

Town of Garner Town Council
Work Session Minutes
September 29, 2009 – 6:00 P.M.

The Garner Town Council met in Work Session at 6:00 P.M. on Tuesday, September 29, 2009 in the Town Council Meeting Room.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Attending: Mayor Williams, Council Members Behringer, Marshburn and Singleton. Council Member Johns arrived at 6:35 pm and Mayor Pro-Tem Kennedy has an excused absence

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Hardin Watkins, Town Manager; Rodney Dickerson, Assistant Town Manager; Bill Anderson, Town Attorney; Brad Bass, Planning Director; Lin Jones, Finance Director; Sonya Shaw, Parks & Recreation Director; Tony Beasley, Economic Development Director and Reginald Buie, Neighborhood Improvement Manager

DISCUSSION

Request for Consideration to Allow Chickens

Presenter: Kristen Warren: Founder, Friends of Hens

Kristen Warren gave a Power Point presentation of the introduction and overview explaining the reasons citizens want to keep hens and dispelling some common myths.

Reasons citizens want backyard hens:

- Having fresh eggs that are nutrient rich with less fat and cholesterol.
- The chickens provide organic fertilizer which is rich in nitrogen and breaks down quickly and easily for the garden.
- They can reduce their solid waste by scratching through the compost pile or old leaves and decompose the pile faster.
- The hens eat insects, moles, snakes, frogs or mice which help insect control.
- They are fun and educational pets for children.
- Having hens we can choose to grow our own eggs when we can and this improves animal welfare.

Myths and issues dispelled:

- Odor problem addressed chickens have absolutely no smell.
- Noise problem by not allowing roosters solves this issue.
- Diseases from chickens are not transferable to humans.
- Predators can be addressed by having a proper coop design and construction.
- Appearance is controlled by the people who keep these hens in attractive coops and keep them clean.
- Compliance/Complaints data suggests the backyard hens would not be a significant problem

Changing the Ordinance:

Ms. Warren would like the Town of Garner Animal Ordinance to be amended to allow a limited number of hens without the restrictions outlined in Section 3-5. Roosters are already restricted in Section 3-10.

Ms. Warren suggested that in Section 3-5(a) chickens and fowl could be removed and provided their own restrictions in item (f), such as:

(f) Female chickens (hens) are allowed in residential zones if (1) the total number does not exceed X, (2) proper housing and a secure area are provided, and (3) housing is kept clean.

Ms. Warren concluded in saying:

“This would be good for Garner businesses, education, food banks and its citizens”. The Friends of Hens group is available for community classes, education, and outreach projects.

Mayor Williams responded by saying the presentation was great.

Council Member Singleton asked what is the average size of a hen and what is their expected life span.

Ms. Warren replied there are many different varieties of hens and the expected life span is about ten years.

Council Member Marshburn asked what the size of the local group is and is there widespread support.

Ms. Warren replied the local group began in 2009 and there are about fifty people involved.

Council Member Marshburn asked how the waste is disposed of.

Ms. Warren replied the waste is disposed by using it as fertilizer in your garden and putting the waste into compost. Hens turn the compost themselves, so there are no flies or odor.

Council Member Marshburn asked in terms of presentation has there been any complaints that Ms. Warren knows of.

Ms. Warren replied the only complaint she has heard of was related to keeping a rooster. Because of the complaint about the rooster it had to be kept indoors, such as a garage.

Council Member Behringer asked if any Homeowners Associations have restrictions regarding keeping hens.

Ms. Warren replied some Homeowners Associations have restrictive rules that poultry is not allowed. If you have a HOA you need to make sure that chickens are legal to have.

Council Member Behringer said she remembers chickens going into the garden and eating all the vegetables.

Ms. Warren said yes the chickens do eat vegetables and they can fly up to seven feet high.

Council Member Behringer said the information and presentation was excellent.

Council Member Johns asked if there have been any complaints from her neighbors.

Ms. Warren replied some people do not want to keep chickens themselves because they feel it is too much of a bother. The neighborhood children do come over to look at the chickens and help collect the eggs.

Council Member Marshburn asked if a neighbor has a dog, does the dog bark more if there are chickens next door.

Ms. Warren replied she does have a neighbor with a dog and he barked a few times. Once the dog got used to the chickens being there, he did not bark anymore. Chickens are usually silent and make very little noise.

Council Member Singleton showed the magazine called Our State and referred to an article in the magazine that says most towns allow chickens.

