

**City Council of Peachtree City
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 3, 2022
6:30 p.m.**

The Mayor and Council of Peachtree City met in regular session on Thursday, February 3, 2022. Mayor Kim Learnard called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Others attending: Gretchen Caola, Frank Destadio, Mike King, and Phil Prebor.

Announcements, Awards, Special Recognition

None

Presentation

Peachtree City Post Office Concerns

Billy Posey said he was retired from the Post Office as a postal inspector investigating mail fraud. He was there to request the assistance of all Peachtree City in getting the mail drop box in front of the Peachtree City Post Office reopened. It had been closed and the openings taped up since October, 2020, Posey said. The Post Office stated it was because there had been a collections box break-in. Posey went on to say there had been a reduction in the number of collection boxes nationwide because there was not a need for them. However, he said he believed Peachtree City had fewer drop boxes per capita than most cities.

He said there were ongoing problems at the Peachtree City Post Office. Many business owners went outside of Peachtree City to do their mailings because of the issues. He filed an open records request and learned there were 72 complaints. Posey recalled attending a meeting at City Hall in 2017 regarding the post office to address late mail complaints, poor delivery service, and low staffing.

The outside collection box was needed, Posey continued, relating how he saw a man in a wheelchair struggle inside to drop off a bill payment. He went on to say he had written to U.S. Rep. Drew Ferguson but was disappointed in his office's reply. It explained that the box had been vandalized, and the Post Office would not reopen it without a review. He pointed out that the break-in occurred a year and a half ago.

Posey closed by recalling that Coach Kirby Smart and the Georgia Bulldogs lost to the University of Alabama in the Southeastern Conference Championship Game in December, but Smart changed his playbook, and UGA beat Alabama for the National Championship just a few weeks later. Peachtree City needed to change its playbook and work with the Post Office to get the box reopened.

Public Comment

Suzanne Brown called for Council to begin each meeting with a one-minute prayer after the pledge of allegiance. She said the United States Congress began each session with a prayer. Brown stated the country was founded with Judeo-Christian ethics, and the Constitution preserved our rights. The prayer should ask for guidance to help elected officials make the right decisions and act in the best interests of the citizens, Brown said, adding if anyone did not want to pray, they could silently meditate. She closed by praying that Council start the practice of prayer at each meeting.

Keith Larson reflected that two months had passed since the Multi-Use Path System Advisory Group presented its findings and recommendations to Council. In her State of the City address, the Mayor said path safety would be a priority. The first step, Larson said, should be adopt a formal path safety

policy incorporating the Safe System approach that would provide the framework for implementation of improvement projects to the highest risk level areas as resources were available.

He said he had forwarded to Council a draft path safety policy implementing the Safe System approach along with the opportunity for Peachtree City to join a Safety First challenge initiated by the National League of Cities. The City, he said, could commit to implementing the advisory group recommendations in the first 100 days to get started for the Safety First challenge.

Council should pass a local resolution or safety plan to demonstrate a commitment that advanced the Safe Systems approach. They should also sponsor a safety demonstration or safety intervention project while gathering community input and analyzing safety impact. Residents wanted to see the City respond in the near term with visible and meaningful actions. He said he and others in the advisory group, along with new volunteers, would be willing to assist the City in implementing the path safety recommendations.

Agenda Changes

None

Minutes

King moved to approve the January 20, 2022, regular meeting and executive session minutes. Destadio seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

1. Donation of Motorized Wheelchair for Peachtree City Library

2. Acceptance of Multi-Use Path Easement-Panasonic

Destadio moved to approve Consent Agenda items 1-2. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Agenda items

07-19-C2 Intergovernmental Agreement and Design Criteria of Redwine Road Tunnel

More than three years ago, the City started negotiations with the County about constructing a tunnel under Redwine Road to help ensure the safety of students who drove golf carts into the Starr's Mill school complex, King stated. Two and a half years ago, they entered into an agreement with the County to get that done. As late as January 26 of this year, the County was ordering equipment and working on the design to get this project started. Suddenly, it was delayed by Peachtree City, and King said that frustrated him. It was delayed to consider a bridge along Panther Path. It would be 21 feet high and at a 45-degree angle across the street with 90 to 100 feet rise along Redwine Road on the Peachtree City side and 100 or so feet north of Panther Path.

