

City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2017
7:00 p.m.

The Peachtree City Mayor and Council met in regular session on Thursday, March 16, 2017. Mayor Vanessa Fleisch called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Others attending: Terry Ernst, Mike King, Kim Learnard, and Phil Prebor.

Public Comment

Eric Imker discussed the upcoming annual Monopoly Tournament, which would be held at Los Mariachis restaurant on April 22. The event was drawing participants from multiple states, including one of the Hasbro Grand Champions. Imker then discussed the upcoming Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) Referendum on March 21, listing the types of purchases to which the extra penny of sales tax would and would not apply.

Minutes

February 27, 2017, Joint Meeting Minutes
March 2, 2017, Regular Meeting Minutes,
March 4, 2017, Workshop Minutes

King moved to approve the February 27, 2017, joint meeting minutes as amended, the March 2, 2017, regular meeting minutes as written, and the March 4, 2017, workshop minutes as written. Ernst seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Consider Amendments to City Budgetary Policies

Ernst moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Learnard seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

New Agenda Items

03-17-03 Public Hearing – Consider Variance Request, 102 Brooksong Way

Planning and Development Director Mike Warrix presented the variance request, saying that Lot 2 of Brookfield (102 Brooksong Way) was 5,700 square feet and was zoned GR-3 General Residential. The owners, Robert and Imelda Hills, were requesting a six-foot variance to the 20-foot rear building setback in order to build a 10 x 14-foot addition to the home that would encroach approximately six feet into the setback. The Brookfield Homeowners Association (HOA) had submitted a letter of their approval of the project.

Warrix continued that, if Council granted the variance, then staff had some conditions that should be applied.

Mr. Hills then presented some photos of his home and yard to indicate the location of the proposed addition. He indicated the HOA had discussed the proposal with his immediate neighbors and received no objections.

No one spoke for or against the variance request.

Ernst asked if this was one of the smaller lots in the neighborhood, and that was confirmed. King noted he had received a call from one of the neighbors with questions about the variance, but they did not express any concerns or opposition.

Learnard noted that she always appreciated the efforts of residents to improve their property; however, she was concerned that the addition would make this property inconsistent with the rear property views of the other homes on the street. She said the space was very tight, and she would ultimately have to vote against the variance.

King wanted to make sure the neighbors behind the home, and not just those on either side, had no objections. Prebor noted that a sign advertising the request had been placed on the property, and the Leland Cypress hedge would block the view from one of the neighbors, and a wall screened the view from others.

Fleisch asked if the HOA did the lawn maintenance throughout the neighborhood, and that was confirmed. She said that assured her the HOA was active, but she was concerned not to have letters from the closest neighbors or confirmation in the HOA letter that they had all been contacted and did not object to the variance. She asked the applicants when they would break ground.

Mr. Hills responded that his goal was to obtain the permits and break ground immediately if the variance were to be granted.

Prebor asked if Council could approve with the condition that the homeowner obtain letters of support from the adjacent neighbors. City Attorney Ted Meeker said yes. King wanted to make sure that included the neighbors behind the lot were aware of the variance request. Learnard noted that pre-approval put a lot of pressure on those neighbors and suggested continuing the request until the April 6 meeting. Fleisch agreed, saying the homeowner should return with letters from the adjacent homeowners supporting the issue, or a revised letter from the HOA saying they had spoken to all the adjacent homeowners and there were no objections.

Prebor moved to continue the item to the April 6 meeting. Ernst seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Council/Staff Topics

Preview – Records Management Ordinance/Policy

Public Information Officer/City Clerk Betsy Tyler explained that governments generated a lot of records in the course of business and had to maintain a policy to manage those records so the information was timely, complete, accessible, and usable. This included the destruction of records that were no longer needed or required.

Toward that end, Peachtree City had both an ordinance and a policy in place to assure that the City complied with state law in the management and destruction of records while reducing the City's liability and working with the organizational and staffing structure.

The ordinance formally adopted the retention schedule published by the State of Georgia and the City policy that would be followed for any exceptions to the state schedule. Tyler noted that the State published and updated this schedule, which was a "Best Management Practices" manual for retaining and destroying records. Local governments were required by law to keep records for the length of time listed in the state schedule, but could keep for longer periods if a local supplemental schedule was in place noting the length of time specific records would be kept and the local reason for doing so. Local governments also had to list retention schedules for any types of records not covered by the state schedule, and the City needed to have a policy in place that had been reviewed by the state to limit the City's liability when records were requested but were no longer available because they were destroyed according to the state and city's schedule.

Tyler continued that destroying records too soon violated state law and increased the City's liability in lawsuits. The inability to produce records that should be kept by law could be prejudicial against the City's defense efforts. Conversely, keeping records for too long was also a liability – it consumed space, maintaining too many records hindered staff's ability to access records that, under Open Records Law, had to be provided in three days if they were open records and in the

City's possession. Finally, the same prejudicial outcome in lawsuits arose if the City still had records, but failed to disclose or provide them because they could not be located.

