

October 21, 1974
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The City Council of the City of Charlotte, North Carolina, met on Monday, October 21, 1974, at 8:00 o'clock p.m., in the Board Meeting Room of the Educational Center, for televised meeting, with Mayor pro tem James B. Whittington presiding, and Councilmembers Fred D. Alexander, Kenneth R. Harris, Pat Locke, Milton Short, Neil C. Williams and Joe D. Withrow present.

ABSENT: Mayor John M. Belk.

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Planning Commission sat with the City Council, and, as a separate body, held its public hearings on the zoning petitions, with Chairman Tate, and Commissioners Drummond, Ervin, Finley, Kratt, Ross, and Royal present.

ABSENT: Commissioners Boyce, Jolly and Turner.

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INVOCATION.

The invocation was given by City Manager, David A. Burkhalter.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

Upon motion of Councilman Short, seconded by Councilman Withrow, and unanimously carried, the minutes of the joint hearing on Monday, October 14 and the regular meeting, on Monday, October 14, were approved as submitted, with the following correction in Minute Book 61, Page 3, 25th line, change "Mayor Belk" to "Councilman Harris".

HEARING ON PETITION NO. 74-47 BY WALDO L. HALL FOR A CHANGE IN ZONING OF PROPERTY LOCATED AT 301 PETERSON DRIVE EAST.

The scheduled public hearing was held on the subject petition for a change in zoning from R-6MF to I-1 of property located at 301 Peterson Drive East.

Mr. Fred Bryant, Assistant Planning Director, stated this is a request for a change in zoning from R-6MF to I-1, light industrial, on one lot located on Peterson Drive at its intersection with Heriot Avenue, and has one single family residence on it.

On the South Tryon Street side, on both sides of Peterson Drive is a solid pattern of existing single family houses. From Heriot Avenue over to Tryon is a residential relationship. There is a different pattern of land use from Heriot Avenue back in the direction of Old Pineville Road where most of the land uses are light industrial. There is a broad pattern of light industrial uses all the way to Old Pineville Road. On Yancey Road in the direction of South Tryon is also a continuation of light industrial type of activities.

The zoning pattern reflect about the same situation as the land use pattern. There is a solid residential zoning pattern that extends all the way from South Tryon Street down to Heriot Avenue, along Peterson and along Cama Street, all of which makes a small residential neighborhood from Tryon Street down to Heriot. The subject property is on the fringe of that type of zoning, and is included at present in the R-6MF classification. Across Heriot Avenue is I-1 zoning to accommodate the light industrial uses; across Yancey and along Yancey Road is a pattern of heavy industrial, I-2 zoning that extends along Yancey in one direction, over toward Old Pineville Road, north of Yancey.

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Mr. Bryant stated the subject property is bounded on two sides by existing R-6MF zoning, on one side by I-1 and on the rear by I-2 zoning.

Mr. William Hamel, Attorney for the petitioner, stated he has a petition signed by most of the surrounding property owners favoring the change in zoning. He stated the property is the corner lot at Peterson Drive, Heriot Avenue and Yancey Road; the lot is 630 feet around and is the largest lot of any of the other lots that are residential. He stated all but 200 feet of that lot faces industry at this time. On the southwest of this lot is the American Crankshaft Company which is on property zoned I-2; on the south, across Yancey Road, are two heavy industries; on the east, directly across Heriot Avenue, is a light industry; on the northeast the property is light industrial.

He stated his client, Waldo Hall, has contracted to sell this lot to Mr. William D. Pittman, Sr. and Mr. Pittman, Jr., who own Pittman Enterprises, which manufactures press-on numbers, and is the only one of its type for 800 miles to the north and 250 miles to Atlanta.

Mr. Pittman came forward and showed samples of the type of numbers and decals his company manufactures. He also presented a drawing of the property showing where the building would be located on the lot. Mr. Pittman stated they plan to face the building on Heriot Avenue up against Yancey away from the residential area; the building is to be 50' x 100' and is a metal building with a low profile roof. At present they employ 14 people, and they plan to leave the residential structure which is located on the lot at this time.