That was an eyesore, King said, and it would require removal of private property trees, including mature magnolias, as well as the removal of setback flora along the west side of Redwine Road. If they went ahead and built the tunnel where they had planned, it would join the County's Federal aid project to access an approved cart path from Highgrove to Panther Path, which was where the School Board wanted it. Most of the Peachtree City residents would access it there, instead of where they currently crossed Redwine, at Foreston Place, which also was where any resident coming from the south side would cross. With a tunnel, they could travel for a couple of extra minutes and cross more safely.

King said they had agreed to do this, and the delay frustrated him. They should say "no" to the bridge. They would not be allowed any input in how it would be built, the materials, or design features. He said he, as a Councilman, could not see this happening in Peachtree City.

Learnard thanked King for initiating this discussion. Peachtree City was one of the few, maybe the only, municipalities in Georgia that had term limits for its Mayor and Council, she noted, and that meant turnover at least every eight years. Right now, there was a new Mayor and two new Council members, and questions came up when there were new people. One of her questions was why were they not planning on a bridge to get golf cart drivers across Redwine Road to the Starr's Mill schools? She reviewed the location, purpose, and impact of a bridge project. It would not just have an impact at school times—there were concerts and sporting events on weekends and at nights, and often the carts were driven by underage teens on dark roads. Fayette County had agreed to pay for the bridge or the tunnel, which was half a mile away nearer to Robinson Road. Learnard said she did not believe students would be willing to travel half a mile out of their way to take a tunnel, then travel half a mile back, but that was currently the plan. She wanted them to decide tonight if they wanted to continue with the tunnel or change plans to build the bridge.

She showed the approximate location of the bridge on a map. They did not know what it would look like since it had not been designed. The County would pay for it, so the County would design it and install it. Peachtree City owned the property on the west side of Redwine and would have to grant an easement.

The County Commission signed the IGA in June, 2019, but Learnard noted there had been conversations about the project at its meetings as recently as August of 2021. The IGA, Learnard continued, stated that it could be modified at any time by mutual written consent of both parties. The County was willing to do that as evidenced by discussion at their August 26, 2021, meeting.

The Mill Pond subdivision was going along the west side of Redwine Road, Learnard noted, and that developer paid for a traffic study that the County Engineer presented to the County Commission at that August meeting. The County Engineer found the company that did this study to be competent, and the study to be inclusive and neutral. They looked at whether a tunnel, bridge, or a High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) signal at an at-grade crossing would be best. Safety was their top consideration, but they also studied traffic impacts and patterns, property impacts, future maintenance, utility impacts, and cost. They also delved into what would be the best long-term solution to get cart traffic across Redwine. Learnard said a tunnel under Redwine would be fine if it was closer to Panther Path, but there were utility constraints in that area that made a tunnel unfeasible in that location.

The traffic study indicated that daily vehicular traffic on Redwine Road was 9,679. Daily golf cart traffic on Panther Path was 621 trips, and that was expected to increase when Mill Pond was complete. There were 374 daily golf cart trips across Redwine at Foreston Place, which was about midway between Panther Path and the location of the projected tunnel.

Learnard displayed a photo of a line of students on golf carts headed south on the path along Redwine approaching the intersection with Nesmith Court in the Mountbrook neighborhood. This illustrated why Mountbrook residents were concerned about getting out of their subdivision in the mornings.

Prebor asked how the bridge would alleviate traffic backups? There were golf carts coming from west of Redwine Road that would take the bridge to get to school, Learnard replied. They would not have to use the at-grade crossing. Caola noted that the traffic study showed 78 carts on average crossed in the mornings at Foreston Place, and those were the kids from Peachtree City. Learnard said that was right. There were 85 crossings in the afternoon and an average of 374 per day.

Trips on Panther Path, now at 621 per day, were predicted to jump to 881 when Mill Pond was built, the study showed. Prebor questioned that more than 200 carts would be coming from the new subdivision, where there would be just 74 homes. That would be three per house, he pointed out.

