

**CITY OF CHAMBLEE, GA**  
**MINUTES OF CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION**  
**March 11, 2010 – 6:00 p.m.**

Mayor Eric Clarkson called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Councilmembers present were: Mr. Tom Hogan, Mrs. Leslie Robson, Mr. Scott Taylor, Mr. Mark Wedge, and Mr. Dan Zanger.

Staff members present were: Mr. Jim Gleason, City Manager; Mr. Tillman Hannon, Public Works Director; Mr. Joel Holmes, Recreation Director; Ms. Angela Hudson, Finance Director; Mr. Marc Johnson, Police Chief; and Ms. Nancy Williams, City Clerk.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Mayor Clarkson read the rules for conducting public hearings.

**1. Variance Request - 3397 Keswick Drive**

Mayor Clarkson called the public hearing to order and explained that Mr. Joe Voyles requested a variance to Section 1004 of the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the side yard set-back from 10 feet to 5 feet to allow a home addition.

Mr. Dan Schultz, Development Director, and Michelle Alexander from Pond & Company presented the staff reports, and recommended denial of the variance request because the applicant had not presented evidence of an undue hardship. Mr. Schultz read a letter from Ms. Lynn Henry, 3403 Keswick Drive, in support of the variance request.

Mayor Clarkson asked to hear from those who wished to speak in favor of the variance request. Mr. Joe Voyles from Signature Homes of Berkley Lake, LLC said he represented the owner of the property. He said the owner had a large family and needed additional space to continue living in their home. Ms. Patricia Hewitt, 34202 Keswick Drive; Ms. Lynn Henry, 3403 Keswick Drive; Ms. Jennifer Robin, 3445 Keswick Drive; and Mr. Mike Waller, 3134 Helden Road spoke in favor of the variance. Mr. David Runsick, the owner of the property, also spoke in favor of the variance.

The Mayor asked to hear from those who wished to speak in opposition to the variance request. Hearing no opposition, the Mayor closed the public comments portion of the hearing and opened the floor for City Council discussion.

Councilmembers Robson, Wedge and Zanger asked the applicant questions about the existing house and the plans for the addition. Mr. Voyles said the current house is 720 square feet and the owner needed additional space for his family. He said they attempted to come up with a plan that would meet the City's code, but every alternative would have required a variance. Mr. Wedge said he spoke with residents in the neighborhood and he did not find anyone opposed to the variance. He said he believed this would be an on-going issue because many of the homes in the neighborhood were built in the 1950's. He also said he spoke with the Fire Department

and they did not have an issue with the proposal. Mr. Taylor agreed that this would be an on-going issue. The Mayor called the public hearing to a close. The City Council will consider the variance request at the regular meeting scheduled for March 16, 2010.

**2. Zoning Ordinance Amendment - Proposed change to Section 216 “Seasonal Activities Permits and Temporary Outdoor Sales Permits” (also known as the “Farmer’s Market Ordinance”) to allow staff to approve yearly calendars and to require a 300 foot buffer from properties zoned NR-1 and NR-2.**

Mr. Schultz explained that the City Council had previously asked staff to draft an amendment to the zoning ordinance concerning permits for seasonal activities and outdoor sales to allow annual calendars to be approved administratively rather than requiring approval by the Mayor and City Council. This ordinance was prepared by the City Attorney and was read at the regular meeting on February 16, 2010. The ordinance will be read again prior to City Council taking action at the regular meeting scheduled for March 16, 2010.

Mayor Clarkson opened the floor for citizen comments. Hearing no comments, the Mayor closed the public hearing.

Councilman Wedge moved to adjourn the public hearing. Councilman Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**WORK SESSION:**

Mayor Clarkson called the work session to order.

**Presentation & Announcements**

**1) Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) - Smart Growth Policies and Procedures**

Mr. Steven Causby from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) introduced Mr. Andrew Farnsworth, an intern and graduate student in the Masters of Public Administration Program at the University of Georgia. Mr. Farnsworth prepared a presentation about how some local governments are using components of “Smart Growth” during the current economic downturn. He said communities with projects that had not yet been completed when the recession hit looked for creative ways to secure financing, but there were no easy solutions. He said most communities reported to him that they felt their projects did have a direct effect on making their communities more competitive and despite the new economic climate; they would not cut out smart growth elements.

Mr. Hogan said he appreciated Mr. Farnsworth’s report. The Mayor and Council also thanked Mr. Farnsworth for his efforts.

