

Salisbury, North Carolina
October 18, 2022

REGULAR MEETING

PRESENT: Mayor Karen K. Alexander, Presiding; Council Members Harry McLaughlin, David Post, and Anthony Smith; City Manager Jim Greene, Jr., City Clerk Kelly Baker; and City Attorney J. Graham Corriher.

ABSENT: Mayor Pro Tem Tamara Sheffield.

Salisbury City Council met in Council Chambers in City Hall located at 217 South Main Street. The meeting was called to order by Mayor Alexander at 6:00 p.m. A moment of silence was taken.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Alexander led participants in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Thereupon, Councilmember Smith made a **motion** to adopt the Agenda as presented. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

RECOGNITIONS

Mayor Alexander recognized Communications Specialist Kaisha Brown on her selection as Rotarian of the Year by the Rowan Rotary Club. Rowan Rotary Club President Dr. Jared Tice explained the requirements for receiving the annual Rotarian of the Year award. He added Ms. Brown has brought ideas and energy to the Rowan Rotary Club for two years as she stepped into formal and informal leadership roles. He added her background and experience in marketing, communications and community organizing had an immediate impact on every aspect of the Club.

He thanked Council for recognizing Ms. Brown. Council congratulated Ms. Brown on her accomplishment.

Mayor Alexander recognized Public Works Director Craig Powers as he leaves his position with the City. She thanked him for his leadership and work as an exemplary employee.

Councilmember Post commended Mr. Powers for all he has done for the community and the Public Works Department.

Councilmember McLaughlin wished him well on his new job.

Councilmember Smith noted Mr. Powers' professionalism, and he thanked him for his service to the City.

Mayor Alexander commented on an article in the *Salisbury Post* in appreciation of the response received from the Fire Department during a recent fire. She noted she is also grateful for the service the Fire Department provides to the community. She thanked Fire Chief Bob Parnell for the training and leadership provided to the Salisbury Fire Department.

PROCLAMATION

Mayor to proclaim the following observance:

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

October 22, 2022

CONSENT AGENDA

(a) **Minutes**

Approve Minutes of the regular meeting of October 3, 2022.

(b) **Right-of-Way Use Permit**

Approve two Right-of-Way Use Permits for the intermittent use of two parking spaces on Main Street from October 31, 2022 through December 16, 2022 and the sidewalk and one travel lane on East Fisher Street from October 19, 2022 through March 1, 2023 for renovations to the Bell Block Building.

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Alexander opened the floor to receive public comments.

There being no one to address Council, Mayor Alexander closed the public comment session.

SPECIAL USE PERMIT – 529 WEST INNES STREET

This item was postponed.

MAJOR SITE PLAN – MINOR VEHICLE SERVICES FACILITY

Development Services Manager Teresa Barringer addressed Council regarding a request for a major site plan for the construction of a 1,710 square foot minor vehicle services facility located within a General Development overlay. She noted Strickland Brothers Oil is the name of the business to be located at 1511 Jake Alexander Boulevard South and the petitioner is JZN Properties, LLC.

Ms. Barringer pointed out the current zoning is Corridor Mixed Use (CMX) with a General Development overlay and the current zoning will not change. She explained the proposed development is for a 1,710 square foot minor vehicles services oil change facility that is a by-right use, but requires Council's approval due to the General Development. She added the proposal is to be reviewed as a major site plan even though it is under 10,000 square feet.

Mayor Alexander asked if Council needs to consider changing the General Development Overlay. Ms. Barringer agreed it may be time to remove the General Development Overlay from the LDO.

Ms. Barringer commented the proposal is consistent with policies C-3 and C-10 of the Vision 2020 Comprehensive Plan. She noted the proposal was reviewed by the Technical Review Committee (TRC) and the Planning Board and positive feedback was received.

Councilmember Post noted the proposal does not involve a zoning change and is a by-right use because of the floating district. Ms. Barringer agreed, and she explained the General Development Overlay is similar to a Conditional District Overlay, which provides another level of review beyond the basic district zoning. She added it was a protective layer while the LDO was being updated and provides an opportunity to consider development in that corridor.

Mayor Alexander asked about the process to make changes to the General Development Overlay. Ms. Barringer noted it can be brought back to Council as a text and map amendment once it has been properly noticed, and brought before the TRC and Planning Board for recommendations. By consensus, Council agreed.