Council Member Marshburn asked Ms. Warren's opinion if there should be a limit on how many chickens people should have.

Ms. Warren replied in her opinion there should be eight to ten chickens allowed and no more.

Mayor Williams thanked Ms. Warren and explained it is up to Council on what the next step is.

Action: Refer to Law & Finance Committee

Motion: Singleton

Second: Marshburn

Vote: Unanimous

Progress of Transportation Plan Update

Presenters: Brad Bass, Planning Director

Scott Lane, Louis Berger Group, Inc., Planning Director

In attendance from the Planning Commission were Carol Hutchinson, Chairman and Elmo Vance, Vice Chairman.

Mr. Bass presented an update on the Transportation Plan. The Town Council authorized the development of a new Transportation Plan in October 2008. The Town retained the consultant services of the Louis Berger Group to develop the new plan. A Steering Committee was appointed by Council to assist Staff and the Consultant with this effort. The project kicked-off in January 2009.

The Steering Committee developed a vision statement. The vision statement says the following; Garner's transportation system provides its citizens and businesses with efficient and safe

travel options for auto, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit users that serve transportation needs in a balance with land use development patterns as well as regional and local partnerships.

The Consultant and key Town staff met on May 8th for a half-day work session to finalize the preliminary recommendations for roadway, public transportation, and bicycle/pedestrian projects.

At the June 9th meeting the Consultant provided the committee with a brief summary of public comments that were gathered from the public-on-line survey conducted from March to May 2009.

At the July 14th meeting the Consultant developed three conceptual intersection designs chosen by the Town staff (based on Steering Committee and public input) to alleviate congestion at these locations. The review of candidate intersections for potential design treatment took place. A preliminary draft of several chapters of the Plans was distributed to the Committee at that time.

At the July 3rd Independence Day Celebration at Lake Benson Park the Consultant set up a kiosk to gather additional public input on the Transportation Plan.

On September 15th a preliminary draft Transportation Plan document was presented to the Transportation Steering Committee for its review and comments.

The Staff and Consultant will continue their analyses and draft recommendations for a presentation at the Public Workshop that will be held in the Fall of 2009.

Adoption of the Transportation Plan is anticipated in early 2010.

Scott Lane Consultant from Louis Berger Group thanked Mayor Pro Tem Kennedy and Council Member Marshburn for being part of the Steering Committee.

Scott Lane's Power Point presentation consisted of the following:

- (A) Philosophy of the Plan Update:
 - Major Physical Recommendations
 - Transit ridership increased
 - Bicycle and pedestrian travel
 - Supporting Economic Objectives
 - Integrated with Main Street/Garner Road Design Study
 - Focus on Bang-for-the-Buck Improvements
- (B) Ways of Managing Congestion
 - Capacity Expansion: Widen & New Roads
 - Better Connections: Collectors & Calming
 - Managing the Demand: Bike/Pedestrian & Transit
 - Managing the Supply: Access & Signals
- (C) Plan Progress
 - Started on January 7, 2009 (First Committee)

Anticipated Completion-January, 2010

COMPLETED ITEMS	REMAINING ITEMS
Inventories	Public Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work Shop ▪ Planning Commission ▪ Public Hearing
Roadway Studies	Implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Costs ▪ Calendar
Steering Committee	Intersection Studies
Travel Modeling	Steering Committee
Public Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Survey ▪ July 4th Celebration 	
Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical, by Mode ▪ Policy & Design Guides 	

(D) What You'll Find in the Plan

Travel Modeling

- Greatly Improved from Previous Version
- With/Without Southern Wake Freeway

Street Inventory

- Integrating Land Use, Accident Data, Geometrical Data
- Aid with Development Requirements

Corridor Analyses

- Assessing Corridor Level of Service (Florida Q/LOS Model)
- Multimodal (Auto, Bicycle, Pedestrian, Transit)

Access Management

- Reducing Accidents
- Extending Roadway Capacity

Best Practice Guide

- By Roadway Typology
- Intersections
- Public Transportation

- Bicycle
- Pedestrian

Conceptual Intersections

Action: Discussion of Transit Station Review, public workshop and back to Council

Urban Archery Hunting Season Within the Town Limits

Presenters: Gary Thomas, Urban Archery Advocate, Grovemont Road Resident

Greg Batts, NC Wildlife Resources Commission

A presentation was given on Bow and Arrow Hunting Season which takes place on January 9th thru February 13th, 2010. The Urban Archery Hunting Season is available for cities, towns and villages that submit to the Wildlife Resources Commission by April 1 of each year a letter of intent to participate in the season.

