

**Our Town – Johnson Village, Fry's Spring, JPA**

**August 25, 2016**

**6:00 p.m.**

All Councilors present.

Mayor Signer gave an introduction and welcomed residents.

Rosanna Bencoach explained changes to the Buford Precinct.

**Ms. Portia Schneider** 325 Camellia Drive, said they were excited about the Azalea Park and thanked staff for installing bathrooms and the new shelter. She asked for a water fountain.

-Brian Daly said there is a drinking fountain at the dog park.

**Additional action required:** None at this time

**Ms. Marlene Jones** 103 Elkhorn Rd., Johnson Village, asked if there has been any progress on getting a 21<sup>st</sup> century customer portal for the City's administrative services, such as looking at bill history or setting up automated pay, as well as reporting cracks in the sidewalk or other issues. We should have better services as a modern city. She thanked the City for their splash parks.

-Maurice Jones said we are currently exploring mobile 3-1-1 systems and are reviewing proposals from vendors.

**Additional action required:** Customer service system updates will be given to Council as the RFP process advances. Billing enhancements will be discussed with utility billing and treasurer.

**Status:** This item is expected to be referred to procurement by October 1.

**Ms. Gweneth West** 2531 Willard Dr., said Woodland and part of the JPA that comes from Lynchburg Rd. to Harris is missing necessary infrastructure to handle stormwater. She has had 4 ½ - 5 feet of water in her basement twice. New building at the end of Woodland is planned for 16 units in a small area, and she would like for this to be examined. Taxes in the area – homes currently being built are selling for twice what her home would sell for now, and neighbors are worried that the incoming Wegmans will increase tax assessments, making homes unaffordable for long-term residents. The number of hotels being built in Charlottesville and the Albemarle area, especially along Rte. 29, is a concern.

-Maurice said staff will follow up on the Woodland drainage and development issues.

-Mr. Fenwick said residents can check online in a few weeks to see what follow-up action has been taken.

-Ms. Galvin asked Chris Engel to respond to the number of hotels being built in the area and how it is in keeping with our current tourism levels. Chris said hotels in the area have high daily rates and revenues per room, so this is in response to current demand.

-Ms. Galvin spoke about the importance of providing enough affordable housing.

**Additional action required:** Stormwater issue will be referred to NDS, Public Works, and Public Utilities for review

**Status:** NDS and Stormwater staff are evaluating the site to determine if there are ways to address the problem.

**Ms. Elizabeth Gibson** 1631 Cherry Ave, lives across the street and said we should be conservative while we still can. She said hotels still are not affordable to local residents who need them in case of emergency. She said there are butterfly airways on all the bridges.

-Ms. Galvin said we are going through a major community-wide exercise, the comprehensive plan update, which is the vision of land management in our City.

**Additional action required:** None at this time

**Ms. Jessica Otey** 129 Observatory, said she needs a dead end sign on top of the street where she lives. A dozen people a day turn around in her driveway every day.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from NDS and the Traffic Engineer

**Status:** The Traffic Engineer has reviewed this issue and site, and determined that the current sign is adequate and in the right location.

**Ms. Marga Bushara** 228 Huntley Ave., said there are no sidewalks on Stribling Ave., and this is a very dangerous area for the many pedestrians. No cars stop at the JPA pedestrian crosswalk to allow pedestrians to cross. Signage is blocked by vegetation, and the crossing is obscured by a hump in the road. She asked for a blinking crosswalk to be installed.

-Maurice Jones said Alex Ikefuna will look at the vegetation issue and make sure there is view clearance. Public services will look at restriping the crosswalk and the possibility of a flashing crosswalk.

-Ms. Galvin asked where we are on Stribling sidewalks. Mr. Ikefuna said he will check on the status. He explained the application process to request the sidewalk as a priority.

-Ms. Szakos said new housing built along Huntley should be taken into consideration when considering sidewalk requests in this area.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from NDS, Code Enforcement, Public Works, and the Traffic Engineer

**Status:** The sidewalk requested on Stribling Avenue was recently evaluated as part of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan update (adopted Sept. 2015), but did not meet the threshold for inclusion in this round of sidewalk construction.

The City receives requests for sidewalks on a rolling basis and evaluates the requests every five years to coincide with the city's capital improvement projects budget. Sidewalk construction priorities were recently established with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update and can be found online:

<http://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/neighborhood-development-services/sidewalks>

The following criteria are considered in determining where to construct sidewalk:

- Sidewalk Connectivity – Does the sidewalk connect to existing sidewalks?
- Proximity to attractors/facilities – Is the location within proximity to bus stops, schools, commercial areas, civic building or park?
- Street traffic - What is the posted speed limit, traffic volume and crash history?
- Demand – Is there a demonstrated need as evidenced by land use designation?
- Field conditions – Is right-of-way available? What are the impacts to existing trees? Is minimal cut/fill needed?