Councilman Short asked how far this will be from an occupied home? Mr. Hamel replied the nearest one is occupied by Mr. Montague who is present here tonight and who has signed the petition. That Mr. Montague lives just next door at 307 Peterson Drive and it will be 50 to 75 feet to his residence.

Councilman Harris asked how many parking spaces will be required? Mr. Bryant replied with the number of employees he has indicated it will require 10 to 12 spaces. Mr. Pittman stated the parking will be at the front of the building off the street, and access will be to Heriot Avenue.

No opposition was expressed to the proposed change in zoning.

Council decision was deferred for a recommendation of the Planning Commission.

HEARING ON PETITION NO. 74-48 FOR A CHANGE IN ZONING FROM R-6MF AND B-1 TO R-6 OF PROPERTY ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF OAKLAWN AVENUE, BETWEEN BURTON STREET AND SPRING STREET, AND ON PETITION NO. 74-49 FOR A CHANGE IN ZONING FROM R-6MF AND B-2 TO R-9MF OF A 2.30 ACRE TRACT OF LAND LOCATED ON THE SOUTHWEST CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION OF STATESVILLE AVENUE AND CALLAHAN STREET, ON PETITIONS OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE.

The public hearing was called on the subject petitions.

Mr. Fred Bryant stated both of the requests have evolved from the Redevelopment Department and represent requests designed to bring the zoning pattern, which is present in the Greenville Area, in line with the redevelopment plan, which is in process of being carried out in that area.

He stated there are two vicinities involved. The first is a request to change from an existing business and multi-family zone to a single family classification, an area located on the south side of Oaklawn Avenue, covering a considerable distance along Oaklawn Avenue.

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The area south of Oaklawn Avenue is largely vacant due to the fact the Redevelopment Department has already carried out the demolition process relating to the redevelopment activities in the Greenville Area. A few uses have been placed back in the area, and in addition there are several uses still in existence that have not been cleared. On the south side of Oaklawn Avenue there remains a small neighborhood service facility consisting of a beauty shop, barber shop, small grocery store and some other retail commercial activities that have been allowed to remain for the time being. Immediately behind that, along Fontana Avenue, a new street constructed in the area, there have been constructed several single family houses. These are houses that have been built for sale, and is the type of housing that has been designed to be placed back into the area. On Spring Street, which is a new street built in the area, is the neighborhood community center which has been built and placed in the Greenville Area. He stated those are the only areas of uses that now exist in the large section.

North of Oaklawn on the opposite side there are several uses that remain, the largest of which is the Fairview Homes, public housing project, which has been there for a number of years. The area between Lloyd Street and McCall Street is a playground area, and a small recreation center is located at McCall Street. In the direction of I-77 construction area are several residential uses that remain on Oaklawn Avenue. Basically the older, existing neighborhood lies north of Oaklawn and the now cleared Greenville Area lies south of it.

Mr. Bryant stated the second request consists of a block of land on the west side of Statesville Avenue and is a request for a change to multi-family an area that would be developed in accordance with that type of activity. The immediate area is all vacant with all the uses cleared. Across Statesville Road there remains several single family homes and then there is the beginning of the industrial activity across the railroad. In the area of the subject property, it is primarily vacant land.

The zoning reflects one of R-6MF zoning. Most of the Greenville Area, except for some property along Oaklawn Avenue which is zoned B-1, and property along Statesville Avenue which is zoned B-2, the Industrial area, the vast majority of the area has been zoned R-6MF for a number of years.