Learnard went on to give the traffic engineers' summaries of each of the factors they had considered. A pedestrian bridge would eliminate conflict points, while an at-grade crossing could create new points of conflict. The bridge would have no impact on Redwine Road traffic, but the at-grade crossing could add delays, especially in the mornings. The bridge would reduce crossings on Nesmith Court, while the at-grade crossing would add more. The impact to property was deemed minimal to moderate for the bridge, but minimal to none for the at-grade crossing. The impact to utilities was yet to be determined for the bridge, but would be moderate for the at-grade crossing, where there would be signal maintenance and power costs. The bridge was estimated to cost about \$2.5 million that the County had indicated they would pay, while the at-grade crossing should be about a tenth of that. A bridge would be a long-term solution, while the long-term usefulness of the at-grade crossing were not known.

Learnard read comments from the County Commissioners at the August 26 meeting. Eric Maxwell called the decision a "no-brainer" due to safety concerns, saying an at-grade crossing was not safe, and a tunnel at that location was not feasible. He said a bridge would be there for many years, providing safety to young cart riders. Lee Hearn said he was surprised to learn there would be 850 golf carts per day and predicted that number would only increase. Learnard then added that she did not know where that 850 figure came from, but Peachtree City did plan to connect along SR 74 from Mill Pond to the tunnel at SR 74, which meant easy access for carts in the southwest area. She added that four kids on a golf cart coming from The Gates, running late to Starr's Mill, would not take the time to go up to a tunnel a half mile away. Getting back to the Commissioners' comments, she read that Edge Gibbons pointed out that the study recommended a non- at-grade crossing, and only if you could not do that, an at-grade crossing.

The Mayor presented a list of considerations for Council, with safety for the students as the first item. The traffic study recommended a non- at-grade crossing and noted that the at-grade crossing was not feasible at that location. The list went on to note that considerable growth in the number of golf cart trips at Panther Path was predicted. Fayette County would pay for the bridge. Peachtree City would have to provide an easement on the west side of Redwine from land they already owned. The Commissioners were willing to modify the existing agreement. Learnard said safe golf cart access and improved traffic operations could increase property values in the area. She noted that cart traffic impacted vehicular traffic on Redwine. Lastly, she said, City Council members were visionaries. They were the ones who had to forecast future needs and respond with planning and decision-making today.

This was about more than access to three schools. They were talking about football games and concerts, with students and parents driving at night. She felt that if they did not act now, then five or 10 years from now Council would be having a discussion about the need for a bridge. The difference between now and then would be that the County would not be willing to pay for it in the future.

She thanked King and Council for listening to her and asked their opinions.

Caola said she lived in that area for 18 years, and her kids went to school there, kindergarten through 12th grade. She believed the tunnel would be equally safe. The majority of students were north, northeast and northwest of the schools. They would pass the tunnel location at Robinson and Redwine before they got to the bridge area. They would cross Redwine and continue on to school. Yes, she

said, there was a stop sign at Mountbrook, and those families might have to wait a few minutes for the kids to leave their neighborhood, but a tunnel was equally safe.

The student golf cart traffic on Panther Path should not be compared to that at McIntosh, she continued. Starr's Mill was not centrally located like McIntosh. Most of the kids at Starr's Mill came from the north, northeast, or northwest; some did come from Wilshire and crossed at Foreston, but it would not be that much out of their way for them to go up to the tunnel and cross. She did not think kids would be darting across heavy traffic on Redwine. There would be some kids crossing, just like there were all over town.

The conversation was about a 21-foot lighted concrete bridge at a 45-degree angle crossing Redwine. That was an eyesore. The kids could travel under a tunnel and safely get to Starr's Mill. She said she believed they should stick with the IGA.

Destadio said he met, on behalf of Council, with County Administrator Steve Rapson and Director of Transportation Phil Mallon in order to gather facts about the bridge proposal. Destadio noted that the safety of the students was foremost in everyone's minds. He said he mostly talked with Mallon, an engineer, learning about the height of the bridge and the 45-degree angle. There would be no loss of mature trees. They were initially told that, but Destadio said he challenged Mallon about the distance between the path and the trees. Mallon checked it, and found it was 23 feet, so none of the magnolias would have to be removed.

