



# City of Jonesboro

900 West Monroe  
Jonesboro, AR 72401

## Meeting Minutes City Council

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Monday, October 15, 2012

5:30 PM

Huntington Building

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### Special Called Meeting

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER BY MAYOR PERRIN AT 5:30 P.M.

**Present** 7 - Darrel Dover; Charles Frierson; John Street; Mitch Johnson; Gene Vance; Mikel Fears and Charles Coleman

**Absent** 5 - Ann Williams; Chris Moore; Tim McCall; Chris Gibson and Rennell Woods

#### 2. NEW BUSINESS

##### **Joint meeting between City Council and MAPC**

*MAPC members present:*

*Kim Elmore*

*Ron Kelton*

*Jerry Reece*

*Lonnie Roberts*

*Jim Scurlock*

*Joe Tomlinson*

*Mayor Perrin explained this is a joint meeting of the City Council and MAPC to discuss concerns that either the Council or MAPC may have.*

*Councilman Dover stated that over the past four years the Council has heard eight appeals and only overturned two. One was regarding Panera Bread's drive-thru window and the other was an older couple who wanted to do wholesale out of their home. Councilman Vance noted the Panera Bread location originally was supposed to be on the east side of Stadium across the street from where it is currently located.*

*Mayor Perrin added this is just an open forum and is intended to be a learning experience for everyone.*

*City Planner Otis Spriggs provided the Council with information that is provided to any new members of the MAPC or anyone who is interested in City policy. He noted from time to time text amendments to the Code will be done to deal with issues. Currently, the big topic is multi-family housing. Also, the housing study should be going to public hearings within the next few months. He explained they have tried to provide the needed information in a timely matter. He further explained attendance at the meetings is very important, as well as making a complete and concise recommendation for the City Council. Mr. Spriggs added that policies will need some updating, which will come from the Vision 2030 plan before being presented to the MAPC and City Council. He then recommended having this joint meeting once a year in order for the two bodies to stay in communication with each other.*

Mayor Perrin stated MAPC is doing a good job and he understands how difficult it is to see the cases that are coming before them every month.

MAPC Commissioner Jim Scurlock explained one of their hardest issues they have to face is, for instance, when they talk about apartments because no one wants them next to their properties and it seems like if enough people speak in opposition to the development then it will be turned down. He noted there is a real reason for apartments because not everyone can start out buying a \$100,000 home. He feels it is disingenuous to the citizens to not build apartments, even though complaints should be heard. But, an avenue should be made for people who want to propose apartments and not turn them down because more people may be against the proposal than for it. Councilman Fears stated it is hard for him to hear complaints from the citizens of his ward and then to vote for whatever they may be opposing when he is an elected official. Commissioner Scurlock explained there has to be some give and take on both sides because if it's not going to be done then there's no need for land owners and engineers to spend thousands of dollars preparing the plans. He added one of the main problems people have with apartments is crime, but developments like duplexes are safer.

Councilman Frierson noted at the last Council meeting he spoke in favor of voting with MAPC rulings. He then said he's all for affordable housing, but it shouldn't create other problems like crime. He added that as long as the law is followed and the MAPC followed the facts, then he will support their decisions because that was their function when the MAPC was first created. He noted he doesn't think a full scale appeal hearing is a function of the City Council. Councilman Frierson explained he is for a moratorium on apartment developments until the City can look at the current developments and decide whether or not more apartments are needed. He went on to discuss an apartment complex that was nice, then was sold to someone who lived out of state. The maintenance of the complex went down after the sale. Councilman Vance stated that should be covered in City laws; that progress should not be stopped because the laws can't keep up with it.