Mayor pro tem Whittington asked if any consideration has been given to reverse frontage from Burton to Spring Street on the single family, if the rezoning takes place? Mr. Bryant replied the actual plan for the use of property along the south side of Oaklawn Avenue is a series of cul-de-sacs which would come off Fontana, and the effect then would be the rear of all the lots, which would face on the cul-de-sacs would be Oaklawn Avenue. There would be total reverse frontage on Oaklawn Avenue.

Mr. Sawyer, Director of the Urban Redevelopment Department, explained the plan for the development of Greenville Area, pointing out Oaklawn Avenue on the north, Statesville Avenue on the east, Seaboard Railroad on the south, the under construction I-77 on the west, and the Greenville Area with the Northwest Expressway tying into and interchanging with the I-77 right through the lower third of the project area.

He stated they are asking that the first area be rezoned to R-6, single family for a tier of single family lots; the second area is requested rezoned to R-9MF for a church site, and churches are permitted in residential zones. The area around the second site will be R-9MF.

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Mr. Sawyer referred to a map showing the existing zoning pattern which is B-1 on the Oaklawn frontage, and B-2 on the Statesville Avenue frontage down to just below Callahan Street and the church site. Then the vast majority of the lower portion is an industrial zone, I-2, with the large central area R-6MF, including the industrial area planned on the southwest corner. From time to time, they will come back to Council as they are ready to market the land for sale and request assistance in solving the overall zoning problem on a piece-meal basis.

The plan they are attempting to implement is a total community they have planned for a full range of housing, from single family, medium density townhouse and garden apartments type housing. They planned a shopping center at the very busy intersection of Oaklawn Avenue and Statesville Avenue; they planned parks that thread through the area, and lead to a central park that will have all the recreational opportunities that most parks in the city can offer now. They have already sold to the city one parcel of land on which the Greenville Neighborhood Center has been constructed. That will serve not only this community, once it is developed, but it serves a broader area. Across the expressway, they have planned an industrial area they hope will be developed by industries that will offer job opportunities to the residents of the Greenville community once it is developed.

Mr. Sawyer stated the only land they have sold are ten lots in the vicinity fronting on Fontana Avenue that have been developed with single family housing. In addition they have contracted to sell a church site to the Brandon Presbyterian Church, which church is presently located in the project area, and still functioning. Beyond that they have not been able to market any of this land primarily because of the moratorium that has been called by former President Nixon on the federally assisted housing program - he refers specifically to the Section 235 Federal Interest Subsidy program and the 236 Rent Supplement Program, which were possible at the time the project was planned, and were cut off. He stated they are in about the same situation of any other owner of land in the city or in the country - that is, they are subject to and being affected by the same housing recession that is common throughout the country.

Beginning in the early stages of the project, they bought the land in the multi-family section in the lower corner, bounded by Statesville and the access road to the Northwest Expressway to market for multi-family housing because that was a large vacant tract and they could make it available to a developer without displacing a large number of families from the area, which was one of their objectives. They purchased that property in December, 1971, and offered it to a non-profit organization in the Greenville area, PAED. That organization began making applications to HUD for the 236 Federally Assisted Programs, and was turned down in early 1972 because HUD disapproved the application as it has an internal policy that did not permit the development of high density residential structures in a racially impacted area, which they said this was. That was just the beginning of one of the housing problems we are still attempting to solve here in the City. They had to shift their attention from the multi-family site to the single family area as it was the only density permitted by HUD to be developed at that time. That is why they have contracted with the same non-profit sponsor, PAED, to purchase 25 lots - ten have been conveyed and ten have been built upon. As of this afternoon, he understands from the developer that one of the houses has definitely been sold, and they have contracts on three additional houses that look very good at this point. Four of the ten houses might be sold very soon. That will be the first residents of the new Greenville community.

