

*****April 13, 2015*****

The Signal Mountain Town Council held its regular monthly meeting on Monday, April 13, 2015, at 6:30 p.m. in the Town Hall. Those present were:

Those present were: Mayor Dick Gee
Vice Mayor Bill Wallace
Councilmember Chris Howley
Councilmember Robert Spalding

Also present were: Town Manager Boyd Veal
Town Attorney Phillip Noblett
Town Recorder Carol White
See attached list for others present

Mayor Gee led the pledge of allegiance. Stacey Seals, Fire Chaplain, gave the invocation.

Minutes

The minutes for the January 12th regular meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

The minutes for the January 23rd special agenda meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

The minutes for the February 9th regular meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

The minutes for the February 23rd regular meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

The minutes for the February 27th special agenda meeting were presented. There being no changes, the minutes were approved.

Presentation

Jim Floyd, Assistant Vice President and Cindy Shell, Transportation Designer of Volkert, Inc. gave the Council a presentation on the traffic calming study they performed of the Hidden Brook neighborhood (copy attached).

Citizen Comments

Mayor Gee invited comments from the audience.

Alan Davidoff, Creekshire Drive, said that the speed limit on Creekshire Drive had been lowered from 30 to 25mph based only on the complaints of a few residents. He said that a lot of things are done that don't take into account the will of the majority of residents but are done for needs that are perceived but not real. Mr. Davidoff said that actions are supposedly taken for safety and the benefit of children. He stated that these are perceived and not real needs. He said that this is a new tyranny based on presumptions that there is a problem that may not actually exist. Mr. Davidoff stated his belief that it was more comfortable to go fast over speed bumps and that drivers will soon realize that and will be speeding over the bumps. He said there are no records of any accidents in the area and again stated that this is a perceived and not a real need. He stated that the recommended actions are intrusive.

Jim Wakim, Hidden Brook, said he does not like bumps but does like the idea of speed humps. He said that he walks every day and sees speeders every day. He said that the speed feedback signs are not effective.

Katie Gibbs, Dunsinane, said that the safety of the neighborhood children makes the 3 seconds it takes to drive over a speed hump well worth the short delay. She said that she does teach her children the dangers of roads, but they are children and sometimes their judgement is not the best.

Jennifer Goodrich, Creekshire Drive, said that people need to teach their children to not play in the street. She said she recently drove down Arden Way and there were children playing tag in the street, a tricycle and basketball goal in the middle of the street and a mom sitting on her deck talking on her cell phone. Ms. Goodrich stated that roads are for traveling, children should play on their property. She then said a child ran into the street in front of a mother and daughter driving from Timberlinks up Middle Creek. She said the child's mother came out and yelled at the driver and not the child. Ms. Goodrich said that parents should not train their children to play in the street. She said that MTAS says to educate, enforce, as a last resort - engineer. She asks if this is our last resort, has the Town exhausted educating and enforcing or is just jumping to the third stage.

Sherry Lawrence, Arden Way, said that she represents the senior citizens point of view. She stated that her nice quiet neighborhood has been "bumped". She said there was no warning nor were residents asked for their input. Ms. Lawrence said that it hurts for senior citizens to go over the speed bumps.

Melissa Cantrell, South Drive, stated that the zoning ordinance on the agenda needs work. She said Section 2 allows for the creation of ¼ acre lots and mentions abandoned lot lines. She stated that abandoned lot lines are legally gone and don't exist, that they are not just dormant, but gone. Ms. Cantrell said this ordinance creates an arbitrary category of property that does not exist anywhere else in Tennessee. She asked what happens when an owner has ¾ acre and wants to create a ¼ acre lot but has no record of a lot line being abandoned. She ask if they will be told they don't fit into the new classification. Ms. Cantrell explained that this allows for ¼ acre lots

without any resemblance to a conservation subdivision because there is no trade off of buildable land being maintained as open space. She said that if this action is to address the problem of infill lots (over regulations that already exists) that needs to be addressed with an eye toward unintended consequences.

The Council asked Mr. Veal to provide them with a cost estimate to install the traffic calming systems recommended by Volkert. Mr. Veal stated that process was already begun and he will provide that to the Council soon.

Gloria Stewart, Old Riding Way, asked if the Town has looked into obtaining right-of-way for a new entrance into the high school. Mr. Veal said that in the past the Town had studied a roadway off Timesville that would be adjacent to Hidden Brook. He said that while he was not involved in that, he believed it was determined to be unfeasible, cost prohibitive or to have ownership issues.

There being no further comments, the meeting resumed.

Discussions

Councilmember Spalding said he would like to have the monthly police reports posted on the Town's web site. Mr. Veal said he will make sure that is done.

Other Business

Mayor Gee provided the Council with a draft performance evaluation. He asked the members to review it as a model for the evaluation of the Town Manager.

Councilmember Howley said that the US 127 repairs are on the TDOT 2020 schedule. He said that is too far away with the current condition of that road. He stated that the Council is trying to speed up those needed repairs.

Councilmember Howley informed the Council that he has been involved in working on the Nolan and Signal Mountain High School traffic issues. He said that Jonathan Welch, Chief Williams and both principals are working to relieve the traffic congestion when Nolan lets out.

Councilmember Howley informed the Council that sales tax collections are down 20% over the last 4 months compared to last year. He said that he believes that is due to the WWTA moratorium in opening new businesses in the Town. Councilmember Howley said he was aware of 2 or 3 business who would like to open here but cannot because of the moratorium. He stated that ultimately means the Town will have to find that money somewhere and that might mean coming back with a property tax increase.

Mayor Gee said that the moratorium will not go away any time soon. He said that it all hinges on the City of Chattanooga and he doesn't look for any relief within the next few years.

Mayor Gee said he has contacted District 27 Representative Patsy Hazelwood, who is setting up a meeting with himself and Councilmember Lusk for next week to speak with representatives of TDOT.

Mr. Veal informed the Council that the May agenda session will be re-scheduled to May 22 due to the holiday.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Dick Gee, Mayor



Recorder