
**TOWN OF WENTWORTH
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES
JANUARY 6, 2009
7:00 P.M.**

The Wentworth Town Council held their regular monthly meeting in the Town Hall meeting room at the National Guard Armory, on **Tuesday, January 6, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.**

Council members present: Mayor Dennis Paschal, Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner, Councilwoman Iris Powell, Councilman Robert Aswell, and Councilman James Belcher

A quorum was present.

Staff Present: Brenda Ward, Town Clerk, Deputy Sheriff Clarence Cheshire, and Fred Baggett, Town Attorney

Article I. Mayor Paschal called the meeting to order.

Article II. Councilman James Belcher gave the **Invocation.**

Article III. **Discussion / Revisions / Adoption of Agenda**

A. Requests and Petitions of Citizens

Mayor Paschal advised that Mr. Freddie Brame signed the Speaker Register to speak in the Public Hearing.

The mayor made a motion, “...to add Freddie Brame to the Agenda.”

Councilman Belcher seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article IV. **Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes**

A. Town Council Meeting – December 2, 2008

Mayor Paschal noted, “Everybody has a copy...”

Councilman Belcher made a motion, “*The Minutes be approved as presented.*”

Mayor Pro Tem Evelyn Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article V. **PUBLIC HEARING**

A. Case No. W2008-05 / Request to Rezone from Residential Agricultural to Residential Protected—Conditional Use, For a 12-Lot Major Subdivision.

Part of Tax PIN 7985-01-25-6131 (Cole Road and Dairy Road)

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 2

Mayor Paschal opened the Public Hearing and asked **Ms. Frankie Legaux**, Assistant Director, Rockingham County Planning and Zoning, to present the request for rezoning.

Ms. Legaux advised that the Applicant is Roberson Development Corporation, and that the acreage for rezoning is approximately 14.2 acres.

Ms. Legaux reviewed the “Criteria for Board Consideration” attached hereto as a part of these Minutes (Attachment A), including the “Planning Staff Recommendation.”

Regarding condition number 3, which requires the Applicant to apply for and receive an erosion control plan permit from NCDENR before any grading or construction over 1 acre begins, **Ms. Legaux** said, “This may not be required. I will make a note of that because the applicant does not have to do any grading for a road...so we will either have a plan or a letter from DENR stating that it doesn’t have to be complied with.”

She continued to review the conditions that were part of the Staff’s Recommendations.

Ms. Legaux noted, “A seventh condition was added by the Planning Board, and that is that the houses be limited to stick built and modular houses according to North Carolina State Building Codes and that no doublewide manufactured homes shall be permitted.”

Ms. Legaux said she would be glad to answer any questions.

Mayor Paschal asked Council if they had any questions. There were none.

Mayor Paschal invited **Mr. Freddie Brame, of 331 Dairy Road**, to address Council.

Mr. Brame said that he lives within the buffer zone of the proposed subdivision. He advised Council, “I came to speak tonight with my family, to ask you not to approve this, because Dairy Road is a dead-end road, and we are already overwhelmed with traffic...it is just unbearable. The other road, Cole Road, is a one-lane dirt road. The road, as is, does not really accommodate the traffic we already have, and twelve more houses will only make it worse.”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 3

“Just across Sandy Cross Road, from Dairy Road, there is a seven-lot subdivision but they have only sold three lots, so it is mostly empty,” **Mr. Brame** said.

He added, “That is our concern, my family and my parents, mainly, is the traffic on the road and the fact that we have had several instances down the road...the Sheriff has had to come down there numerous times.”

Mayor Paschal asked **Mr. Brame** to point out the location of his home on the map provided by Ms. Legaux. **Mr. Brame** pointed out his house, which he described as, “...the one that the red line goes through the middle of it...its back off the road.”

There were no other questions for **Mr. Brame**, who stated again, “I just wanted to come to say that we are against this.”

Mayor Paschal asked **Ms. Legaux** and **Mr. Steve Roberson** of Roberson Development Corporation, if some of the lots would be accessed from Cole Road and some from Dairy Road. They all reviewed the property map and discussed how the lots would lay and which roads would be accessed.