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Mr. Sawyer stated beyond that they have a great deal of interest in times past, but none recently, for other developments. The Second Calvary Baptist Church contracted to buy site to develop a church. They developed plans and as prices began to inflate and escalate, they were priced out of the market, and the church terminated the contract. They were very seriously approached about the shopping center site, and that fell by the wayside, primarily because it did not appear that the residential development which would help support it would be developed in the Greenville area. They have had other requests for the townhouse site, the latest of which is from MOTION, Inc., a city sponsored housing developer. Currently MOTION has 49 housing units coming along under the 236 federally assisted rent supplement program, that were under the wire, just prior to the moratorium. It looks like, with current cost levels, and HUD has recently agreed to approve that project, that will be constructed on the sites - 49 units. A contract has not been executed with MOTION yet, but they are very close.

Mr. Sawyer stated there is room for 550 to almost 600 units, depending on the densities permitted under zoning and by FHA, and depending on the density the developers should want.

Councilman Harris asked if the church site will have an access on Statesville Avenue? Mr. Sawyer replied it will through Callahan Street, but not directly onto Statesville Avenue. Any curb break on Statesville would be too close to Callahan. That does give it proper access. Councilman Harris asked if there is still a possibility of the other site being used by a church? Mr. Sawyer replied by a church, yes, but that particular church has already bought an existing church elsewhere and abandoned their plans to build on the site. The site will be reserved as a church site.

Councilman Alexander stated he hopes they will not let the idea of the industrial development die; that he is quite interested in seeing what can be done to bring the proper type of industrial firms into this location. That he hopes they will keep it alive and pursue it vigorously to see that we get something in there to make jobs for the people who will move back into the area. Mr. Sawyer replied they intend to pursue that; that is one of their objectives. Mr. Sawyer stated that the Chamber of Commerce is working very closely with them.

No opposition was expressed to the proposed changes in zoning.

Council decision was deferred for recommendations from the Planning Commission.

ORDINANCE NO. 422-X AMENDING CHAPTER 23, SECTION 23-8 OF THE CITY CODE OF THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE AMENDING THE ZONING MAP BY CHANGING THE ZONING OF PROPERTY FRONTING ON DRIFTWOOD DRIVE, AND BEGINNING WEST OF ALBEMARLE ROAD, AS PETITIONED BY B.E.W. CORPORATION.

Motion was made by Councilwoman Locke, seconded by Councilman Withrow, and unanimously carried, adopting the subject ordinance changing the zoning from R-9MF to O-6 of a tract of land fronting 140 feet on Driftwood Drive, and beginning about 258 feet west of Albemarle Road, as recommended by the Planning Commission.

The ordinance is recorded in full in Ordinance Book 21, at Page 310.

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RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR PUBLIC HEARINGS ON PETITIONS NO. 74-50 THROUGH NO. 74-53 FOR ZONING CHANGES.

Councilman Short moved adoption of the subject resolution providing for public hearings on Monday, November 25, at 2:30 p.m. on Petitions No. 74-50 through No. 74-53, which motion was seconded by Councilwoman Locke, and unanimously carried.

The resolution is recorded in full in Resolutions Book 10, at Page 146.

CONCEPT OF PLAN TO DEVELOP SMALL UPTOWN PARK ON EAST TRADE STREET, APPROVED.

Mr. Loonis McGlohon stated he would like to present an idea that has to do with improving a parcel of land that is now a vacant lot, between Eckerd's and Belk's downtown stores on East Trade Street - the first block east of the Square.

He stated the design is by a Charlotte designer, Joe Sonderman, which calls for a Kiosk which would be large enough to house a policeman on duty, or someone giving tourist information for visitors, a planted area, tables with a fountain in the center, and trees along some of the areas, and a gazebo.

Mr. McGlohon presented drawings showing the kiosk, flags and super graphics painted on the brick walls which are about five stories tall; a drawing showing the wall behind the building facing Tryon Street, 106, 108 and 110. These buildings will be treated in pastels similar to the Charleston Rainbow Room. Again there will be super graphics on what is now solid brick wall at the rear, the Woolworth Store. The last drawing was of the gazebo, which could be used as a bandstand or for other programs.