The sidewalk on Stribling Avenue will be kept on our list of requests and evaluated in 2019 as part of our on-going capital improvements program.

**Ms. Jennifer King** JPA neighborhood, thanked the City for the process that allows the neighbors to interface with developers and have the opportunity to comment. However, a year later, nothing has happened on a particular property; will that come back to the neighborhood since so much time has passed? Also, she is looking at how health, youth, and elderly issues all connect. She examined the community health assessment MAPP study during a Rotary meeting, and the rate of poverty of 1 in 4 in the City of Charlottesville was staggering to her. Also, the demographic shift in the Charlottesville area in terms of the aging population, and the importance of mental health in the community are areas that she is passionate about. The City should protect the incredible resources in Charlottesville and help them grow.

-Ms. Szakos said Council receives this report annually, and it informs their actions around health, mental health, and other important issues.

-Ms. Galvin said she is the Council representative to the MAPP assessment process, and she agrees that some of the figures are very eye-opening.

-Maurice Jones said the City is trying to tackle the issue of poverty, and they did a report examining barriers to self-sufficiency. Programs have come from that, including workforce development programs, such as the GO programs. He also mentioned that poverty rate is more like 13-14% once you take college students out of the equation, but that is still too high. Our unemployment rate is historically low compared to the state and the nation. We are working with our non-profit partners as well. This is an important issue for the City Council.

-Mr. Signer said this is a compassionate, proactive government, which is reflected in our budget. We are #1 in spending on public health-related issues.

-Mr. Bellamy said he appreciates the volunteer contributions and involvement of community members. He said if the neighborhoods are open to fixing poverty, they have to be open to affordable housing solutions.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from NDS on whether developer would need to share updates

**Status:** The answer is yes. A substantial change in already approved Special Use Permit (SUP), Rezoning (including PUD) may require a developer to revisit the neighborhood to discuss his proposed changes with the residents. The City Council amended the City Ordinance in 2015 to require this citizen input in development review process.

**Andrew Grimshaw** 129 Observatory Ave., said there are a lot of poor refugees living in the Shamrock Apartments, so all poverty is not concentrated in one place. He said he is fine with living in an open neighborhood, but he does not like the implication that we are not comfortable living with certain people just because of where they live. He asked about two nearby properties that have been classified as derelict and asked what they can do as citizens to move these properties towards condemnation.

-Alex Ikefuna said there are often legal implications involved with abandoned properties.

-Craig Brown said citizens can make the City aware of derelict properties initially, and keep them apprised of any changes that may take place.

-Mr. Fenwick reminded residents of openings on boards and commissions and asked them to volunteer and encourage others to volunteer. Mr. Signer asked that open boards be read aloud.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from NDS and City Attorney about abandoned properties

**Status:** City Code enforcement staff is investigating this issue and will contact the property owner to secure the property per code to keep it from being accessible for illegal activities.

**Ms. Iris Cox** 550 Cleveland Ave., said no developers have invited her to give input on developments in her neighborhood. Cleveland Ave. is a dead end street, and with hundreds of units going up at the end of the street, traffic influx and flow is a big concern. She also asked if the City takes down streets because they are ugly or poor. What happens to preserve old neighborhoods?

-Ms. Szakos said the development was approved years ago, before neighborhood engagement was a requirement.

-Alex Ikefuna offered to speak with Ms. Cox about traffic issues. Traffic egresses would have been approved with the development.

-Ms. Galvin said getting sidewalks and traffic lights in place as we build new housing is critical. Much of the traffic congestion is caused by commuters who cannot afford to live in the City, so housing that is being built is addressing that need.

**Additional action required:** Follow up by Alex Ikefuna NDS

**Status:** The City has historic preservation program and staff that is responsible for coordinating activities and actions designed to protect historic neighborhoods. Regarding the development occurring on Cleveland Street, the plan went through review process and the entrance and exit for vehicles were approved as part of the plan review process.

**Mr. Norman Morris** 1621 Cinder Ave., on the Shamrock side, said the City put in two storm drains. When Stratford Ct. was developed, and building continued down the cul-de-sac, they stopped installing proper infrastructure. Neighbors throw trash in the V-culvert, and a tree has fallen, causing flooding in his yard and the yard of a few of his neighbors. He said he applied for a board, but he knew he wouldn't be accepted because Council had already decided who they wanted to be on the Blue Ribbon Commission.