Destadio commented that he respected the views of all the Council members. The angle bothered some more than others. Destadio said his biggest issue was that, while the County had agreed to pay for the bridge, they were not willing to give Peachtree City any voice in the design process. Peachtree City required that every facility within 500 feet of a major arterial road pass an architectural review by the Planning Commission. Mallon was agreeable to working with the City, but Rapson refused, Destadio reported, and that bothered him.

However, Destadio went on, what bothered him more than anything was that they were still talking about this. They had an IGA, which he had read twice, and nothing in the IGA seemed to call for another vote. He wanted to find out the facts, and he did, and it seemed they could just as easily leave the existing IGA in place. The Mayor was correct; it could be modified, but Destadio said he saw no need for that. His position was to leave the IGA in place, and it should not have been brought up at all.

Prebor said they were wasting time discussing this. They adopted the IGA in 2019. It was a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) project voted on by the entire county. They said the County was paying for it, but Peachtree City provided 40% of the County's income. He asked City Attorney Ted Meeker if they needed to vote on this?

Meeker said they did not unless it was to direct staff to revise the IGA, which it did not sound like they were going to do. There was no request from the County to amend the IGA. There was an item on the agenda, Destadio noted, but Meeker said no action was needed. Prebor requested they move on and get some business done.

New Agenda items

02-22-01 Consider 2022 Paving Bid

City Engineer Dave Borkowski said he was requesting they award the 2022 paving bid to Atlanta Paving & Concrete for \$5,993,994.13. Staff followed normal bidding procedures. They received three

bids, Atlanta Paving being the lowest. The bids ranged from \$5.9 million up to about \$7.4 million. Staff had reviewed all the bid documentation and found it appropriate. They had worked with Atlanta Paving for several years and were very satisfied.

This year they bid out 14.7 miles, and the low bid was \$5.9 million. Last year they bid out 15.5 miles, and the low bid was \$5.3 million. That was an example of how prices had increased. They were paving fewer miles for more money. Mobilization had gone up about 24%; cement was up 12%; asphalt was up almost 10%. Some of the roads they were paving this year would require curb and gutter replacement, which added to the costs.

Borkowski referred Council to a slide showing the roads they had resurfaced to date and the project list for 2022.

Destadio asked if they were satisfied with this company's work in the past? Borkowski said he had been in Peachtree City about 18 years, and Atlanta Paving was the most responsive paving contractor they had used.

City Manager Jon Rorie asked Borkowski to go into more detail about the curb and gutter work. He explained they would replace any handicap ramps and upgrade them while they were replacing the curbs.

Destadio moved to accept New Agenda item New Agenda item 02-22-01, 2022 paving bid from Atlanta Paving & Concrete for \$5,993,994.13. King seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

02-22-01 Accept Bid from SAFEBuilt for Building Services

Planning and Development Director Robin Cailloux explained they had outsourced permit and building inspections since about 2011 or 2012 and had worked with SAFEBuilt since that time. They needed to rebid the contract and issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in the fall. Five quality responses were received and ranked by a group. It was very close, so they met with some of the higher-ranking companies and decided to award the contract to SAFEBuilt as they proposed it. In all of the responses, the amount of revenue that the City would share would increase, as would the types of service. Erosion and control inspections would now be provided.

They also were asking that a zoning technician be provided part-time for a year. That was part of the current contract and would be in the new one. This person would help the Planning Department manage reoccurring tasks and walk-in requests, freeing up staff to focus on managing the Comprehensive Plan Update and the Unified Development Ordinance projects. This was added after the RFP, so the quoted amount of \$89,600 would be in addition to the proposal.

Staff was requesting Council award the contract to SAFEBuilt as presented in their proposal, as well as the funding of the zoning technician for \$89,600. That money would be appropriated from the General Fund Surplus Carryover.

Did the RFP state that they had to accept the lowest bid, Destadio inquired, or did it state the bids would be evaluated and selected based on a certain criteria? Cailloux replied there were matrices regarding experience, cost sharing, but Destadio stopped her, saying he was satisfied if the RFP made that clear to the bidders.

Prebor said he made some calls to people in the business, and everyone was satisfied with SAFEBuilt.

King moved to approve New Agenda item 02-22-02, Bid from SAFEBuilt for Building Services and at \$89,600. Caola seconded.

Cailloux said he was conflating the two. Council wanted to accept the contract as proposed as well as fund the technician position. King rescinded his motion and Caola her second. Cailloux said the first sentence of the staff report would work as a motion.