He stated they are a committee of several people who are interested in this development - Bill Guarrant, Joe Sonderman, Austin Fox, Jack Miller of Central Charlotte Association, and the Company he works for, WBTV, along with Tom McDermott, City's Landscape Division.

He stated they hope to get a lot of donations from private individuals and companies; they hope it will be a community project with everyone contributing a little. They think it will cost \$50,000 or less to have the park open on Thanksgiving Day.

He stated the land is owned by Davidson College and a family whose name is Childs, and Mr. Lewis Rose acting for the heirs has given permission to use the land for a period of three to five years.

Councilman Short asked if the Park and Recreation Commission will operate and maintain this park? Mr. McGlohon replied Mr. McDermott says they have in reserve some planting material which can be put into the park, and maintain it. The City Manager advised this is Landscaping and not Park & Recreation.

Mayor pro tem Whittington asked if they have any monies on hand? Mr. McGlohon replied they have talked with a few people; but they wanted to bring it to Council first; they have had some promises of some donations; a company in South Carolina has agreed to build the gazebo.

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Mayor pro tem Whittington stated speaking for Council he would like to thank Mr. McGlohon for bringing this idea to them; that he hopes it is something that can be done with private funds, and people working together can build this little park near the Square, across from NCNB Plaza. This is a people moving program, people involved program.

He stated he hopes the staff, and the Mayor and Council will do what they can to help with it; it is a great idea, and Council appreciates this kind of involvement from the citizenry.

Councilman Alexander moved that Council endorse the concept of the Uptown Park as presented by Mr. McGlohon. The motion was seconded by Councilman Short.

Mr. Burkhalter, City Manager, suggested that Council request staff to cooperate with the committee, and ask the Landscaping Division to maintain the park, then perhaps people will make donations, if they know it will be maintained properly.

Mayor pro tem Whittington stated the motion is to endorse the concept and the City Manager has advised how to instruct staff.

The vote was taken on the motion and carried unanimously.

EDITORIAL ON THE NEED FOR A PLACE TO HONOR LOCAL HEROES MADE A PART OF THE MINUTES, AND STAFF REQUESTED TO LOOK INTO THE IDEA OF ESTABLISHING A DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC RECORDS.

Council Alexander stated in the informal session of Council he requested that the following editorial from Saturday's Observer be made a part of the minutes:

"LOCAL HEROES - The City Needs A Place In Which To Honor Them

Among old Charlotteans the name in the paper was familiar and perhaps brought back memories of another era. John E. Crowell, the story said, now a white bearded 81-year-old, would be inducted into an aviation hall of fame at Hammondsport, N. Y., next May. A Charlotte hero was to be honored by people elsewhere.

The story was one of two such notices in the week's news. The other was a report that the Bill Graham Evangelistic Association had chosen Wheaton College in Illinois as the site for a Billy Graham Library. Another Charlotte son was to be remembered by people somewhere else.

They were not the first reminders that Charlotte tends to be uncaring about its native sons and daughters who make significant contributions to the world. Or non-native sons and daughters, for that matter; Charlotte does not discriminate in its forgetfulness.

What is there to remind us of Col. Thomas Polk, for instance, the man who founded the town? Or Mrs. John Wilkes, the woman who encouraged the building of hospitals? Or Col. William R. Myers, the banker-railroader-real estate man who gave land all over town for civic projects?

We name a school for Alexander Graham, a park for James B. Marshall, a bridge for Brodie Griffith or an expressway for Paul Younts, yet we neglect to tell later generations why. Who were these people that they should be so honored?

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Who Were These People?

And we overlook dozens of other men and women who helped to make the community what it is. Dr. Ham McKay, Judge John J. Parker, Capt. S. B. Alexander, Gov. Zeb Vance, Judge Spencer Bell, lawyer Julia Alexander, writer W. J. Cash, architect Martin Boyer, are just a few who come to mind.

