

Aiken City Council Minutes

REGULAR MEETING

July 11, 2011

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Clyburn, Dewar, Ebner, Homoki, Price, and Wells.

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Glenn Parker, Pete Frommer, Kim Abney, Ed Evans, Ben Moore, Larry Morris, Alicia Davis, Tim Coakley, Sara Ridout, Amy Banton of the Aiken Standard, and about 30 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Councilman Wells led in prayer, which was followed by the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

GUIDELINES

Mayor Cavanaugh reviewed the guidelines for speaking at the Council meeting. He asked that those who would like to speak raise their hand and be recognized and limit their comments to five minutes.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There being no additions or deletions, Councilman Ebner moved and Councilman Wells seconded a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of June 27, 2011, were considered for approval. Councilman Wells moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that the minutes of the June 27, 2011, meeting be approved as written. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION

SCDOT

South Carolina Department of Transportation

Silver Bluff Widening Project

Report

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Mr. Kevin Gantt, with SCDOT, was present to give Council a report on the results from the May 26, 2011, public information session on the Silver Bluff widening project.

Mr. Pearce stated Kevin Gantt, with SCDOT, is present to provide an update on the pending Silver Bluff Road widening project to three lanes from near Town Creek Road to Richardson's Lake Road. He pointed out we have been working on this project since September, 2007. Originally DOT had proposed a five lane widening project. There have been a series of meetings and input from the citizens. The current proposal is for a three lane widening project. It was felt that a public information session would be helpful. That meeting was held on May 26, 2011.

Mr. Gantt is present to share the tabulation of public comments received at the May 26th public information session held at Town Creek Baptist Church. Over 193 public comments were received on this proposed road widening, and 55% of responders preferred the original SCDOT plan for widening this road. He will also outline the next steps to secure an environmental review of this proposed project, with another public hearing expected on the environmental findings in early 2012. A summary of the information from the May 26, 2011 Public Information meeting was provided for Council's review.

Mr. Pearce stated the next stage for the widening of Silver Bluff is that SCDOT requires a concurrence letter from the City for projects being built within the Aiken city limits. After hearing from Mr. Gantt, Council will consider authorizing the Mayor to sign a concurrence letter for this project to proceed to the environmental stage. The environmental study will take about 6 months to complete. This is not a final determination of the project. It is just going to the next step so there can be a formal public hearing once the environmental report is received. This is just a presentation of the results from the May 26, 2011, meeting and a formal public hearing on the results.

Mr. Kevin Gantt, of SCDOT, showed a map of the area of the proposed improvements along Silver Bluff Road. The project is about a mile and a half along Silver Bluff from Richardson's Lake Road to just past Town Creek Road. He said the proposal is to widen the road to three lanes along the corridor and to make some improvements at particular intersections. He summarized the history of the project beginning in 2007. Three public hearings have been conducted on the project. The initial hearing was for a five lane project in 2007. At that time the comments received from the public were not favorable for the project. SCDOT went back to the ARTS Committee with direction from the City, and the purpose and need of the project was changed. The project went from a capacity project, which was widening and which the public was not in favor of, to corridor improvements, which addressed five intersections to make the corridor operate better. The comments were received and the plans were redesigned. SCDOT came back in September, 2009. At that meeting corridor improvements were presented. Improvements were proposed at Town Creek, Hartwell Drive, and at Richardson's Lake Road. The results from that meeting were much more favorable. SCDOT then went back to the ARTS Committee for direction. The summary was to advance, but to do it by minimizing the right of way impacts and also using a three lane section throughout the corridor. A summary of those results was used in going back to the drawing board, and a public information meeting was held on May 26, 2011. At that meeting SCDOT showed two alternatives. One was the alternative about the centerline and another alternative which minimized right of way impacts at a particular intersection at Hartwell Drive. The public comment overwhelmingly showed that the public would like to see the project progress about the centerline. This alternative uses less right of way impact. SCDOT has worked with the City of Aiken through the ARTS Commission. He said he was present at this meeting to ask for Council's concurrence to give SCDOT the authority to move forward as directed by the ARTS Committee to advance the plans, finish the environmental document, and get to a public hearing. Nothing is final until we conclude the environmental process. If we go forward and we receive comments from the public, all of those comments have to be addressed at that hearing before the Federal Highway Administration will bless the project and allocate funds for design, and ultimately construction, of the project. He said he would address any questions.

In response to a question by Mayor Cavanaugh regarding the percent of the comments from the public hearing, Mr. Gantt stated 55% of the 193 comments were in favor of the proposed changes being made about the existing centerline. About 26% were in favor of the shift, with 5% opposed to the project, 14% had no opinion on either approach to the widening.