Mr. Thomas stated the idea of having this extended season could help in the over population of deer within the Town limits. In his opinion car accidents, deaths and property damage would decrease. All of his deer meat goes to a local butcher, which he pays for, to be dressed and donated to the Hunters for Hunger Organization. He has donated over 100 pounds of deer meat.

Council Member Singleton asked how does the allowable areas get chosen and are you allowed to hunt on other people's property.

Mr. Batts replied hunters wishing to hunt in an area participating in the Urban Archery Season should call the participating municipality or visit its website to obtain a map showing lawful areas to hunt and additional information on specific restrictions that may apply to each area.

The Urban Archery Season does not obligate private landowners to allow hunting on their property, nor does it eliminate the ethical requirement for obtaining permission from the landowner before hunting. Hunters are legally required to obtain written permission to hunt on posted property.

Council Member Marshburn asked if the hunting distance from dwellings apply to schools.

Mr. Batts replied there is a distance of 100 feet from any dwelling. A buffer could be indicated around the schools.

Council Member Marshburn asked if the Wildlife Commission would verify the decrease in the deer population.

Mr. Thomas replied it would take several years to see the decrease.

Council Member Marshburn asked with this hunting season extension does it specify what kind of deer could be hunted.

Mr. Batts replied you can hunt buck and doe as long as you buy the correct licenses.

Council Member Singleton asked is this type of hunting only for Town limits.

Mr. Batts replied yes this is only in urban municipalities and managing wildlife within the city limits of a county.

Council Member Marshburn asked if hunting deer is the only reasonable method of decreasing the population.

Mr. Batts replied yes this is the best way for decreasing. Contraceptives are very costly and then you would need to tag each deer. When you turn them loose it may be hard to find the same deer again for the second application.

He also said if there are any further questions to contact the Town of Elkin and the Town of Smithfield who allow this extended season.

Council Member Johns asked if he saw someone hunting illegally who should the call go to.

Mr. Batts replied the Wildlife Commission is the contact.

Mayor Williams thanked Mr. Thomas and Mr. Batts for the presentation.

Action: Referred to the Law & Finance Committee

Garner Road Overlay District Grant Program Update

Presenter: Brad Bass, Planning Director

Garner Road Overlay District was adopted by Town Council on October 21, 2008. Thirty-six existing businesses are affected by the Overlay District Retro-Fit Landscaping Requirements. Exiting businesses have two years to comply with landscaping requirements.

The Town Council authorized a Grant Program to assist existing businesses (75% in 2009 and 50% in 2010). Initial notice to business owners and property owners was sent out on November 8, 2008. The second notice to business and property owners was sent on June 19, 2009.

Five properties have completed the Overlay District Landscaping Requirements and qualified for Town grant assistance. The amount of \$9,522 in Town grants have been awarded to date.

Projects that have come in are as follows:

- Hayes Chapel at 315 East Garner Road
- Noles Auto Sales at 1312 West Garner Road
- Louis Alexander Property at 1343 West Garner Road
- H & L Electrical at 2027 West Garner Road

Projects currently in progress of completion:

- Bryan LP Gas at 1313 West Garner Road
- Eastern Courier Corporation at 2043 West Garner Road

Fourteen properties have contacted the Town regarding compliance prior to December 2009.

- Charles Evans at 2033 West Garner Road
- Amerigas Propane at 1503 West Garner Road
- David Rivers at 713 West Garner Road
- (Martin-Marietta to purchase) at 950 East Garner Road
- Christ Temple of the Apostolic Faith at 2034 West Garner Road
- Cloverdale Barber Shop at 2030 West Garner Road
- Garner Mini Storage at 2016 West Garner Road
- Grocery Boy Jr. at 1912 West Garner Road
- Pearce Brothers Roofing at 1714 West Garner Road

- VFW Property at 1706 West Garner Road
- Garner Diner at 1336 West Garner Road
- Used Car Sales Lot at 810 West Garner Road
- Peace Chapel of Deliverance at 1001 West Garner Road
- Palmer Memorial Baptist Church at 2038 West Garner Road

The next steps are for staff to follow up with all businesses who have contacted the Town. Staff will contact the remaining businesses reminding them of the Overlay District Requirements and the Town Grant Program.

Mr. Bass stated the Town has 60% compliance to date.

Council Member Marshburn asked what if the business is unable to comply due to financial reasons.

