

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF GASTON  
TOWN OF CRAMERTON

January 23, 2020

The Board of Commissioners for the Town of Cramerton met on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 7:00 p.m., in the G.M. Michael Commission Chamber at the Cramerton Town Hall.

**Board Members present:** Mayor Will Cauthen; Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas; Commissioners Dixie Abernathy, Susan Neeley, and Richard Atkinson were present. Commissioner Donald Rice was absent.

**Staff Present:** David Pugh, Town Manager; Attorney Karen Wolter; Brad Adams, Police Chief; Josh Watkins, Planning Director; Joel Lineberger, Finance Director; and Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk.

**Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:** Mayor Cauthen called the meeting to order and determined there was a quorum.

**Adoption of Agenda for this meeting:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adopt the proposed agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all.

**Public Comment:** No one signed up to speak.

**Agenda Items requiring a Public Hearing**

- a. **A public hearing for the purposes of public discussion regarding the Baltimore School in Cramerton, and for the Town Board of Commissioners to consider Resolution #2020-01 approving the school building and site for Local Historic Designations and recommending the same to the Board of County Commissioners for local designation and property tax deferral.**
  - i. **Open Public Hearing: Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to open the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas and approved by all.
  - ii. **Staff Comments:** The Town Manager stated the State of North Carolina has reviewed the findings regarding this site. The proposed resolution 2020-01 will be presented to the Gaston County Board of Commissioners and the Board will be notified in order for Cramerton Board members to attend.
  - iii. **Public Comment:** Attorney John Russell thanked the Board members and staff for their assistance with this project. Fred Glenn thanked everyone for wanting to preserve the Baltimore School.
  - iv. **Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and it passed by unanimous vote.
  - v. **Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson for the adoption of Resolution #2020-01 approving the Baltimore School building and site for local historic designation and recommending the same to the Board of County Commissioners for local designation and tax deferral. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all. A copy of the signed resolution will be placed in the minutes book.
- b. **A public hearing for the purposes of considering rezoning a portion of the previously approved Phases C and D for the Villages at Cramerton Mills (VCM).**
  - i. **Continue Public Hearing. Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to open the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all.
  - i. **Staff Comments / BOC Questions and Answers.** The Planning Director stated that VCM Bowman, LLC submitted a request to rezone a portion of their previously approved development, the Villages at Cramerton Mills. The rezoning request would alter the uses and densities for Phases C and D of the previously approved development. Under the current zoning, Phase C was approved for 284 apartments and a portion of the 84,000 square feet of office/retail uses and 40,000 square feet of institutional uses. Phase D is currently zoned for 168,500 square feet of

industrial/light manufacturing uses. In this proposed revision, Phase C will replace the 284 apartments with 70 townhomes, and the office/retail and institutional uses will be eliminated. Phase D is proposed to remove the 168,500 of industrial/light manufacturing, and replace it with 38 single-family detached homes. The Planning Director stated that a change was requested regarding the architectural feature for the roof pitch to be 6 to 12 (6:12) for primary roof instead of a 5 to 12 (5:12) pitch. Decorative lighting will be consistent with Phases A and B. Natural surface trail shown in Phase C shall be constructed by the developer along Cramer Mountain Road and shall be a minimum of six (6) feet wide and constructed with crushed concrete. Phase C will not have a vehicular connection to Cramer Mountain Road. Vinyl siding will not be used as an exterior cladding material for Phase C or D. The applicant has agreed to have a third-party contractor install standard orange tree protection fencing around all stream buffers and undisturbed buffers shown with Phases C and D. Nate Bowman advised the Board that there will be several detached townhomes built. This was recommended to be added as a condition that there would only be two townhomes constructed. Staff recommends approval of this request with the proposed amendments. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked if this down grading of zoning would remove all commercial building. Commercial and retail construction will be in Phase E. Commissioner Atkinson asked about the traffic impact study. Mr. Bowman stated this is currently under review by NCDOT. Commissioner Neeley asked if there would be a homeowner's association and a community building. Mr. Bowman said there would be a homeowner's association but not a community building. The structures will be three stories with parking underneath. Brookline Homes will be the contractor for this project. Sidewalks will be on both sides of the streets. Mr. Bowman stated that there will sixty-four percent of open space in Phase C and 45 percent of open space in Phase D. There will be active open space in Phase C.

