

MINUTES
VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK COUNCIL & NCDOT SPECIAL MEETING
PROPOSED N. HIGHLAND LAKE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS
ST. JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS CHURCH PARISH HALL
APRIL 13, 2018
10:00 AM

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Staton presided over the special meeting of April 13, 2018, at 10:00 a.m., in the Parish Hall of St. John in the Wilderness Church. Those present in addition to Mayor Staton were Vice Mayor Weedman, Council Members Brown, Dockendorf, Gooch, Jamerson and Posey, Village Clerk Parker and Administrator Boleman.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Mayor Staton led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

DISCUSSION: PRESENTATION AND REVIEW OF REVISED NCDOT PLAN OF THE NORTH HIGHLAND LAKE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Mayor Staton introduced NCDOT representative, Mr. Bryan Burch, Division 14 Engineer.

Mr. Burch introduced other representatives from NCDOT and from Vaughn & Melton, consulting engineers, including: Ms. Wanda Austin, Division 14 Project Development Engineer, Mr. Jonathan Woodard, Senior Project Engineer, Mr. Steve Williams, Division Planning Engineer, and Mr. David **Deutiana (sp?)**, NCDOT Communications Officer; and Mr. Joel Setzer, a former Division 14 Engineer now with Vaughn & Melton, and Mr. Reese Schuler, Design Engineer, Vaughn & Melton.

Mr. Burch explained the project was identified a few years ago through NCDOT's process to determine critical needs in the area and prioritize projects on the division's list of projects awaiting funding. NCDOT scopes the project, then meets with local government officials to learn what is desired with respect to the project. NCDOT developed an initial plan for North Highland Lake Road that was not acceptable to the Council. Following several months of discussions between Council members and NCDOT engineers and their consulting engineer team, a revised plan was prepared, and it is to be presented today.

Mr. Schuler, in a power point presentation, reviewed a drawing of the original layout showing 14-foot lanes with curb and gutter on both sides of the road, with a multi-use path on the north side of Highland Lake Road. He stated that the modified plan proposes 11-foot travel lanes that, on the south side of the road, follow the existing edge of the road, where changes were avoided to stay away from historic properties. Paved shoulders of one to two feet would be added on the south side of the road. However, the road bed would be shifted to the north to accommodate the paved shoulders and also to avoid encumbering the historic properties on the south side of the road. On the north side of the road, a 2-foot wide curb and gutter would be installed. To minimize the impact on Pinecrest Presbyterian Church, a 5-foot sidewalk would be installed between Greenville Highway and the driveway entrance to the church. Past the church entrance,

the sidewalk would transition to a 10-foot wide multi-use, off-road path running to the railroad tracks.

Mr. Schuler reviewed existing right of ways and the revised right of ways. He stated the only area within the historic district where any planned road improvement would affect a property with a historic preservation easement is at the southeast corner of the intersection of North Highland Lake Road and Greenville Highway, where turning right from Greenville Highway, the corner currently does not have a sufficient radius on the curve for safe vehicular operation. Proposed in the modified plan for safety reasons is a single, northbound and right turn lane to accommodate larger vehicles, such as school buses, emergency vehicles, and delivery trucks.

At the church, a small retaining wall would be installed behind the sidewalk for approximately 150 feet to eliminate completely post construction impacts to the church's parking lot. A temporary construction easement on the church's parking area would be required for contractor access, but such access would be limited so as not to interfere with church activities or otherwise inconvenience the church.

The modified plan proposes a widening of the pull-off area across from Highland Lake dam from its current 12 feet to 15 feet. The plan provides for the replacement of the double barrel pipe system carrying King Creek northward from the dam with a concrete box culvert that would mimic the rockwork at the dam. Past the culvert eastward, the multi-use path would run within the park to the proposed new entrance to the park, then on to the railroad tracks, and utilize the park's multi-use trail system to the extent possible.

At Highland Lake Drive and Highland Park Road, the plan proposes the realignment of the curve and a pedestrian crossing for access to the park. As in the original design, westbound left turn lanes are proposed at both Highland Park Road and Highland Lake Drive.

The proposed park entrance is a compromise from a safety perspective and the potential impacts of two large oak trees. The plan contemplates closing the existing park entrance, moving the entrance approximately 200 feet westward around a curve, and rerouting Highland Golf Drive's access to the road.

The plan also proposes a change in the grade at the railroad tracks to improve the sight distance and the crossing of the tracks.

Council Members questioned Mr. Schuler and sought clarification on various features of the revised plan. There were also discussions of the impact of the project on Pinecrest Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Schuler advised that, between now and June 2019, plans would be developed, after which right of ways would be acquired and utilities would be relocated. Construction would start

around February or March of 2021. NCDOT will pay the appraised value for right of ways acquired for the project, as well as any damages resulting from such acquisitions.

The cost the Village will incur in the implementation of the plan is a 20% match for sidewalk and multi-use path construction, additional plantings and reforestation over and above DOT allowances. The village's costs would be offset, in full or in part, by amounts paid to the village for right of ways on park land.

Council Member Dockendorf thanked NCDOT for the working relationship with Council.

At 11:05 a.m., a break was taken, and at 11:15 a.m., the meeting reconvened.

Public Comments – A number of attendees, including the following, spoke in opposition to the revised plan: Beverly Stoney Johnson, Mr. Davis, Anne Coletta, Travis Rockey, Bill Penny, Stephanie Dunn, Mr. Rushton, Ted Owen, Anthony Burke, Darlene Miller and Victor Behoriam.

Residents who spoke in favor of the project included: Steve Jamerson, Denise Long, Bruce Holliday, and Cathy Maury.

At 12:00 p.m., Council Member Jamerson made a motion for a continuance of the meeting to April 27, 2018, at 10:00 a.m., at the parish hall of St. John in the Wilderness Church. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dockendorf and carried on a unanimous vote.

Michelle Parker, CMC
Village Clerk

Robert V. Staton
Mayor