Mr. Bass replied a property owner on West Garner Road was given some other options such as writing a letter of hardship and other alternatives to be discussed with staff.

Council Member Johns asked if paving and gravel for parking lots was included in the improvements.

Mr. Bass replied paving and gravel for the parking lots are not included in these improvements but, restriping would be included.

Time Extensions for Permits Adopted by Legislature Update

Presenter: Brad Bass, Planning Director

The critical provision of the new State Permit Law S.L. 2009-406 (Senate Bill 831) is this: For any development approval that is current and valid at any point during the period beginning January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2010, the running of the period of the development approval and any associated vested right is suspended during the period beginning January 1, 2008 and ending December 31, 2010.

Temporary use permits as well as temporary signs are not covered under this law. All of the permits expire after January 1, 2010 under this new law.

“Development Approvals” under the new law include:

An amendment to the law was made that also applies to non-regulatory aspects of development approvals as well. Specifically, a revived development project’s utility allocation is also extended under the new law unless such allocation was assigned to another development project and there is not sufficient allocation available to serve both projects. In that case the revived project would receive first priority allocation consideration (i.e. first in line for new allocation).

The only other implication of this new law is that numerous other projects received permit time extensions. In some cases projects received up to three years of additional unexpired permit time and with that an extension of sewer allocation as well.

Below is a list of projects currently on file with the Town of Garner that have been approved but are not under construction at this time.

SITE PLANS

- Sigma II at Lot 15 White Oak Business Park
- Bella Sera @White Oak at White Oak Road & Salt Hill Road
- Garner Village Court at Lot 4 Garner Village Court
- Lot 22 White Oak Business Park at Tinstee Court

SUBDIVISIONS

- Parkland at US401 & Parkland Grove Blvd
- White Oak Farms at Ackerman Road & Hebron Church Road
- Curtiss Road Property at end of Curtiss Drive

STAFF APPROVED SITE PLANS

- 1000 Greenfield North for Office & Warehouse
- 1100 Greenfield North for Office & Warehouse

Council Member Singleton asked if a project loses a year do they still get another year.

Mr. Bass replied the Council can determine that decision to either vote yes or no to the extension.

Council Member Marshburn asked what the direction of movement in the legislature is.

Mr. Bass replied House of Representatives General Assembly Dave Owens stated everyone is watching this law. So far three amendments have been made to this law and the language is still pretty rough.

Action: Update Received

White Deer Project Construction Update

Presenter: Tony Beasley, Economic Development Director

A Power Point presentation was given by Mr. Beasley consisting of photos of White Deer Park from the beginning to the present.

Construction Progress Work Schedule:

DATE	PROCESS
Sept 30	Punch list for structures
Oct 05	Punch list for park and trails
Oct 15	Buildings turned over to the Town. Office furniture delivered. Alarm system activation. Locksmith to key building. Phone system operational, insurance in place, utilities transferred and CO from inspections.
Oct 16	Furniture complete, refrigerator installed, staff to begin relocation from Town Hall to White Deer Park.

Oct 19	Staff operates out of White Deer Park & IT completes installation.
Oct 23	Park facilities turned over to Town. Town insurance active
Oct 24	Soft opening to public – No Announcements
Nov 01	Grand Opening and Dedication of White Deer Park

Mr. Watkins asked about the solar panels and what they provide.

Mr. Beasley replied the solar panels provide heat for the restroom floors and hot water to the sinks.

Mr. Watkins stated the park looks like it is ready to open now.

Mr. Beasley asked Council what date would work best for another tour.

Ms. Shaw, Parks & Recreation Director, presented an operational plan starting with the White Deer Park vision statement. The vision statement states: White Deer Park is a safe, predominantly passive park that is sensitive to the environment, preserves wildlife habitat, and is aware of its impact on surrounding areas. The park provides health and wellness within the community and serves as an example of environmental responsibility and stewardship.

Operating Hours

- Normal Park hours: Monday-Sunday: 8:00 am until sunset
- Nature Center hours: Tuesday-Saturday: 9:00 am - 5:00 pm and Sunday: 12:00-5:00 pm

Staffing

- Normal operating hours: two permanent staff
- Evening and weekend rentals, various facility attendants
- Full and part-time staff will be crossed-trained to operate the nature center during staff days off, vacation, sick, etc.

Daily Operations

Staff will be responsible for:

- Opening and closing of Nature Center
- Answering phones and greeting visitors
- Taking care of department programs, registrations, facility reservations, shelter rentals
- Serving as park patrol and providing park information
- Addressing maintenance concerns with Public Works Department

One Year Operational Plan

0-3 months: Establish operational practices: During this time staff will get adjusted to the facility, grounds and operational needs.