Councilman Belcher asked Mr. Brame, “The traffic problems you have been experiencing on Dairy Road, is it volume or speed...?”

“Both,” replied **Mr. Brame** and family members.

Mayor Pro Tem Conner asked, “What is the speed limit?”

Mr. Brame replied, “The speed limit is marked as 45, but nobody drives 45, and it’s a narrow road.”

Councilman Belcher asked if the traffic volume is worse at certain times of the day, “...in the morning or afternoon?”

Mr. Brame replied, “It is basically throughout the day...but heavier before and after school.”

Mayor Paschal said, “And it’s heavier during strawberry season...”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 4

The **Mayor**, addressing Mr. Brame, said, “You do realize that some of these lots are on the back side of Cole Road and would have driveway cuts into Cole Road. Those folks are just as likely to go out that way as Dairy Road.”

Mr. Brame asked, “Are there any plans to upgrade Cole Road?”

Mayor Paschal explained that Cole Road is one of the few dirt roads in the town limits that has not been paved. He advised that the Town, in the past, has budgeted to pave one road per year, and that Council acts according to petitioners’ requests to have their road paved.

He added, “Every road that we have requested them (NCDOT) to pave, they have, and we paid half of the paving costs. Once you get the subdivision in, the State is more likely to pave it.”

Mr. Brame said, “When they paved Dairy Road, we were told that the State may close Cole Road.”

Mayor Paschal said, “We have, all along, with our land use plan and ordinances, ...tried to hold folks to larger lot sizes instead of small 10 or 15,000 square foot lots...some have to have water and sewer and go smaller, but for the most part, we require at least an acre lot.”

He added, “We will look at getting Cole Road paved and most of the folks who are on that end would probably use Cole Road anyway.”

Mayor Paschal asked if anyone had further questions.

There were no additional discussion, and **Mayor Paschal** made a motion, *“To approve the request to rezone from Residential Agricultural to Residential Protected—Conditional Use, for a 12-Lot Major Subdivision, and that we adopt the supporting statements of consistency as required by NCGS 160A-382(b) and 160A-383, as outlined in the Town Council’s Analysis and Statement.”*

Councilman Belcher seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

The **Mayor** closed the Public Hearing and thanked everyone for coming out.

Mayor Paschal stated, “We are now back in regular session and will follow the Agenda, beginning with Old Business.”

Article VI. OLD BUSINESS

A. Consideration of Interlocal Agreement Draft between Rockingham County and the Town of Wentworth for use of the Old Wentworth School Ball Field and Gymnasium

Mayor Paschal invited **Richard Capps**, Chairman of the Town's Recreation Committee, to address Council.

Mr. Capps thanked council for letting him come back to speak. He reminded Council that they asked the Recreation Committee to review the proposed lease from Rockingham County and to determine some specific things that need addressing in the lease.

Mr. Capps said he brought with him, for council's consideration, three (3) variations of the initial lease agreement—"...from the first one, designed to be ideal, to the last one, which would be the bare bones minimum of what we might could expect. We are still taking small steps at this point in time, but I really think there is going to have to be some major negotiations if we are going to get that building."

"Some of the things that need to be considered," said **Mr. Capps**, "even if they were to approve some of the new language in the lease, in the first proposal here, for example—we must be more specific about plumbing, the roof...now that it's raining we could check to see if the roof over the gym is leaking..."

Mr. Capps said he did not think Council should compromise on the roof and gymnasium or the plumbing—"With anything that is minor, it will at some point in time become major and it must be determined that the landlord will fix these things or else they will tell us to get out."

He added, "The cleaning of the walls and the drop ceiling and the trash, in and of themselves is not the issue. It's just that if you're going to turn something over to somebody, *as is*, the very least that we should have is running water, electrical problems taken care of, a good roof, a good facility and sound structure to work with. The rest of it is just a matter of time anyway."

Mr. Capps added, "Between what I've written in these proposals and those who make the decision on how to negotiate the lease—that's not my forte—but somewhere in there, I think I've covered all my bases."

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 6

Mayor Paschal said, "It looks like you've done a good job and we appreciate all the hard work."

The Mayor continued, "I think what we need to do is take some time to look these over, and decide which one we want to consider."