- ii. **Public Comment:** No one signed up to speak.
- iii. **Close Public Hearing: Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Atkinson to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Neeley and approved by all. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked for a timeline on this project. Nate Bowman advised that the builders are ready to get started as soon as the engineering plans are approved. Discussion was held regarding the fencing that was erected per the request of Minerva Hardy from the Baltimore neighborhood. Melvina Booker stated she did not think the white fencing was very pleasing. Nate Bowman stated landscaping would be placed around the fencing to soften the look.
- iv. **Consider approval of rezoning a portion of the previously approved Phases C and D for the Villages at Cramerton Mills (VCM). Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Abernathy to approve the rezoning of a portion of the previously approved Phases C and D for the Villages at Cramerton Mills. Attorney Wolter asked that the motion be clarified stating that only two (2) detached townhomes would be constructed. Nate Bowman agreed to the amendment to the motion. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all. Commissioner Abernathy asked that Nate Bowman follow up with the landscaping around the fencing.
- v. **Consider Adopting a Statement of Consistency that this rezoning is consistent and reasonable with Cramerton's Land Use Plan. Action Item:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to approve and adopt a Statement of Consistency that this rezoning is consistent and reasonable with Cramerton's Land Use Plan. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.

## **Agenda Items Not requiring a Public Hearing**

### **a. Planning and Zoning**

#### **i. Stormwater**

##### **1. Stormwater in Old Town (Riverside)**

- a. **Action Item: Budget Amendment #2020-05 – An FY 2019-2020 stormwater budget amendment for stormwater infrastructure work performed at Riverside Drive and Main Street Extension.** The Town Manager stated Wilcox Construction provided a quote for \$44,500.00 and this amount can be taken out of the stormwater budget. Another quote was obtained from another firm by LaBella Engineering

which was about \$1,000.00 greater than the quote from Wilcox Construction. A savings was gained as Wilcox Construction was already on site in the Riverside neighborhood and did not incur any overhead costs or the cost of equipment mobilization. Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked for clarification regarding this action item if it was to increase the budget for stormwater. The Town Manager stated this would increase the stormwater line item by \$54,000.00 and in the stormwater reserve. Commissioner Abernathy thanked the Town Manager for obtaining another bid. Commissioner Neeley made a motion to approve budget amendment #2020-05 for stormwater infrastructure work performed at Riverside Drive and Main Street Extension. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Abernathy and approved by all.

**BIG BOARD:** The Town Manager stated the Planning and Zoning Board will hold a meeting on February 18<sup>th</sup> to discuss the MT Land Project. A public hearing will be discussed at the March 5<sup>th</sup> Board meeting with the public hearing to be held on March 19<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Abernathy stated she would be in attendance at the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. The Town Hall building and Parks and Recreation building are almost finished. Plastering is finished and the final punch list should be completed in a few weeks. Discussion continues with the Masonic Lodge regarding the parking lot. No information has been received from the school regarding the Helix R artwork. Commissioner Neeley offered to provide another contact in the school system for the Town Manager to follow up with. The Planning Director stated the Timberlake connectivity and small Lakewood Bridge will be a detached ped bridge. A preliminary design will be provided to the town once the notice of award is complete. The Board asked if lighting would be part of the project and the Planning and Zoning Director stated he would ask about lighting. A public input session for Central Park is scheduled for January 30<sup>th</sup> and letters have been mailed to property owners. No work will be done on the bathrooms until after the designs have been presented at the public input meeting. A final walkthrough and punch list of the Community Center should be completed by the end of January. The Baltimore School resolution will be forwarded to the county. An update regarding the wayfinding signs with the outcome of the contractor pricing along with recommendations from Buzz Bizzell should be available in February. Commissioner Abernathy asked about the Cramerton Historical Society startup cost for \$6,000.00 and if this item could be discussed prior to the budget meeting in March and what was the process they would need to use such as a formal request to us. The Town Manager stated they could submit a formal request for the amount they want or this could be discussed at the upcoming Goals and Objectives meeting on Saturday.

**Manager's Report:** The Town Manager asked the Board to check their calendars to see whether March 24<sup>th</sup> or March 25<sup>th</sup> would be the best date to meet for a budget workshop session. The Board agreed to meeting on March 24<sup>th</sup>. The Town Manager advised that the meeting would begin at 8:30 a.m. and finish around 2:30 p.m.

Requests have been made asking about placement of additional pavers at the Veterans Memorial. Commissioner Atkinson asked if the circle area around the pavers could be considered. Gary Fankhauser will be contacted to see about a design using that area and any other possible solutions. The pavers will be placed once the number of pavers that can be placed is determined and all have been purchased. A current list of future pavers that have been requested is being kept on record at Town Hall and those individuals will be contacted once a decision is made regarding the placement of any additional pavers. The Board recommended that a specific quantity and date be set for this process. The Town Manager stated maintaining the town's fund balance at forty percent will be discussed at the Goals and Objectives meeting on Saturday. The town is waiting on federal funding for the Riverlink Greenway Project. Commissioner Abernathy asked about the graphic organizer that was discussed at last year's goals and objectives meeting. The Town Manager stated a copy of the graphic will be at the Goals and Objectives meeting and it will be put on the website.