3-6 months: Staff will begin offering educational workshops and classes to various user groups, mostly co-sponsored with community agencies.

Some of the department's current programs will offer classes at the Nature Center (preschool, youth, afterschool, school's out, summer camps, etc). In addition, adult programs and special events will also be scheduled.

6-12 months: Continue increasing programming, marketing and outreach efforts to increase park attendance; develop a non-profit group to financially support park programs.

Parks Rules and Regulations

- Park hours are sunrise to sunset
- No alcohol, weapons, or fireworks allowed on park property
- No open fires. Grill only in designated areas
- No unauthorized motorized vehicles on trails
- Pets must be kept on leashes at all times
- Pet owners must clean up pet waste
- Stay on designated trails for your own safety and the protection of plants and animals
- Do not pick, remove or disturb plants or wildlife in the park
- Littering is illegal. Dispose of trash in the appropriate containers
- Please dispose of recycling in the appropriate containers
- In the event of an emergency, call 911
- For general questions, contact Garner Parks & Recreation at 919-772-4688

Facility Emergency Plan

- Facility contact information, staff contact information
- Emergency assembly point
- Facility alarms and utility shut-offs
- Emergency notification: 9-911 and police non-emergency line
- Evacuation plans for emergencies or natural disasters
- Hazardous materials training
- Security plan, alarm system, educating park users on trail safety, emergency phone box locations, police securing park at night
- Continuous staff training

Community Partners/Organizations

- **NC Office of Environmental Education**
Offer planning & programming assistance
- **Wake Nature Preserve**
Nature professionals who identify ecologically valuable areas in the County and provide educational resources for staff
- **NC Department of Environmental & Natural Resources**
Provide educational resources for display, distribution and instruction
- **Local Eagle Scouts and Scout Groups**
Current group project is building bird houses
- **Garner Bluebirders Group**
Clean and maintain bluebird boxes at Lake Benson Park; will do the same for White Deer Park
- **Leave No Trace Center for Environmental Ethics**
Provide environmental education teaching materials and instructors

Proposed Rental Fees for Shelters

Pine Shelter: Nature Center side, shelter beside playground
50 people at \$20/hour minimum of 2 hours

Holly Shelter: Nature Center side, shelter on right when entering lot
35 people at \$15/hour, minimum of 2 hours

Homestead Shelter: Nature Center side, shelter on right beyond old homestead
45 people at \$20/hour, minimum of 2 hours

Sweet Gum Shelter: Middle shelter east side, nearest to restrooms
50 people at \$20/hour, minimum of 2 hours

Maple Shelter: Left side of parking lot on east side of park
50 people at \$20/hour, minimum of 2 hours

Proposed Rental Fees for Nature Center

Nature Center Classroom (Indoor classroom only) by groups during regular hours of operations: \$40 per hour, minimum of 2 hours; With Learning Deck: \$60 per hour, minimum 2 hours

Learning Deck during regular hours of operation: \$30 per hour, minimum 2 hours

Nature Center Classroom (Indoor Only) for times outside of normal operating hours: \$50 per hour, minimum of 2 hours; With Learning Deck: \$70 per hour, minimum of 2 hours

Learning Deck for times outside of normal operating hours: \$40 per hour, minimum of 2 hours

Proposed Program Fees

Based on cost recovery for normal programs:

- Youth 2-12 years at 50% cost recovery
- Youth 13-17 years at 75% cost recovery
- Adults 18 and over at 100% cost recovery

Youth educational groups:

- \$25/1 hour program
- Additional class supply costs will vary

Marketing Efforts

- Multiple articles in local newspapers
- Park information displayed at all Department Special Events and Downtown Summer Concerts
- Map and pictures displayed on the Town and Parks & Recreation websites
- Park tours and updates provided for Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee
- Coordinate efforts with the NC Office of Environmental Education:
Facility will be listed on their website

Park will be featured on their Teacher Tour in October 2009

- Develop park brochure and map for distribution
- Adding White Deer Park and Lake Benson Park to www.visitraleigh.com Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Park will be featured in the 2009 Winter edition of NCRPA magazine

Educational Components to White Deer Park

- Instructional programs which will help fulfill classroom curriculum requirements for NC Public Schools
- Educational displays which will rotate seasonally:
 - Bluebirds, Salamanders, Butterflies
- Public classroom programs (indoor and outdoor) which emphasize environmental education, sustainable practices and minimal impact on the land
- Through a \$2500 grant from Target, a small reading area will be housed in the Nature Center which provides educational materials for park users and encourage early childhood reading
- Interpretational signage placed throughout the park
- Guest presenters and lecturers will be scheduled periodically for public programs
- Public tours which will educate about the park and its low-impact “green” features
- Partnership with other environmental education groups to assist in educating the community about stewardship, sustainability and environmental responsibility

Grand Opening is scheduled for November 1, 2009 from 1:00 until 5:00 with the main event starting at 3:00.