King moved to award the contract for building services to SAFEBuilt as presented in their proposal, and that funding be provided in the amount of \$89,600 to fund a new contracted position from SAFEBuilt for the provision of a Zoning Technician. Caola seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

02-22-03 American Rescue Plan Funding Allocation

Assistant City Manager Justin Strickland explained that the American Rescue Plan Act was passed in March, 2021, to help communities in their responses to the health crisis, provide revenue loss relief, and/or invest in local infrastructure. Peachtree City received \$13.5 million; half was paid in July, 2021, with the remainder set to arrive in July, 2022. So far, the City had approved using \$305,625 for a vaccine initiative and premium pay for employees who worked during the initial COVID outbreak. That was approved by the previous Council and completed by December 31, 2021.

Staff now recommended Council approve the use of the remaining funds as follows: water and sewer Infrastructure: 50%; stormwater Infrastructure: 40%; contingency: 10%. That contingency would be used on these same underground projects if they ran over budget. Strickland said they wanted to include that because costs would probably increase in the future.

Staff recommended using these funds because of the needs of the City to maintain its aging infrastructure. The City relined pipes with concrete to add 70 to 90 years of life. These infrastructure improvements were an approved use for ARP funds.

Learnard asked if a motion was needed? It was, Meeker said, stating that it should say: Staff recommended that Council allocate American Rescue Plan federal funding for the federally approved spending categories listed in the staff memo.

So moved, King said, with Prebor seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearings

02-22-03 Variance-Rear Setback-104 Country Club Court

Cailloux said this home was one of five on the cul-de-sac, and the property was zoned R-15-C, which meant there was a condition on the zoning requiring larger setbacks than the typical R-15. An aerial photo showed that the property backed up to the Flat Creek Golf Course, and the course's service barn was right behind this property.

The property owners were requesting an encroachment of approximately 23 feet into the 30-foot rear setback to build a pool pavilion. A drawing of the property showed the layout of what was planned. There was a pool, permitted and now under construction. She pointed out the service barn and the gravel drive that led to it. The applicants wanted to build a 36x22 foot pavilion. Cailloux explained that the setbacks were for buildings, so a pool was allowed in a setback. She showed a photo taken from the home's back deck that showed a clear view of the service barn.

The Zoning Ordinance required them to look at six criteria when reviewing a variance, and this was a quasi-judicial decision. The first asked if there were special circumstances with this property that did not

apply to others in the same zoning? The location of the property was unique in its proximity to the barn. However, she said, there was no evidence to support the second criterion, which asked if application of the regulations would create a hardship other than not being able to build a pool pavilion.

Cailloux said the lot did lose a lot of its privacy when you combined the proximity to the service barn and the topography of the lot, and therefore met the third criterion of exceptional circumstances. It would not constitute a special privilege inconsistent with the limitations of the property if the variance was granted, which was what the fourth criterion looked at.

This would not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare. Cailloux noted the applicant had submitted letters of support from neighbors and the golf course. Granting this variance request met the final criterion's standards and would not conflict with the Comprehensive Plan, which encouraged investment into properties.

The applicant explained that he was trying to block the view of the service barn, which he called a real eyesore. It would also alleviate some of the noise issues.

The Mayor opened the public hearing. No one wished to speak in favor of the variance. Suzanne Brown spoke in opposition, saying the applicant bought a big house and wanted to put in a pool. The contractor cut down almost every tree in the backyard, and now the applicant realized he could see the service barn and a rickety wood fence on the property line. Was it the course's fence or the homeowner's? Why not replace it with a 12-foot-tall privacy fence? If it was the course's fence, ask them to replace it or make it taller. Could code enforcement get them to fix the eyesore?

The Zoning Ordinance said a variance should not be granted unless all of the six criteria were met, Brown continued. There was no evidence of practical difficulties, so that criterion was not met. Brown said she disagreed with staff's opinion that granting this variance would not be a special privilege. The cabana infringed into the rear buffer because it was so huge, and that was a special privilege. It was not solely due to the limitations of the lot. The lot was wedge-shaped, but so were many others.