Councilmember Post asked if any feedback was received from the owner of the residence beside the property. Ms. Barringer indicated she had not received feedback, and she explained the LDO does not require a public notice for this level of review. Councilmember Smith asked if the property owner is aware of the proposed construction. Ms. Barringer noted the property was listed for sale for commercial development. She added the LDO does not require the applicant to notify neighbors due to the property being in the corridor commercial development area. Mayor Alexander noted it is by-right use. Ms. Barringer agreed.

Mr. Rick Bravo with Timmons Group stated he is working with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) regarding driveway permits and connectivity between properties.

Thereupon, Councilmember McLaughlin made a **motion** to approve the construction of a 1,710 square foot minor vehicle services oil and lube facility at 1511 Jake Alexander Boulevard South. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

THE PLAZA – REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Planning Director Hannah Jacobson asked Council to consider releasing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the purchase and redevelopment of the Plaza building located at 100 West Innes Street.

Ms. Jacobson provided background and history of the Plaza building. She stated in the late 1980s Ralph and Lauren Ketner purchased and renovated the property, and donated it to the City in 1991 to establish a downtown residential neighborhood. She explained the deed restrictions require that the City maintain ownership of the building for 30 years.

Ms. Jacobson stated over the last several months, staff worked on developing a RFP to solicit proposals from interested and qualified contractors. She added in the spring of 2021, the City hired a real estate development consultant to explore possibilities for the redevelopment of the property. She explained in May of 2022, staff received guidance from Council to proceed with drafting an RFP, and it met with leaseholders announcing the City's intention to market the building. She stated leaseholders requested they receive a six month notice before relocation.

Ms. Jacobson explained the City's vision and priorities for the Plaza include using the ground floor for retail which would add activity and vibrancy to downtown. She stated there is also a strong demand for market-rate downtown residential units.

Ms. Jacobson added the contents in the RFP include reviewing at the community profile which evaluates Salisbury as a whole while also discussing the City's strategic location in the region. She stated the Downtown Market Analysis, Main Street Master Plan, Downtown Parking Study and the Downtown Salisbury Inc. (DSI) Main Street Annual Report are all available if requested.

Ms. Jacobson provided aerial images of the two parcels the City hopes to receive proposals. She emphasized the first parcel is where the building lies at the corner of West Innes and Main

Streets, located within the Downtown Mixed-Used (DMX) zoning district, which is also part of the local historic district. She added the parcel is 53,200 square feet on 0.15 acres, and she stated the building is currently used for residential, retail and office space. She noted the second parcel located in the back is used for parking.

Ms. Jacobson stated the City requires the proposals to include a description of the project from the developer, team qualifications, project experience, and a project timeframe, which needs to include a plan for how the redevelopment will occur and how they will notify current tenants. She added proposals that give tenants less than six months' notice to relocate or to raise rental rates would not be considered.

Ms. Jacobson added if Council were to proceed with the RFP, the selection process has been broken into three phases including the first phase which is solicitation and would include releasing the RFP on October 19, 2022, issuing press releases, and posting it on the City website. She stated this process would consist of scheduling building tours for early November and setting a deadline for proposal submissions in early December. She explained the second phase is the selection which evaluates proposals based on the project concept, feasibility, and public benefits. She commented during this phase, the City would determine if the sale should follow an upset bid or an economic development process. She noted the final phase is executing the sales contract and following up on the upset bid process if applicable.

Councilmember Post asked if the City plans to include an asking price on the building. Ms. Jacobson confirmed there is no asking price at this time. City Attorney Graham Corriher stated the City has the opportunity to reject all bids even without an asking price.

Councilmember Post questioned if interest rates would affect the sale of the Plaza.

Councilmember Smith stated the Plaza is a symbolic and historic space.

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to release a request for proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of the Plaza Building located at 100 West Innes Street. Mayor Alexander, Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

EMPLOYEE PAY GRADE AND CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

City Manager Jim Greene asked Council to consider approval of the proposed employee pay grade and classification schedule included in the Classification and Pay Study recommended by the MAPS Group. He stated this is a critical plan for the City and involves nearly a year of review and analysis by the MAPS Group.