Councilman Homoki stated a couple of years ago there was a meeting in the Municipal Conference Center. There were some detailed drawings of the intersections of Richardson's Lake, Hartwell Drive and Town Creek Road. He wondered if those plans had been changed due to public input to date. He stated his understanding is that the people wanted to have the improvements about the existing centerline, but he is understanding Mr. Gantt to say it is more feasible to move the whole road to the left. He also asked if there would be a traffic signal at Town Creek and Silver Bluff.

Mr. Gantt stated the intersection of Richardson's Lake Road intersection is pretty much the same. They changed some of the dynamics to address the turn lanes coming in from the south of the project. Basically that intersection is the same. Some of the median was changed to make sure the turn lanes could be put in and function correctly. Presently there is a median at the intersection that would cause traffic to wiggle as you go in. They straighten this out and made some accommodations. The traffic capacity is handled the

same way. Going up through the corridor, Hartwell Drive was redesigned to minimize right of way impacts. He said a great effort was spent on this intersection to try to push the traffic to the interior and give back green space on the outside. This allowed them to tie the road in and make it safer. He said at the Hartwell Drive intersection the road was shifted to be able to see what that would cause in the project. When the project was shifted away (the second alternative at the May 26 meeting) it actually increased the total right of way impact. When this was showed to the public, the comments were that they favored the changes about the existing centerline, which were progressed from the beginning. The comments favored the original design and not the shift in alignment. Regarding the question about a traffic signal at Town Creek, Mr. Gantt stated this was resolved over a year ago. When they addressed the intersection at Town Creek, there were comments at each meeting regarding a light at Town Creek. The intersection was studied by SCDOT, and it was felt the improvements to be made along the Silver Bluff corridor, with three lanes all the way through and a free flow right turn, would help the operation of the intersection. The agreement was that after the project was completed, SCDOT would monitor the intersection, and if it was felt it met the warrants at that time, a signal could be installed. He said, however, at this time the intersection does not meet the warrants for a signal.

Councilman Homoki pointed out that the traffic flow at Town Creek does not warrant a traffic signal because most of the people take the road down to Pine Log Road and make a right to get back on Silver Bluff Road. He felt until a light is installed there would not be a true reflection of what people would do coming out of Gem Lakes because they take an alternate route.

Mr. Gantt stated to install a signal it has to be installed on the actual counts coming through the intersection, and the traffic does not warrant a light at this time. He pointed out that the improvements will address some of the issues at that intersection, because they will clear and increase the site distance coming into the intersection. In the future, if the improvements do not help, they can still go back and see if the traffic warrants a signal. He pointed out there are nine criteria that must be considered in installing a traffic signal, and one or more of the criteria has to be met.

Councilman Ebner stated in 2001 when the Village at Woodside was approved there was supposed to be a light at that intersection. He said his understanding is that light will be installed. He said the traffic is less than the requirements, but there is a high level of safety issue for cars coming from Petticoat Junction. Mr. Gantt responded that he remembers the light being mentioned, and it is still in the project.

Mr. Brad Kerr, 102 Hartwell Drive, at the corner of Silver Bluff and Hartwell, stated he received an email on the results of the May 26 meeting, with 55% in favor of the State design. He said he was concerned about the results. He said he did some research and counted the parcels that border Silver Bluff. He said there are about 54 parcels that actually touch the Silver Bluff corridor on both sides, with some residential and some business. He wondered what percentage of the 54 parcels that are directly impacted are reflected in the results of the meeting. He pointed out that comment cards were distributed to all people in the area, and some may be a couple of miles from Silver Bluff Road. He said he understood there had been a request to SCDOT for copies of the actual comments, and this had not been received yet. He wondered where the respondents lived. He said everyone he talked to at the meeting was in favor of the City design. The City design moved and shifted the centerline from the Gem Lake side of Silver Bluff over to the empty lot across the street. There is also a wooded buffer zone owned by a subsidiary of Woodside that goes down the Woodside side of the Silver Bluff corridor. He felt the buffer was wide enough to account for the 8 to 15 feet centerline shift to an empty lot to save houses and trees along the corridor.

Mr. Gantt stated it is hard to quantify impact. He said the proposed project at times has been very contentious because people in the community all have a voice. He said they don't just count the number of properties adjacent to the corridor. He said federal law requires them to advertise for a certain period of time, generally 15 days, before conducting the public meetings. This is to notify the public, or anyone who would use the public road, not just people inside the corridor, to be able to give a comment. At the

first meeting there were over 200 comments and 193 comments in the May 26 meeting. The comments were that the people did not want to see the widening. Because of that direction and the voice from the public, the purpose of the project was redone and the project almost started all over in the design process. Over 6,000 cards were mailed to residents in the area. That is in addition to the federal requirement, because they wanted to get more of a voice from the community. The public hearing was advertised through the media and signs were posted along the corridor. This was to notify anyone who uses the corridor to be able to voice an opinion. He said SCDOT uses the direction from the City through the ARTS to develop the project. He said public information meetings are conducted, and they summarize the comments. He said anyone who comes to the public meetings has a voice. He said all things are weighed in the process. He pointed out that the next step is an environmental impact study that will study the impact of widening the road. There will be a formal hearing where the public can express their concerns. He said he did have copies of the summary of the comments which have been requested. He said he had to go through several offices to get the information.