There are halls of fame to remind us of many other people who command our notice: football players, golfers, baseball heroes, even stock car drivers. But there is little to tell us of the men and women who helped to make this a better place.

Charlotte should have a hall of history for remembering men like Johnny Crowell, a pioneer in an era when flying was as novel as today's space travel. He was more than a daredevil (though he was that); he helped Charlotteans recognize the potential of aviation and stimulated public support for building a Charlotte airport. He was the first airport manager.

Flying Up Tryon Street

He was also an inventor. He perfected a compass for cross-country flying (early pilots had to follow railroad tracks to get where they wanted to go). He also developed a model cockpit in which men could learn to fly without leaving the ground. A third invention improved aerial photography.

But most Charlotteans remembered Johnny Crowell as a stunt flyer. He set world's records for flying outside loops in a single-engine airplane (He did four in one minute.) He introduced skywriting in this part of the country. Once he flew up South Tryon Street, skipping over electric wires to drop straw hats on pedestrians as part of a hat-sale promotion.

An exhibit on Johnny Crowell in Charlotte's hall of history would be a big hit among visiting school children. Even today his stunts sound daring.

An Invader's Quarters

An exhibit on Thomas Polk also would capture children's imagination. He came here when all of Charlotte was backwoods and set up a town at the junction of two Indian paths. His log-cabin courthouse enabled Charlotte to become the county seat.

His house was at Independence Square, where Eckerd's is now, and during the Revolutionary War, Lord Cornwallis made it the British Army's headquarters. The Thomas Polk story would help us appreciate the meaning of the term, "Independence Square."

Dr. Alexander Graham, father of UNC's Dr. Frank Graham, might have less appeal for school children but great appeal for their parents. He was Charlotte's first school superintendent. He came here from Fayetteville in 1888, when public schools in North Carolina were rare. He set up classes in an old military academy at the corner of Morehead and South Boulevard (where the YMCA is today). During the Civil War, the building had been used as a hospital for Confederate soldiers.

A Hospital Schoolhouse

Apparently hospitals and school houses were not so different in those days. When Dr. Graham was planning the city's first graded school, an architect showed him plans for a sanitorium to be built in Texas. Dr. Graham liked the design so much he adopted it.

For years, Charlotteans knew it as First Ward School, a strange looking structure with wings radiating from a central core, bay windows in each room, and a big playroom in the basement. The building was recently demolished, but it was the city's pride at the turn of the century.

Saving The Mint Museum

Women visitors to a Charlotte hall of fame would enjoy an exhibit on the life of Miss Julia Alexander, one of the county's first women lawyers. From about 1910 through the 1930s, she was a very influential force in the community.

She represented Mecklenburg County in the state legislature and introduced the first bill authorizing the consolidation of city and county governments, an idea that is still very much with us. She was also a key figure in preserving the old U.S. Mint as the Mint Museum of Art.

Examples For Our Times

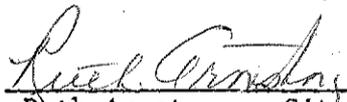
Charlotte has destroyed much of its past. It has torn down most of the buildings that remind us of our heritage. But the lives and the times of the men and women who contributed to that heritage can be remembered. A hall of history might give us some examples to live our lives by.

JACK CLAIBORNE
Associate Editor"

Councilman Alexander stated this called to the public attention the lack of any form of a department or facility that made record of historical items of interest as they relate to people and things growing out of our Charlotte community. That he further discussed the idea he proposed to Council sometime ago that he felt we need a Department of Public Records. He stated the editorial substantiates some of his thinkings of why a Department of Public Records is needed. That he has asked that the article be read into the minutes of this meeting, and that further attention be given to the idea of establishing a Department of Public Records, and that staff be asked to come to Council with some firm facts leading towards the possibilities of such development.

ADJOURNMENT.

There being no other business before the City Council, the meeting was adjourned.



Ruth Armstrong, City Clerk