Mr. Watkins asked if there is any feedback from Lake Benson Park regarding White Deer Park opening their gate at an earlier time and who would open the gates.

Ms. Shaw replied they would look into the earlier opening times of the park and Public Works opens the gate.

Council Member Marshburn stated the early walkers may have an issue on where to park their vehicles.

Mr. Watkins asked Ms. Shaw to explore the possibility of opening the gate earlier, maybe by 7:00 am. He also stated during daily operations people who live on the same side of Town as the park can now sign up for all parks and recreation classes at the park. This will make it very convenient for the public.

Council Member Marshburn asked if there is a possibility in using volunteers for park tours.

Ms. Shaw replied yes and also in the Nature Center as well.

Council Member Marshburn asked if people will be able to take a run through Lake Benson Park into White Deer Park.

Ms. Shaw replied staff is looking into it.

Council Member Marshburn asked if there are no smoking areas possible.

Ms. Shaw replied she is not sure of the non smoking areas.

Mayor Williams stated he would like the issue of non smoking areas be discussed.

Council Member Johns asked what the largest possible seating area is.

Ms. Shaw replied about 75 people capacity.

Council Member Johns stated the Boy Scouts from Greensboro wanted to know when they could come and tour the park.

Ms. Shaw said starting around February 2010 the park will be able to provide this service.

Council Member Singleton stated he was glad Council decided to do both phases at once. He asked about signage for the park and where placement of the signs may be.

Mr. Watkins replied staff will look in to it.

Neighborhood Improvement Projects Update

Presenter: Reginald Buie, Neighborhood Improvement Manager

Mr. Buie started his presentation explaining the responsibilities of the Neighborhood Improvement Manager:

- Oversees the preparation of plans and programs in the areas of neighborhood improvement and neighborhood revitalization.
- Serves as a resource to the Town Manager, elected officials, and homeowner group leaders regarding preservation of home value, policies and programs needed to support and sustain neighborhoods, and strategies to improve neighborhoods in need.

Activities and Accomplishments

- Successfully completed the Community Development Academy at the UNC School of Government in Chapel Hill in June 2009.
- Visited Lexington, NC; Salisbury, NC; Concord, NC and Wake County and observed their Neighborhood Improvement Programs.
- Over the 4 months the following program policies have been developed:
 - Town of Garner Neighborhood Improvement Program
 - Town Matching Grant Program
 - Town of Garner Residential & Commercial Property Improvement Program

Wake County Rehabilitation Loan Program

- Wake County Rehabilitation Loan Program offers low interest rate loans to qualifying property owners with fixed or limited incomes for repairs to their homes. This program is also available for rental housing.
- Low-interest Amortized Loans with fixed monthly payments are available with this option. Interest rates and payment terms are based on income.

- Deferred Loans are an option for residents who are at least 62 years of age and/or have very low incomes. With this option, no payments are due until the home is sold or passed on to heirs.
- After rehabilitation is complete, the total of all loans on the home may not exceed 95% of the home's value. Wake County's rehabilitation loans are secured by a note and a deed of trust.

Eligibility Requirements

- Single Family Homes
 1. Owner-occupied single family home
 2. Within Wake County, but outside the city limits of Raleigh, Cary, and Holly Springs
 3. Needs improvements that will cost \$10,000 or more.
 4. Mobile homes must be on a permanent foundation and listed as real property on Wake County's tax records.
- Rental Property
 1. Single-family and multi-family rental property occupied by people with low-to-moderate incomes.
 2. Within Wake County, but outside of the city limits of Raleigh, Cary, and Holly Springs.
 3. Needs improvements that will cost \$10,000 or more.
 4. Mobile homes must be on a permanent foundation and listed as real property on Wake County's tax records.