Brown said every Council member should have visited this property to see what was proposed. If they did not, they should recuse themselves from voting. She had visited the property, asked questions, and took pictures. More than 400 square feet of the structure would sit in the setback, and Brown stated that was not acceptable. What was the structure's height?

She urged City Council to stand strong or face on onslaught of other variance requests. They had to be trusted to preserve green space and buffer zones. The applicant could build a smaller pool cabana. The problem could be solved without a variance, and the applicant could put up a fence or plant trees along the property line. Council should let everyone see they would not approve variance requests.

No one else wished to speak, and the Mayor closed the public hearing.

King said he was as familiar as anyone with the Flat Creek Golf Course, having both worked and played golf there. He asked the applicant if he was going to replace the fence?

The applicant said he planned to erect a new fence and plant large trees along the property line. They were just trying to bring the property up to standards. There had been renters there for years, and it had been neglected. He wanted to improve the property and enjoy the outdoor area.

Prebor said he visited the home in the 1990s and thought it was the nicest house with the worst view in all of Peachtree City. He was glad to see this improvement. He knew both the neighbors and contacted them. They said this would be beneficial to their property values as well.

Caola recalled that she voted against a variance for a pool at the last meeting, but you had to consider each request individually. The applicant was renovating his property like her family did when they moved to Peachtree City, and she said she was happy to see it.

Destadio said it was always his inclination not to approve variances. He said he visited the property, and Caola did as well. What was planned looked to him like more of a pool house than a pavilion.

The applicant said it would have an open front and three sides that matched the house. It would be stucco or Hardiplank.

Caola asked if it was stubbed for a half bath? The applicant said, no, but they planned for a small kitchen. She advised him to consider a bathroom so wet swimmers would not have to go in the house.

The plans called for the pavilion to come directly off the garage for 36 feet. Destadio said he did not see how that would block the view of the service barn. The trees they were planning on installing would be adequate. Destadio commented that he agreed the pool and decking would improve the property, but the pavilion called for a variance that did not need to happen. They could enjoy the pool without that covered pavilion.

The applicant went back to the photo taken from their deck. He said he and his contractor took measurements, and the pavilion would completely block the barn. Destadio was skeptical and asked how tall it would be? The applicant said it would be the same height as the garage. He went on to say this was their retirement house, where they wanted to raise their kids and have fun. And could that not happen without the pavilion? Destadio asked. The applicant said they were trying to make it suit their lifestyle and again stated they would not be able to see the barn from their deck.

Destadio wanted to know if they considered planting tall trees and not building such a large pavilion? The applicant said they would be adding a lot of vegetation, too. Destadio asked him if he just wanted that pavilion? and the applicant conceded that was correct.

Learnard asked Cailloux if it was necessary that a variance meet all six of the criteria? In the five years she had been in Peachtree City, Cailloux stated, most variances had the same number not satisfied. It was written so that the development was somehow unique itself, but building a cabana was not unique. That was how staff had been interpreting it, so, yes, variances had been approved when not all criteria were satisfied.

Destadio recalled that Brown said the request did not meet certain portions of the Ordinance. Was that valid? Meeker said it was. Were they in violation? Destadio asked. Meeker said there was always Council discretion if that's how the ordinance was written.

King moved to approve Public Hearing item 02-22-03, Variance-Rear Setback-104 Country Club Court. Prebor seconded. The motion carried 3-2, with King, Prebor, and Caola voting in favor, and Learnard and Destadio voting against.

This was the public hearing required to kick off the Comprehensive Plan update, Cailloux reported, adding there were no decisions to be made right now; it was an opportunity to open the floor to the public to provide comments. State law required an update of the Comprehensive Plan every five years, so Peachtree City last did this in 2017. A Comprehensive Plan was a guiding document that should have a 20-year horizon and provide guiding policies and goals for day-to-day decisions. It had to include a five-year work program. The process must include public participation, and Peachtree City was far exceeding the level required. It also had to include a future development map. There were different ways to do this, and Peachtree City had historically produced a parcel-based Future Land Use map.

A good Comprehensive Plan accentuated strengths, mitigated weaknesses, and identified potential opportunities. Cailloux remarked that it was all about balancing competing interests and priorities and making difficult trade-offs.