Tyler noted the only amendments proposed for the ordinance reflected recent changes in the state department responsible for the records program and updating the state retention schedule.

The state had updated the Local Government Retention Schedules in 2016, which had led to staff's review of the current policy and exceptions. Tyler was recommending reverting to the state schedule for the retention of City Council meeting audio and video recordings. Previously the state had no listed time for these, and they could be destroyed or deleted once the meeting minutes were adopted. The City had adopted a 15-year retention of the recordings, which really was not feasible, and was unnecessary because the minutes were the official record of the meetings.

Staff was recommending converting to the state schedule for the retention for the supplemental meeting packets. Previously, the state had no retention for these but had updated the schedule to include these records and recommended a five-year retention. The current City policy listed the retention for these packets as permanent.

Staff was also recommending a change in the retention of golf cart registration forms. Peachtree City's golf cart registration program had been a unique situation to the City for decades, and those types of forms were not listed in the state schedule. The City's previous retention had been for five years following the City's decal replacement or renewal program. Staff was recommending changing that to three years, based on the new three-year renewal process.

The Peachtree City Fire Department was recommending changing their retention of inspections to the new five-year retention (previously there were varying retention periods for different components of their inspections).

Human Resources was also recommending several changes to their supplemental schedule with a goal of only accessing terminated employee files one time for purging and consolidation. That would take place after an employee left the City, which would then leave the retirement file as a permanent record. Those records that the state listed for a shorter retention (short-term and long-term disability claims at three years, Section 125 supplemental benefits at six years after termination of program participation while employed) would remain in the supplemental schedule at seven years to match the department's process.

Tyler said the proposal that evening was a draft and she was still working with other departments and the state on the final wording. She asked Council to forward any questions or concerns to her and said staff would be bringing back the final version of the ordinance and policy for Council approval at one of the meetings in April.

Preview – Land Development Ordinance Amendment – Tree Fund

Rorie explained that, three years ago, the commercial landscaping requirements in the Land Development Ordinance had been amended to provide for an alternate compliance mechanism. He continued that, as the City encouraged economic development, the available land was being used up, creating occasional difficulties complying with the current requirement of three caliper inches of canopy trees and two caliper inches of understory trees for every 1,000 square feet of impervious developed. On very tight properties, the trees could be overcrowded, which did not encourage tree growth.

The change three years ago state that, if a property could not bear the full amount of trees, as determined by the Planning Commission, then up to 50% could be planted off site onto City

property (rights-of-way, recreation areas, open space, etc.). The ordinance also required three years of maintenance for the trees, which became difficult to track when trees were spread around the City. The timeline for planting trees could also prove difficult during a development process because trees could not be planted during the hot summer months.

Rorie said staff was proposing the additional option of payments to a tree fund in lieu of planting. The Planning Commission would still determine that planting on-site was not feasible, at which time the developer could donate the cost of purchase and installation (based on the other landscaping going onto the site) to the City. The City Manager would administer the funds, which could only be used on trees of two caliper inches in size or greater (purchase, installation, maintenance, or relocation).

Rorie noted that the City maintained 159 trees in the medians of Peachtree Parkway South, and over 750 tree rings throughout town. One segment of the Parkway had maple trees, and another had Bradford Pears, which were reaching the end of their normal life-span. Those trees would need to be replaced over time.

Rorie also noted that the large maple tree at Drake Field was dead, despite three years of working with an arborist to save it. That tree was 30 inches in diameter. With Earth Day approaching on April 22, and the City's efforts to move toward a Green Communities Initiative (no net loss of trees in City parks and facilities), the proposed amendment would help fund replacing trees as they died.

Rorie then introduced Jeff Millen, a Fayette Master Gardner through the University of Georgia Extension Office, who was proposing an option for the Drake Field maple that would soon be removed.

Millen said that he was working to make Fayette the first county in Georgia with a Butterfly Trail, and he had been installing Monarch butterflies to help maintain the species as their primary nesting plant (milkweed) disappeared. They had leased the greenhouses at the old Fayette County High School to grow the plants, which would be installed at no cost to the City. They were also installing one at the Line Creek wetland area and working to get that location certified as a Monarch habitat.

Learnard asked who would own and maintain the garden. Rorie said the City would own it and it would be maintained through the UGA Extension volunteers. Fleisch wanted to make sure the planting would work with the overall landscaping for Drake Field.

Rorie said he would be coming back to Council on April 6 with the ordinance amendment and would keep moving forward with the butterfly garden concept (whether at Drake Field or another location).

There being no further business to discuss, Learnard moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 p.m. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Betsy Tyler, City Clerk



Vanessa Fleisch, Mayor