Possible Repairs

- Roofs
- Framing
- Foundation Repairs
- Exteriors
- Windows and Doors
- Heating
- Air Conditioning
- Electrical
- Plumbing
- Well and Septic

Benefits of the Rehabilitation Loan Program

- Improve the quality of life for one family and one neighborhood.
- Improve the appearance of the neighborhood.
- Improve the value of the home and reduce and/or prevent blight.
- Improve sense of worth of property owner.

Town of Garner Yard of the Month Program

- Designed to offer Yard of the Month to the best maintained residential property and Property of the Month to the best maintained business or commercial property on a monthly basis.

- Each winner will have a recognition sign placed on their property and at year's end each winner will be entered into a drawing for a gift certificate from Lowe's Home Improvement.
- The judging committee comprised of Town Staff will determine the monthly winners using a point system based on pre-determined criteria.

Neighborhood Associations (HOA)

Forest Landing Subdivision

1. Jack Mixell and Sandy Rathjen expressed great interest in starting a Neighborhood Association and great interest in the Neighborhood Improvement Program.
2. Mr. Mixell and Mr. Rathjen are working to get more residents in their neighborhood to be a part of a new Forest Landing Neighborhood Association.
3. Mr. Mixell and Ms. Rathjen were given an application for Official recognition by the Town of Garner.

Short-Term Goals (60-90 days)

Community Questionnaire

1. Once added to the Town's website, the questionnaire will provide a forum for residents to voice some of their concerns about their neighborhood.
2. Information on starting a Neighborhood Association will also be included on the website and in the questionnaire.

Neighborhood Meetings

Begin conducting neighborhood meetings in order to determine which neighborhoods are interested in forming Neighborhood Associations or Neighborhood Watch Groups.

Resource Guide

Establish a resource guide for services provided by outside agencies that may benefit our residents.

Long-Term Goals

Sign Topper Program

The sign topper program is designed to give neighborhoods and subdivisions a sense of identity by placing a sign topper on top of street signs at the entry point and exit points of subdivisions. NCDOT has been contacted for regulations governing such signage.

Homeowner Educational Programs

Work with area banks and financial institutions to offer classes in financial management principles such as credit, credit counseling, foreclosure prevention and other issues that a potential homeowner and existing resident needs to be aware of.

Continue to assist and work with all residents, businesses and associations to improve and maintain their respective areas of Town, one property and one person at a time.

Questions and Answer Session

Council Member Johns asked if rental properties would qualify.

Mr. Buie replied they would have to get the permission from the owner first.

Council Member Marshburn asked if the signage for entry signs from NCDOT will be attached at the top of each existing sign.

Mr. Buie replied yes NCDOT will put the signage on top of the existing signs.

Council Member Behringer said she is very excited for the older neighborhoods to be able to have signage and thanked Mr. Buie.

Mayor Williams asked about the status of the home that burned at 911 Timber Drive.

Mr. Beasley replied Paul Ray of the Inspections Department is working on it.

Mr. Buie will have an update report at every other work session meeting.

Council Member Behringer stated this says the Town of Garner cares about their property and this is great.

Action: Update Received

Economic Downturn Update

Presenter: Hardin Watkins, Town Manager

Lin Jones, Finance Director Assisted on the Information

Relevant Observations:

Well Fargo Securities Monthly Report Summary – September 9, 2009

Recovery will take time to build momentum:

- Forecast for economic growth during the second half of this year and 2010 have been steadily ratcheted up as most of the monthly indicators have come in better than expected.
- Predicting real GDP rising at a 3.7% annual rate, which is 0.3% higher than one month ago.
- Much of the near term improvement comes from a narrowing of the trade deficit and a smaller inventory drawdown.
- Stronger economic growth overseas is boosting demand for exports helping to further narrow the trade deficit.
- Fiscal stimulus dollars are flowing a little more freely.

Believe the economy still faces significant headwinds that will make it difficult to sustain the robust gains.

- Much of the improvement merely reflects a bounce back in motor vehicle production and reduction in the rate of inventory liquidation.

Private final domestic demand or “core” GDP remains exceptionally weak.

- Weakness in private demand means overall growth will decelerate once the inventory drawdown is complete and stimulus programs end.
- While forecasting a substantial deceleration in overall growth a “double dip” is not expected.

Consumer spending got a temporary boost during the third quarter from the Cash-for-Clunkers program.

- Spending for nondurable goods and outlays for services likely will show only a modest increase.
- Consumers are only willing to spend if they are presented with a bargain.
- Even when income turns back up, spending will likely continue to lag as consumers try to rebuild savings.

