

Holly Springs Town Council Minutes

Special Meeting April 17, 2008

The Holly Springs Town Council met in special session on Thursday, April 17, 2008, in the Performing Arts Theater of the Holly Springs Cultural Center, 300 W. Ballentine Street. Mayor Dick Sears presided, calling the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. A quorum was established as the mayor and all five council members were present as the meeting opened.

Council Members Present: Councilmen Vinnie DeBenedetto, Parrish Womble, Chet VanFossen, Tim Sack (who had to leave), and Hank Dickson (who arrived shortly after the presentation began) and Mayor Sears.

Council Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: various staff members were in attendance during the evening, which began with an exposition on growth and growth issues in the lobby of the cultural center at 5 p.m. At 7:30 p.m., those in attendance were invited to retire to the Performing Arts Theater to view a presentation on the various issues of growth and then to provide input on the subject.

A comprehensive Power Point presentation on the effects and challenges of growth in a community was presented. The presentation provided statistics and data and also outlined the five guiding principles the town uses in making decisions:

1 - MANAGED GROWTH

The Town's focus is to maintain and enrich the Quality of Life objectives for the current and future residents of Holly Springs through effectively managed growth

2 - ECONOMY

The Town strives to develop, maintain and promote a high quality economically sustainable community with a diverse tax base

3 - INVESTMENT

The Town must continue to invest in its future with respect to services, facilities, and infrastructure to ultimately achieve its community vision

4 - INNOVATION

The Town in developing its identity must continue to take a leadership role by encouraging initiative and innovation, to promote the highest community standards as our citizens demand

5 - PARTNERSHIPS

The Town recognizes the value of developing, maintaining, and fostering productive mutually beneficial relationships with public and private agencies and individuals at international, national, state, and local levels

Following the presentation, which also included a supporting presentation by the Holly Springs Chamber of Commerce, the Council opened the floor to accept input from the public on the issues of growth.

At this time, Mayor Sears opened the public hearing, and the following comments were recorded:

Phil Stephens, Atlanta – Mr. Stephens is the developer of South Park Village. He addressed the Council explaining that growth in Holly Springs is a personal issue for him because of his family ties to the community and to the land on which he is developing. Mr. Stephens is a native of Holly Springs.

As a developer, Mr. Stephens said he is subjected to a number of regulations, and he assured the audience members that its government is taking care of the public's interest. He added that in his extensive development career throughout the United States, he has concluded that "no growth" does not work for the community, but "managed growth" does work.

John Sadler, 160 Sudano Ct. – Mr. Sadler said he would hope the Town would be able to improve its leaf collection services by buying an additional leaf vacuum truck. He added that he feels I-540 is a critical roadway that needs to be built, and he does not care whether or not the state establishes it as a toll road, as long as it is built.

He said he felt that the area's evacuation routes need to be improved, and he noted that I-540 would be a part of that process.

Bill Rousseau, 6236 Lake Terrace – Mr. Rousseau is a longtime business owner in Holly Springs and says he has seen a lot of change in this community over the years. Excited about the more positive aspects of growth, Mr. Rousseau urged the Council to not stop the growth and development of Holly Springs or the business and community features that people love will not come to Holly Springs.

He said he felt that growth pays for itself and that if the Town takes steps to stop growth, then the town will die while things that could locate in Holly Springs go to neighboring towns instead.

Barbara Masser, 965 Logging Road – Ms. Masser said she likes a lot of things that are happening in Holly Springs, but she asked what the Town is doing about the preservation of open space.

Jackie Miller, 112 Hickory Glen Lane – Ms. Miller said she was excited about the proposed community center. She added that she would like the Town and the County to work out joint use agreements that would provide for general public use of athletic facilities at schools and not just town-sponsored team activities.

Tim Mahoney, 4904 Timber Green Lane – Mr. Mahoney said he would like the Town to establish and follow a plan to tie areas of the community together with sidewalks/trails and/or bike lanes on roadways.

Madeline Savone, Windward Pointe – Ms. Savone said she likes the development that is taking place in Holly Springs, but she would love to see a movie theater, an ice skating rink and a bowling alley. She said this type of development would provide kid-friendly and family-friendly places of activity and entertainment.

Kevin Sebastian, Somerset Farm – Mr. Sebastian said the Town did a good job with development standards at Wal-Mart. He complimented staff and officials for demanding higher standards, which resulted in a better produce and a better neighbor for nearby residents. He pointed to the pre-construction concerns of traffic and the parking lot lights. In the end, he said, traffic flow has been addressed adequately, and the parking lot lights are designed in a non-obtrusive way that lights the parking lot but does not affect surrounding properties.

John Sadler, 160 Sudano Ct. – Mr. Sadler asked if the Town could establish an ordinance prohibiting the use of jake brakes.

Joe Bogan – Mr. Bogan asked the Council what types of private development were being planned and why could the public not know about some things. Councilman VanFossen explained that private development usually is a confidential matter until the petitioner files public record applications. He said a lot of private development comes to look at Holly Springs, but until land is purchased and applications for development are filed, anything can happen, so it is best to keep things confidential so that nothing threatens a project from being completed in Holly Springs. He noted an example that if a landowner is selling property to an anonymous private development interest and learns through the grapevine who the buyer is, he may increase the price of the property, and the buyer may not be able to justify the higher cost and will go to another town.

Jonathan Pritchett, 105 Cross Hill Lane – Mr. Pritchett, who is manager of the Wal-Mart Super Center, addressed the Council to speak in favor of growth both as a resident and as a member of the business community. He said he and Wal-Mart are happy to be in Holly Springs.

David Hathaway – Mr. Hathaway addressed the Council to say that a moratorium on growth was not the answer. He said other towns would continue to grow, and Holly Springs would still feel the effects of that growth, but not benefit from it. He said he would like to see more inter-connectivity of the neighborhoods in Holly Springs.

There being no further comments, the public hearing was closed.

Adjournment: There being no further business for the evening, the April 17, 2008 special meeting of the Holly Springs Town Council was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted on Tuesday, June 17, 2008.

Joni Powell, CMC, Town Clerk
Addendum pages as referenced in these minutes follow and are a part of the official record.