### **General Staff Reports:**

**Two Rivers Utilities:** Mike Bynum distributed his report. A purchase order has been issued for the clearing of the easement in Phase 5 of the Cramer Mountain Sewer Easement. The Southeast Sewer Project has been combined with the Southeast Water Project to form the Southeast Utility Project. TRU has acquired all of the right-of-way for Phase 1 of this project.

Clearing in the Old Course area should begin next week. A pressure reducing valve is being installed at the South Fork Village Project.

**Police Department:** Chief Adams advised that Patterson Street in the Baltimore neighborhood has been temporarily closed due to the duck hunting season.

**Finance Director:** Mr. Lineberger stated the June 30, 2019 financial statements have been distributed and the town remains in good financial status. He advised the Board that he is waiting on the property tax report from the county. A request for audit proposal has been submitted to three (3) different firms. The town is waiting for NCDOT's final approval for payout on the 29/74 Greenway Project.

**Planning and Zoning:** Mr. Watkins stated a meeting was held on January 20<sup>th</sup> for the renaming of South Main Street Extension. The preferred name was Standpipe Hill.

**Town Clerk:** Nothing to report.

**Town Attorney:** Nothing to report.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Community Committee:** Commissioner Neeley stated this committee discussed their activities for the year. A river sweep is scheduled for Saturday, March 28<sup>th</sup>. The committee is working with the Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works on projects to include adding house numbers to residences without them to assist emergency personnel; upfit C.B. Huss Ballfield; canoe/kayak storage; and senior citizen focused events and activities. The committee will also be engaged in Neighbors Helping Neighbors Projects.

**CCOG Meeting:** Mayor Cauthen stated he has a delegates meeting on February 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Parks and Recreation Advisory Board:** Commissioner Abernathy stated she was pleased to be serving as the liaison for this committee. She stated the advisory board members were shown three different designs which included the option of open space, bike skills area, and an area that could be used for public community art displays. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board members were pleased with all the events that occurred in December and the success of those events. A monthly "Cramerton Creates" event will be partnered with the Community Committee and she asked that Board members help make sure this information is made available to as many residents as possible. A possible partnership with the City of Belmont for the abandonment of an old trail that is part of the Carolina Threat Trail system and the adoption of a new trail for use as a mountain bike trail was discussed. The trail is called the Rocky Branch Trail Project.

**MPO Meeting:** Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated the MPO meeting was tonight but he was unable to attend.

### **Topics of Discussion for Each Commissioner:**

Commissioner Neeley stated she attended the state primary candidate forum. She attended the MLK, Jr. unity awards event and Gastonia Mayor Walker Reid, Dr. Mark Epstein, and John Weisenhorn received awards. She attended the Montcross Chamber of Commerce gala tonight.

Commissioner Rice stated he attended tonight's Montcross Chamber of Commerce gala event prior to tonight's Board meeting.

This committee needs donations of milk jugs that will be used for a project with the Easter Egg Hunt.

Commissioner Atkinson stated he attended the Community Committee meeting and was impressed with the laying out of their yearly calendar in advance. He stated his thanks for the sponsorship of the Montcross table. He stated he spoke to Chris Leazer with the Cramerton Historical Society and an update regarding insurance for the museum will be forthcoming. He asked about the back of the Veterans Memorial being waterproofed. The Town Manager stated he was checking into this.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas asked about the timeline for the Planning and Zoning Board applications. The Town Manager presented a memo to the Board with the timeline. The Mayor asked that this information be placed on social media.

Mayor Pro Tempore Koutsoupas stated there was a broken street light on Cramer Mountain Road past the Cramer Mountain entrance that needs to be repaired. He asked the Planning and Zoning Director about the lot on Market Street that now has a for sale sign that is different from the signage that was currently on the property. Mr. Watkins advised that the zoning permit for this property has expired.

Mayor Cauthen commended Mr. Watkins for the great job he did regarding the setup for the public input meeting regarding the renaming of South Main Street Extension.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made by Commissioner Neeley to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Atkinson and approved by all.

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Mayor William Cauthen

**ATTEST:**

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Wilene Cunningham, Town Clerk