Residential construction is showing some positive signs.

- Home sales and construction have been helped by \$8,000 tax credit for first time home buyers.
- Once the credit ends the rebound in new home sales and construction may level back out.
- Delinquency rates are surging for both prime and subprime mortgages. As a result, underwriting will remain exceptionally tight.

The Federal Reserve is expected to keep short-term interest rates near current levels until it feels confident that there is little risk of the economy sliding back into recession.

Dr. Donald Ratajczak’s (Consulting Economist) Economic Commentary for Morgan Keegan – September 21, 2009

Bottom line on the economy

- Recovering even more strongly than expected.
- Believes a “double dip” is more than a 1 in 3 possibility.
- Little growth in the next few quarters.
- The world economy is not likely to suffer a “double dip” and any dip in US will be small and temporary.
- Recovery remains intact though with some potential stumbling.
- Predicts a major tax bill next year, because no Democrat will allow estate taxes to vanish.
- The uncertainty of changes in the tax bill may put the caution currently expressed in healthcare stocks from the Obama policy changes to shame.

Construction activity

- Surge in apartment buildings in the Northeast led to the large gains in housing starts in August.
- Single family starts actually fell 3%. Gains in the Midwest could not offset the weakness in the Northeast (added apartments not single units) and South.

Council Member Marshburn asked is there any concerns on sales tax receipts for next year.

Mr. Jones replied it is too early to tell. The property value appears very good but we were reasonable but conservative.

Council Member Johns asked about the collections on taxes and where the Town stands.

Mr. Jones replied starting in November, mid December and the first week in January 2010 over half of the taxes will be collected.

Rodney Dickerson – All-Star Update

The new contractor, All-Star will begin transitioning to the Town of Garner with the garbage and recycling pickup starting on October 1, 2009. All-Star is looking for property in the Town of Garner to operate a facility.

Mayor Williams stated All-Star has been very courteous.

Mr. Dickerson stated the Public Works Department has done a very good job with the addresses and information that was needed to give to All-Star. There have been many very good comments regarding the new recycle roll out carts.

Mr. Watkins stated we have received very good comments on the roll out carts and people are very excited about them.

Council Member Marshburn stated with the new roll out carts we now have an expanded list of items to recycle.

Council Member Singleton said the state of Florida just started their recycling program in 2009.

Reports

Mayor Williams

He reminded everyone about the Firemen's Day Parade on Oct 3rd. He asked if any of the Council Members would like to ride in the parade for the Garner Magnet High School Homecoming Parade.

He asked about the Bainbridge house which has been reported to have 26 rescue dogs. He would like for staff to find the Ordinance that pertains to keeping rescue dogs and possibly to change the limit on how many dogs a household could have and for how long of a time period.

He would like Council to support his nomination for an at-large seat with the NC League of Municipalities Board of Directors. At the October 5th meeting there will be a resolution supporting the nomination of Mayor Ronnie Williams to the North Carolina League of Municipalities Board of Directors.

At the October 5th meeting there will be a resolution supporting the Wake County Mayors Association for Submittal of Legislative Agendas by all Municipalities.

Council Member Johns

He stated the people who live on Bayberry are scared of all the violence.

Mr. Watkins will call the police chief in this matter.

He asked about all the political signs whether or not they are in compliance.

Mr. Watkins replied the Planning Department is handling the sign issues.

Council Member Behringer

She reported the Weston Trace residents are afraid of the gang situation and Van Story Hills has a similar problem area.

She reported six (6) street lights in a row out behind the Target off of Timber Drive.

Council Member Marshburn

He announced his winning of a third place finish in his age group for the White Deer Dash and will be receiving a plaque.

He would like to schedule a meeting with ConAgra to extend our hand to help and hear from them and they can hear from us.

Council Member Singleton

He also asked about the graffiti issue Mr. Sample's was having. He mentioned Paul Cox, Public Works Director and his department could help with the clean up.

He reported a missing sign by the bridge at Vandora Springs and US70 indicating the direction to Clayton. He asked Mr. Dickerson to recreate the drawing placement for the sign (regarding the Clayton directional sign) and give to Public Works for installation.

He and his son attended the White Deer Dash on Saturday and his son entered into his journal all about the race and all the details.

Town Manager

He stated the assessment center to seek out the next police chief went very well.
Finalizing a decision on the candidate will occur in the next ten days.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Adjournment: 10:07

Motion: Behringer

Second: Singleton

Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted,

Catherine Reynolds
Deputy Town Clerk