**2) Announcement - 2009 Service Awards**

Mayor Clarkson announced that the 2009 Service Awards will be presented to employees at the beginning of the regular meeting on Tuesday, March, 16th.

The City Council reviewed the agenda items for action to be taken at the regular meeting scheduled to be held on March 16, 2010.

### **City Clerk**

- 1) Approval of Minutes** -February 11, 2010 - Public Hearing/Work Session  
February 16, 2010 - Regular Council Meeting

The minutes will be submitted for adoption on March 16, 2010.

### **City Manager**

- 1) Approval of Donation-Partnership Policy** - Previously, City Council instructed staff to prepare a draft policy to establish a uniform set of procedures for establishing partnerships and the acceptance of donations to the City. Staff presented a draft policy and requested written comments from the City Council in February. The final draft of the policy will be presented for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 2) Approval of Social Media Policy** – Previously, City Council instructed staff to prepare a draft policy to establish procedures for the use of social media. Staff presented a draft policy at the last meeting. The Council had a brief discussion about the policy. Mayor Clarkson said Chamblee had come a long way and he was glad the City had a website. He said it was important to remember that information being posted by the City cannot be personal opinions of employees or individual councilmembers. The final draft of the policy will be presented for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 3) Approval of Blog Policy Guidelines and Blog Comment Policy** – Previously, City Council instructed staff to provide a draft policy to establish procedures for the use of blogs. Blogs are communication tools the City can offer that invites conversation with the community. Some blogs offer basic information while others are designed to promote a dialogue. The final draft of the policy will be presented for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 4) Approval of Employee Communication Policy** – Previously, City Council reviewed a draft policy to guide employees in their oral and written communications. The final draft of the policy will be presented for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 5) Question on GMA Defined Benefit Plan and Approval of Policy Direction** – Mr. Gleason explained the potential impact of changes to the GMA Retirement Plan. Mr. Hogan said he wanted it noted for the record that material previously presented about the GMA Defined Benefit Plan was not from a disinterested party. He said that when the market goes up, the financial burden on the city lessens for a defined benefit plan and he felt a defined contribution plan was best for the City because they would always know what their financial burden would be. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Gleason said there would no financial impact on the City if the Council wished to allow non-vested employees an option of getting out of the Defined Benefit Plan to participate in a Defined Contribution Plan. He said that if the City Council wanted to allow this option, the non-vested employees would be required to go through a lengthy education process so they could make an informed decision. The City Council will take action on this item at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **Development Director**

### **1) Approval of Sign for Peachtree Malone Lofts-PUD**

Mr. Schultz said the Peachtree Malone Lofts Homeowners Association had submitted a request to place a sign on the side of Building 100 at 5200 Peachtree Road. He said the sign is within the allowable limits, but since the development is a Planned Unit Development (PUD), the request would require City Council approval. This item will be placed on the agenda for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **Police Chief:**

### **1) Approval of Computer and Technology Resource Policy**

Previously, City Council reviewed a draft policy to govern employee use of the computers, technology or the Internet. The final draft of the policy will be presented for action at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **Parks and Recreation:**

### **1) Request by Grace Ministries to waive the rental policy and allow use of the Community Building free of charge**

Ms. Michelle Vasquez requested the City Council to waive the rental policy and allow Grace Ministries to use the Community Building free of charge. She said she intended to Host charity events at the Community Building a few times a year and collect food and clothing for the needy. The Mayor and City Council encouraged Ms. Vasquez to reach out to existing charitable organizations and resources in Chamblee that may be able to assist her. The City Council will make a decision on this item at the March 16th meeting.

## **City Attorney:**

### **1) Second Reading Farmers Market Update** – The second reading for the proposed ordinance and final adoption will take place at the March 16<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **Discussion – Mayor Eric Clarkson**

### **1) Update to Council on the Service Delivery Strategy** – Mayor Clarkson said the City had lost its Qualified Government Status because they were not able to enter into a Service Delivery Agreement with Dekalb County by the state imposed dead-line. However, Mayor Clarkson felt that the County and participating cities were working together and moving in a positive direction. He did not believe anyone wanted to go to court over this matter. He said the bottom line was that cities wanted to opt out of services they don't need or use so citizens don't have to pay taxes for those services. He said he would keep the City Council informed of any changes.

## **Citizen Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

The Mayor adjourned the meeting by consent of the Council at 7:45 p.m.

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Nancy Williams, City Clerk

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
Eric Clarkson, Mayor