-Ms. Szakos and Mr. Signer said they had over 80 applicants, and only 6 people were chosen. There are many other openings, and he encouraged him to continue applying to openings that interest him.

-Alex Ikefuna is going to examine the fallen tree and the blocked drain.

**Additional action required:** Follow up by Alex Ikefuna NDS

**Status:** This “v culvert” is on private property. Unless there is an easement dedicating maintenance to the City, it is a private issue to resolve. It is recommended that the complainant work with his neighbors to remove the tree/obstruction.

**Ms. Marlene Jones** 103 Elkhorn Rd., said an elderly gentleman had a bad experience with the workforce development center. The people who run it tell people they need to do things on the computer, and those without computer skills are not treated well and get intimidated. She asked that the City suggest new developments employ City residents. She said we have a challenge finding someone decent to run public housing and referenced the issue at Crescent Halls.

-Ms. Szakos said she believes this may not be the City center; the City’s center is in the library, and people who cannot use computers are treated very well. She said the GO Hospitality program does help with this.

-Mr. Bellamy said our new public housing director, Grant Duffield, has been doing a wonderful job.

-Alex Ikefuna explained the City’s policy on hiring local workers. They can enforce requirements with federal funding, but not private funding.

**Additional action required:** Follow up with Economic Development to discuss feedback

**Status:** Although we are unsure that the experience referenced by Ms. Jones actually occurred at the Downtown Job Center, located on the lower level of the Jefferson Madison Regional Library on Market Street, staff have been made aware of the concern and reminded to always provide good customer service to all visitors to the center.

**Ms. Cynthia Gibson** 230 Huntley, said the sidewalk at Stribling has been an issue for many years. She asked for a traffic study focused on speeding along Stribling. We need to see police make sure cars coming through Stribling doing 30-50 mph ensure compliance with the speed limit. A resident suggested speed humps.

-Capt. Lewis said she will increase enforcement along this area and look into installing speed machines.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from Charlottesville Police Department

**Status:** The traffic concerns expressed around Stribling Avenue are being addressed. Increased enforcement has been deployed and the traffic unit has deployed the speed trailer. They are in the process of collecting data for the study.

**Mr. John Shepherd** 112 Village Ct., Johnson Village, said the site of the hotel being built at Cherry and 5<sup>th</sup> already has bad traffic because of the hospital, especially in the morning. Something must be done about the narrow street and the tight intersection here. He is a bike rider, and the City installed “smart traffic lights”, where if there is no car in one direction, the light will turn green in only one direction. If you are a bike sitting at the intersection, you cannot get a green light. For ex: traffic light at Cherry and 5<sup>th</sup>, Shamrock and JPA, and leaving Johnson Village at Cherry and Shamrock. A resident said the intersection at Fontaine and Maury is a problem as well. Mr. Shepherd said he is opposed to smart

traffic lights; they should be simple and reliable.

-Alex Ikefuna said Cherry Ave. was selected as a priority area, and work will be done here regarding traffic issues.

-Mr. Signer and Ms. Galvin spoke about how the Cherry Ave. small area plan came to be and how important and effective citizen engagement was in the process.

**Additional action required:** Follow up from NDS and the Traffic Engineer

**Status:** The City traffic engineer evaluated the intersections of Cherry & Shamrock and JPA & Shamrock. The issue of bicycle detection is currently unresolved at the intersection of Cherry & Shamrock due to some trees covering the whole intersection and affecting the camera's ability to detect bicycles at the intersection approaches. This issue is currently under investigation for a solution. The issue of bicycle detection was resolved at the intersection of JPA & Shamrock as it was related to the intersection's geometrical constraints where a few seconds delay was applied to clear the right turn vehicular movement prior to triggering a thru or a left turn bicycle movement call. JPA & Shamrock traffic signal is working in accordance with its engineering design. The light at the intersection of Cherry and 5<sup>th</sup> is currently under investigation.

**Mr. Scott Bandy** 1639 Cherry Ave., thanked Mr. Daly for guiding the public input for the Ragged Mountain Natural Area. He said the Stadium interconnector project back in 2006-7 created problems. Cherry Hill development had houses and streets go in before the sewer line was installed. He said the Ragged Mountain reservoir is our primary source for drinking water.

**Additional action required:** None at this time

Paige Rice read board openings.

Thanks to Anna's Pizza for the food.

Adjourned.