It was a community-driven plan with public participation at the core. Council had appointed a steering committee that would advocate for public participation and steer the plan so that it reflected the community. The committee members brought a broad range of life experiences.

There would be a combination of workshops and public hearings. This was the first public hearing and another was required at the end of the process. These were required by State law, but Peachtree City was going beyond the requirements and holding monthly public workshops in February through May. The schedule had been posted on the City website as well as in the Building Department downstairs, and there would be advertisements in the legal organ. Facebook posts were coming, too.

A timeline showed the dates of the public meetings. The committee would meet at the beginning of the month, then there would be a public workshop at the end of the month. At the next committee meeting, they would review the results of the workshop. The final public hearing was set for May 26, and the plan would then be transmitted to the State for review.

Cailloux acknowledged that was a lot of meetings, and it was hard for people to make it to all of them, so there would be ample means to access information online. Anything they did in-person would also be online. Committee meetings would be livestreamed, then available online afterwards. All materials handed out at the meetings would be online. They planned on doing at least one public opinion survey, and that would be offered online. They were trying to provide transparency and track the process as well.

She did not expect any big changes in the Comprehensive Plan. It probably would still confirm the village concept, which had been a part of the formal City plans since the 1970s and was mentioned in documents before the City was formed. There might be a need to define what that meant today. She expected they would confirm and refine some guiding policies. Again, they were required to produce a Future Land Use Map and the five-year work program.

Keith Larson said maintaining the quality of life was an essential part of the Comprehensive Plan. It had always been a priority for Council, developers, and citizens to ensure they had the infrastructure to maintain that quality of life. But now the City was 60 years old, and the infrastructure and developments were aging. They needed the resources for sufficient life cycle maintenance and replacement of this infrastructure. Right now they relied on the SPLOST to take care of these issues, but they needed to expand their vision. They had new opportunities to include and innovate, such as through alternate modes of transportation, telecommunications, and recognition of historic properties. He said he commented on the County's five-year plan about the need to address stormwater. They paid money to it, but where was it addressed as being essential to maintaining the quality of life?

That was one example of what they could do to address the details of what it meant to maintain this high quality of life that they all aspired to.

Joseph Smith remarked that the Peachtree City logo was an empty golf cart, and every time he saw an empty cart along the path, he thought "dead battery." They needed to make sure they did not end up with a dead battery. There were cities around the country that were trying to copy Peachtree City. He had created some materials he wanted to share with Council that touted Peachtree City as a city for families and a safe place to live. He included a family zooming down a path on his golf cart illustration, saying the City needed to know where it was going. A lot of what they had done in the past had worked, and they needed to focus on that. They should focus on families; that was the reason people came.

Suzanne Brown reflected that attracting industry was a key part of Peachtree City from its very beginnings. She said it was important to leave land that was zoned industrial as industrial. Infrastructure needed to be updated so everyone had access to fiber optic cable that would attract industry. Other counties had enticed industry through investment in infrastructure. Brown said they needed to be accommodating to companies when they came to the Planning Commission with plans to build or expand. They did not need to rezone industrial property to build more housing or restaurants or commercial development.

She recalled that one company recently had its request for a second warehouse tabled by the Planning Commission. She got the impression not everyone on the Commission had made a site visit, but she had. The Commission focused on the trees and the buffer zone so it would not be visible from SR 74, but it was not visible now due to a grade change. She could not believe they had not made a site visit, and that was what had to stop, Brown asserted. They needed people who could make adequate evaluations of what was coming in front of them. This was a warehouse that would bring in more jobs. Why was it delayed? They had to be proactive in getting industrial growth.

No one else wished to speak, and Learnard closed the public hearing.

Prebor stated that it would be interesting to see how things had changed since 1960, reminding them that the developers of Peachtree City predicted an eventual population of more than 85,000, which was not going to happen.

Destadio said he was interested in changes since the 2017 plan. He noted that the people on the committee seemed interested and enthusiastic about their challenge.

The first steering committee meeting would be Tuesday, Cailloux stated. The public was invited, and it would be streamed online.

Council/Staff Topics

Learnard said there would be a Town Hall meeting on the subject of recreation on Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m.

There being no further business, Destadio moved to adjourn at 8:20 p.m. Prebor seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Martha Barksdale, Recording Secretary



Kim Learnard, Mayor