Mr. Baggett, Town Attorney, said, "I think we need to know what the Board really wants to zero in on."

The **Mayor** replied, "That's why we need to look at these."

"I concur with that...that's been my thing all along," said **Mr. Capps**. "This lease they gave us is pretty much a cover your own backside kind of lease, a standard lease; but, when you take on a project this big, of this magnitude, I think you have to get into some specific details. We need to know exactly what they, and you, really want to do with this building."

He added, "We don't want to lose the opportunity to use this building. At the same time, if it's not going to be feasible...and we are having to worry about whether or not we can keep the doors open instead of being able to use it for what we want to use it for, then maybe it's not the thing to do."

Mayor Paschal said, "*I make a motion that we table this until the February meeting, and everyone look over it carefully and get a feel for what direction we want to go in, and then we'll get Fred to look it over.*"

Mayor Pro Tem Conner seconded the motion. There was no discussion. All voted in favor and the motion carried.

Article VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Update on New Town Hall Construction Project

- **Jeff Johnson, Alley Williams Carmen & King, Inc.**
- **David Southard, Project Manager, The Wright Company**

Mayor Paschal asked Mr. Johnson and/or Mr. Southard to address Council.

Mr. Johnson noted that Mr. Tim Wray with the Wright Company is also present.

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 7

Mr. Johnson said, “We just wanted to bring you up to date on the Town Hall project. I’m sure you all drive by at least once a week, maybe once a day, to take a look at it. As you can see, masonry is nearly a hundred percent, all the exterior doors and windows are in place; door frames are about 75 percent installed, dry wall and installation is underway and plumbing, mechanical and electrical are all moving along well.”

“Right now,” said **Mr. Johnson**, “I would say that we are either on or slightly ahead of our original schedule which looks like sometime around early to mid-April.”

Mayor Paschal said, “You said May originally, so we’re backing up a little.”

Mr. Johnson replied, “Things have looked really good the last few weeks. A lot of progress has been made, and up until the last few days, temperatures and weather conditions have been cooperating. They were hoping to get the parking lot paved, but obviously, with weather like this, we can’t do that. So the April date is contingent upon the rain stopping sometime between now and then.”

Mr. Johnson advised, “We have had some changes along the way, a few that required some adjustments upward and some that allowed us to adjust down, so it balances out. That’s the way we like to work jobs.”

He said that most color selections have been made.

Mr. Johnson commented on the article in the newspaper (about the Town Hall) and reiterated, “Working with these guys (The Wright Company) has been great. It’s a good company and we’re all very fortunate to have them on the job.”

He said he would be glad to answer any questions. There were no questions from Council, but the **Town Clerk** asked the Mayor if he wanted to ask Mr. Johnson a question about the wood for the cabinetwork. “That’s one of the main reasons I asked them to come,” she added.

Mayor Paschal said, “I thought we were going to look at that when they start putting it in.”

**Town of Wentworth
Town Council Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2009**

Page 8

Mr. Johnson replied, “One of the cabinets...the reception area cabinet, is nearly completely built, and as soon as he gets that completed, I want you to go down to his shop and take a look at it before he gets it installed. I think you will like it.”

Mayor Paschal asked, “We’ll still be in a position, though, where we can change it around...?”

“The reception area—that would be an issue,” replied **Mr. Johnson**, “but he has not started the council chambers yet, so that’s why we want you to take a look at the reception area first.”

He explained that the council chamber desk is to have detailing similar to the reception desk, “...but that’s not to say that it can’t be different.”

Mayor Paschal thanked Mr. Johnson and the gentlemen from the Wright Company for the report.

Article VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

The **Mayor** noted that everyone who signed to speak has already done so.

Article IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Paschal made the following announcements:

- The next regular meeting of the Town of Wentworth Planning Board will be held on Tuesday, January 20, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory.
- The next regular meeting of the Wentworth Town Council will be held on Tuesday, February 3, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Meeting Room at the National Guard Armory.

Article X. A D J O U R N

Mayor Paschal made a motion, “*that the meeting be adjourned.*”
Councilman Belcher seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Brenda Ward, Town Clerk

Approved By: _____
Dennis Paschal, Mayor