Mr. Greene explained the importance of the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) recommended at 2.75%. He stated a 1% bonus for full and part-time employees is also included in the budget. He added if Council approves the pay grade and classification schedule, the City will move forward with salary increases on the November 4, 2022 paycheck. He explained

employees would receive individual letters this week to inform them if they are eligible to receive an increase as part of the compensation plan.

Councilmember McLaughlin inquired about the Deputy City Manager position listed in the Plan. Mr. Greene explained the job is a recommendation and is not currently included in the budget.

Councilmember Smith stated he supports the compensation plan both economically and ethically.

Mayor Alexander asked if all employees would receive the 2.75% COLA. Mr. Greene confirmed and stated the adjustment would be effective November 29, 2022. He added the 1% bonus check would be distributed in December.

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to approve the employee pay grade and classification schedule as recommended by the MAPS Group. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Councilmember Post noted Council needs diversity in its Boards and Commission applications. Mayor Alexander encouraged the public to apply to serve on a City Board or Commission.

Historic Preservation Commission

Upon a motion by Councilmember Post, Mayor Alexander and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voting AYE, the following appointment was made to the Historic Preservation Commission.

Spencer Dixon

Term Expires: 03/31/2025

Councilmember. Smith suggested Council consider possible barriers may impact a diverse applicant pool. Ms. Baker indicated application information is advertised, posted on social media, and flyers are provided at City events. Mr. Smith added he posted information on his social media about Boards and Commissions applications. Mayor Alexander suggested Council post on its social media encouraging the public to apply.

CITY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

(a) Purchase of Property located at 130 South Main Street

City Attorney Graham Corriher introduced Parks and Recreation Program Manager Sam Wilborn to present on the purchase of the Wells Fargo Building.

Mr. Wilborn noted the City received a Rural Transformation Grant from the North Carolina Department of Commerce for \$875,000 for the purchase of the building. He stated the Wells Fargo Building is approximately 30,000 square feet and would be used as an event and office space for the Parks and Recreation Department.

Mr. Corriher stated the City is under a six-month option to purchase the Wells Fargo Building and has until November to decide. He added the option money that the City has paid would go towards the purchase price of the facility. He explained the contract called for a \$906,000 purchase price, but the seller agreed to reduce the price to fit within the confines of the Rural Transformation Grant.

City Manager Jim Greene thanked Mr. Corriher and staff for its work on the purchase of the building. He commented the parking spaces behind the building are critical for Bell Tower Green Park and for the growth of downtown as staff looks into additional residential and retail parking.

Thereupon, Councilmember Post made a **motion** to exercise the option to purchase property located at 130 South Main Street in an amount not to exceed \$875,000. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post, and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

City Manager Jim Greene thanked the Police, Fire, and Communications Departments for working closely with Livingstone College over the past few days. He added his thoughts and prayers are with the Livingstone community.

Mr. Greene stated that with Council's approval he would work with staff to evaluate downtown parking and present recommendations on a residential or employee parking program to Council.

Mr. Greene provided an update to Council regarding improvements needed at City Park. He added Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff went out to evaluate and address those concerns. He stated improvements are needed but not budgeted at this time. He added staff has reviewed the parking at City Park and one of the parallel spaces can be converted into a vertical space in order to relocate the current ADA parking space.

Mr. Greene added several Parks and Recreation facilities need improvements and if Council wishes to move forward, staff would have to look at funding from outside sources, and developing public and private partnerships.

Councilmember Smith inquired about the Parks and Recreation Department providing pickleball and tennis lessons to get kids involved and create a more diverse environment.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Smith thanked the Police, Fire, and Communications Departments for their correspondence with Livingstone College. He added the Livingstone community is in his thoughts and prayers.

MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMENTS

Mayor Alexander reiterated how proud she is of the collaboration between City staff, Livingstone College President Dr. Anthony Davis, and college personnel during the shooting at a concert that took place following the Livingstone College Homecoming Football game.

(a) Cultivating Community Conversations Event

Mayor Alexander announced the Police Department will host its next “Cultivating Community Conversations” Thursday, October 27, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. at Milford Hills Baptist Church located at 1238 East Colonial Drive. Members of the Police Chief’s Advisory Board will lead open discussion between officers and residents. Food will be served.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Councilmember McLaughlin. Mayor Alexander, and Councilmembers McLaughlin, Post and Smith voted AYE. (4-0)

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Karen Alexander, Mayor

Kelly Baker, City Clerk