next 5-10 years and develop it to the best of our ability to what the market asks.

Mr. Spriggs: Concerning the tax question are there any comments?

Mr. Halsey: The developers are currently roughing in the roads, and preparing to put in the sewer. There have been discussions of whether there will be a state highway that will connect Red Wolf Blvd. with Hwy. 351. We are in discussion with the Arkansas Highway Department and the City of Jonesboro to help alleviate some of the traffic through this property. The ownership has agreed to give 15 acres, and do a lot of the work so it will be less expensive to expand the state highway.

Mr. Spriggs: Commented that it has been noted that the team is working on a traffic impact study.

Mr. Halsey: With or without us, you have bad traffic problems now. We have hired Peters and Associates to do a study, and they are looking at our plan and the existing surrounding area, so that we might be part of a solution. So far, all we have asked from the City and the CWL is their time to help us plan, so we won't get the City or the State of Arkansas in a bind. All through this, we have asked people for their opinion.

Randy Tolbert, Peters & Associates, Traffic Consultant for the project. We are in the midst of working on the traffic impact study. We are doing it in two phases: One is what is initially completed within the next two years, what infrastructure will need to be in place in terms of road way, to operate in terms of satisfactory levels, and then also full build-out conditions. We have been in contact with the Highway Department, to gather ideas they have. We have had preliminary contact with the City as well. We should have the study completed by the end of this month.

Mr. Scurlock: Addressing Mr. Halsey- If this were a government plan, I would be dead against it, but since it is an individual plan, or investor's plan, anyone should have the right to do what they want with their land. You seem to have a good concept for that niche. Can you address these questions, because I would be upset if 5 years down the road, it were to cause the City of Jonesboro a half million dollars or so.

Mr. Spriggs: Directed the Commission to the questions regarding the design components and thresholds on the percentages of building types. Reference was made to the master plan which restricts where the single family homes will be situated.

Mr. Chuck Downham clarified. What we tried to do with the design guidelines, is to create a set of design criteria to address architectural typology, i.e. the form that the residential units would take; i.e., whether it is a single family, detached unit, single family, attached unit all the way up to multi-family. In the design criteria, we have provided a lot of design details, from style of roofs, types of materials, position of the development relative to the property lines; features such as porches, front loaded, rear and side loaded garages with alley access, setbacks off of the front of the house. We tried to provide the nuts and bolts of how to build the community. In terms of architectural style, we tried to provide a lot of latitude, where builders can choose the materials in terms of masonry products, and siding material types. Our hope is that the residential units will provide a good mix of housing choices. From the master plan, you can see we have large and modest size lots, down to smaller lots; and, we will have small front loaded lots as well, to provide a variety of housing responsive to the market. If you have just large lots, you are only catering to a certain niche of the community, but if you provide an array of choices you allow people to choose the life style they want to have.

Mr. Halsey: Interjected that the townhomes will range anywhere from 1,500 to 5,000 sq. ft. We talked to some buyers who want to do custom units; they said they would spend any from \$300 per sq/ ft. on their homes. At this point, they will have a shell building, in which they would build it out with their amenities.

Mr. Kelton: Reminded that there was a question regarding City Water & Light, about them incurring additional costs and so forth.

Mr. Halsey: We have had numerous meetings with City Water & Light, they have requested a lot of information about our loads, and what we anticipate. We are putting our infrastructure in. They are planning their future infrastructure accordingly. Referring to the recent hospital construction, they have discussed the loads there. We are paying for our utilities to be put in. The rules that CWL has for all developers are applying to us. We are just following their rules.

Mr. Spriggs: Directed to the question regarding Greensboro Road, and asked Mr. Halsey what was his concept for Greensboro Road in implementing the master plan?

Mr. Halsey stated that he intends to preserve the existing character and the tree-lines of Greensboro Road to the best of his ability.

Mr. Hoelscher: Ask Staff to explain the process of the rezoning, so that public can understand how the process will play out, because tonight is not the end of the process and this body will see other documents.

Mr. Spriggs: The MAPC is being presented a request for rezoning to an Overlay District and make recommendation to Council with a complete record of the findings of fact. We feel that the plan has been filed within the spirit and



intent of the Town Center Overlay District. The property would be rezoned to the TC-O District.

Attached to it, will be the reference of the Design Pattern Book, the Master Plan which will guide the phasing of the project. The details that are mentioned tonight will be taken care of during the Final Development Plan process, as the various phases are presented. Questions of transportation will be answered; Engineering Detailed Drawings related to infrastructure, issues regarding zoning will be outlined at that point as well. Council will adopt by ordinance, the TC-O, Overlay District, with the recommended conditions, three (3) readings of the ordinance will be considered by Council, the public will have opportunity to attend those hearings. If adopted by Council, the TC-O will come back to the Planning Commission in individual stages as Final Development Plans, per phase, in which documents will be a made available by agenda for public review and comment.

Mr. Kelton: Tying this to Agenda 21?: This is one project that is being asked to be rezoned. They (Developers/Investors) are assuming the risk that the Town Center Overlay District will be something that works. We are not going to recommend to Council that they change existing codes, and that all future subdivisions have to comply to the Town Center Overlay District. This is just one project.

Mr. Kelton Continued: There is a term in real estate: Situs- which is defined as the preference people have to live in certain or specific areas, and time will prove whether or not this is the project that the public wants. But when you consider statistics about the problem of obesity, diabetes, heart problems, pulmonary problems, arthritic problems, people need to walk and exercise. I think this will attract a large number of people. When I and my wife retired, it was important that we stay active. And I have never felt better in life, since starting walking, and eating more correctly. To some existing adults, they may not make the transition, but when you rear a child in this type of environment and neighborhood, and they are acclimated at an early age to walking down to a grocery store, to pick up a loaf of bread and a container of milk, or walking to a department store, this is a good habit to develop. Again this is one project and not a rewrite of the Jonesboro City Code.

Connie Needham - 315 Carson, Bono AR: How many people do you see as a capacity to live there?

Mr. Halsey: 2,000 – 2,500 people. Ms. Needham: what is the unit size and the smallest home. Mr. Halsey replied he did not have that information.

Rick Cheshier, 205 Hillpoint Cove presented a sketch with questions on the acreage. 2,500 people on 86 acres is proposed. Will you abandon where Hwy. 351 connects? No, Mr. Halsey replied. Are you separating the people from the development with the 5-lane corridor? It will be difficult to walk safely. You are doing a traffic study? And will it separate it entirely?

Mr. Downham: The five-lane will have controlled intersections with traffic calming measures with raised pavers, sidewalk medians, traffic signalization, cross walks, etc., with the intent of protecting pedestrian flow that may occur between the residential and the Town Center itself. Mr. Spriggs noted that a detailed cross-section of the 5-lane corridor will be added.

Public Debate was closed.

**Commission Action:**

The conditions were read. Motion was made to recommend approval to City Council subject to recommended conditions by Mr. Kelton. Motion was seconded by Mr. Bailey.

Roll Call Vote: 8-0 Unanimously to approve. The motion PASSED with the following vote.

**8. Staff Comments**

**9. Adjournment**