Councilman Dover explained he doesn't think the Council should rezone property because it won't sell under current zoning. Councilman Vance added that they also should not deny a rezoning just because of traffic problems in the area. Councilman Dover further explained they should look at the big picture when rezoning as opposed to small ones because with the small pieces of property there will be more in the surrounding areas who want to rezone as well. He stated when rezoning properties they should look at the whole geographical area and how it will be affected. Discussion was held concerning apartments and duplexes. Councilman Vance noted that whether each person is appointed or elected they should all represent the whole City of Jonesboro and not just a ward. Further discussion was held concerning apartments. Councilman Dover questioned how they can encourage citizens to rent out apartments that are currently vacant as opposed to building new ones. Mr. Spriggs answered that is what the housing study is looking at, but there are some discrepancies in the code that need to be looked at to correctly define apartments and duplexes. He agreed the City needs to provide incentives to companies so they will renovate current properties in order to be rented out. Councilman Vance noted that during two mass annexations everything was zoned R-1, whether there was a house on the property or not. He referred to one piece of property that has a business on it, but it was zoned R-1. Further discussion was held concerning apartments. Mayor Perrin explained some of that is addressed in the housing study. They are currently looking at the study piece by piece to find ways to improve things.

Commissioner Scurlock stated one alternative is for business owners to be landlords over apartments for employees who come in from out of town to work. Commissioner

*Roberts added local ownership is the key, but he doesn't know how to require local ownership yet. Further discussion was held concerning management of apartment complexes. Mayor Perrin then noted over the last three years several apartment complexes have been put under nuisance abatement.*

*Councilman Dover questioned if someone brings a rezoning to the Council whether or not they have to tell the Council what is going to be done with the property. Mr. Spriggs stated no, depending on how they approach the rezoning. Councilman Vance added it is different for limited use overlays and planned unit developments. In those instances, plans have to be submitted to show the full developments or else the developments won't be built. Mr. Spriggs agreed. He stated unless the City starts looking at things like overlay districts, there may be a future problem with properties zoned R-2 or R-3 that are sold and then undergo some sort of redevelopment.*

*Commissioner Scurlock referred to two recent rezoning requests, one that was passed and one that wasn't. He stated that to him he'd rather live in the neighborhood that wasn't approved than the one that was approved. He explained the one that wasn't approved had green space and play areas for children, while the one that was approved had homes ten feet from each other. He further explained they are almost not looking at the intent of what is going on. Mr. Spriggs stated it also depends on the type of development because some people don't want a big yard to maintain.*

*Councilman Vance explained the Land Use Plan is something to be looked at by the planner and isn't something that is fixed in stone. Councilman Dover agreed, but added the total area needs to be looked at as opposed to just a small area so the effects on the whole area can be looked at. Mayor Perrin stated he had asked Mr. Spriggs to look at the percentage of rezonings that followed the Land Use Plan and those that did not. Mr. Spriggs answered that percentage was just about equal between those that followed the plan and those that did not. Mayor Perrin explained the Land Use Plan should be looked at every year because it ties into so many other things, such as the Traffic Plan. Councilman Vance added the Street Plan is the same and should be updated often. He then questioned how traffic counts can be obtained. He stated he knows Aggie Road has a lot of traffic, but so does Main Street and Nettleton Avenue and it's hard to compare everything when there's no data to back it up. Mr. Spriggs answered the new traffic engineer position with the City will help and they are also looking at an access management plan so that if you reach a certain threshold on a development, then a traffic analysis is required with a rezoning. He added they have required that in other rezonings, like Harps, when they knew traffic would be an issue.*

*Councilman Vance discussed impact fees. Councilman Dover questioned how the fee is calculated. Councilman Vance explained it can be done in different ways. It can be a percentage of the cost of the development. He added some developments like the Sam's Club and the Mall at Turtle Creek had to pay for stop lights and/or traffic lanes. He expressed some concerns about impact fees negatively affecting development in Jonesboro, but the City could ask the developers to put up some money to help towards improvements in the area, such as traffic control.*

*Councilman Dover suggested improving the City's control of what is built and how it's maintained.*

*Councilman Frierson stated he finds it educational to read the MAPC minutes. He added the comments by the staff as to whether or not the request follows the City's plans are also helpful.*

*Mayor Perrin reiterated the definition of apartments needs to be looked at in relation*

*to duplexes. He also stated facilities need to have more lighting, especially with apartments.*

**COM-12:076**

Informational handout presented by City Planner Otis Spriggs at the joint meeting between the City Council and the MAPC on October 15, 2012

**Attachments:** [Information](#)

**This item was Read.**

**3. ADJOURNMENT**

**With no further business, the meeting was Adjourned.**