At the Mayor's request, Mr. Gantt explained what would be done at Hartwell Drive. He said they had spent more time on this intersection than the other intersections in the project. This was because of the right of way impacts. When they were instructed to minimize the right of way impacts, they started around the Hartwell intersection. He said they normally do a balanced approach so the project is developed about the centerline to be fair to everyone along the corridor. At this particular intersection, they installed curb and gutter, redesigned the intersection to push traffic to the inside and gave back green space to the front yards. Where there was a median on the inside of the state road at Hartwell Drive, the median was reduced and they gave a grassy space back to the residents. In the end that made the turning radii work out easier, as they had certain requirements that they had to meet for the traffic to be able to turn out and be able to see around the curves. He said they did a lot of work to redesign the area at Hartwell. He said they had a couple of designs for the intersection to try to minimize the impacts. This was specific from the direction of the ARTS Committee.

Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn, that Council approve allowing the Mayor to sign a letter of concurrence to SCDOT so they can begin to conduct the environmental study of the Silver Bluff Road corridor widening project, with a formal public hearing to be held once the study is completed. The motion was unanimously approved.

University of South Carolina Aiken
USC-Aiken
50th Anniversary Celebration
Banners

Mayor Cavanaugh stated USC-Aiken would like to make a presentation to Council regarding the University of South Carolina Aiken's 50th Anniversary Celebration and request placement of banners.

Mr. Pearce stated Chancellor Tom Hallman and Deidre Martin, Vice Chancellor for University Advancement, are present to give a presentation regarding the upcoming plans for a 50th Anniversary Celebration by USC-Aiken. He pointed out that September 10, 2011, will be the celebration of the founding of USC-Aiken on September 10, 1961. As part of the USC-Aiken 50th Celebration, USC-Aiken is asking Council for permission to place banners from August 1 to October 31 of this year. A rendition of the proposed banner, as well as a brief explanation and map for these proposed locations were given to Council for information.

Chancellor Tom Hallman stated he appreciated the opportunity to present a request to Council for the 50th anniversary celebration of USC-Aiken. He said Dr. Deidre Martin would present the request to Council. He thanked Council for their support of USC-Aiken over the years. He said the celebration of the 50th anniversary is a hallmark event, and they want the community to be part of the celebration.

Dr. Martin stated USC-Aiken is very proud that their heritage lies very much in the City of Aiken. The doors were opened on September 10, 1961 in Banksia, so their history is very much tied to the history of downtown Aiken. She said USC-Aiken is what they are today because of the people of the community. She said she was proud of the fact that it was community leaders in the late 50's and early 60's that stood together and asked the State for higher education in our community. Because of those community leaders, USC-Aiken exists today. She said they have tried hard throughout their history to never forget those beginnings, and that they are very much linked into the community. She said they hope to have a great celebration of the 50th anniversary of USC-Aiken starting this fall. She said they plan to have a picnic on the grounds on Saturday, September 10, 2011, the day they actually opened their doors 50 years ago at Banksia. It will be a big day for Aiken and USC-Aiken, because that is the same day as Aiken's Makin'. It is hoped the crowds will attend both events and then attend a concert at the Etherredge Center. She said she was present to request Council permission to have some banners in downtown Aiken as part of the celebration. She pointed out the banner design which had been included in Council's information. She also presented a listing of some proposed locations for the banners in the downtown area. Banners are proposed at 10 locations. USC-Aiken would bear the cost of producing the banners. They would need the city's permission for the banners and help in hanging the banners. They would like the banners to be up from August 1 to October 31, 2011. They realize that Aiken Downtown Development Association may want to also have some holiday banners during the holiday season.

The proposed locations of the banners are:

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Richland at Pendleton | 1 |
| Richland at Laurens | 2 |
| Richland at Newberry | 2 |
| Richland at Chesterfield | 1 |
| Richland at York | 1 |
| Park at Laurens | 2 |
| Park at Newberry | <u>1</u> |
| Total | 10 |

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the City is very proud to be a part of USC-Aiken and have the University in Aiken. He felt they had done a wonderful job over the years, academically, in athletics, and in other areas. He said he had no problem with the request for banners. He felt this could be a partnership in the 50th celebration of USC-Aiken.

Dr. Martin stated she had looked at the intersections in the downtown area and had chosen areas which are presently open. She felt they could do 10 banners, based on their budget. However, she was willing to work with staff to be sure the locations are okay with the City. She pointed out there will be banners similar to the ones proposed downtown on campus throughout the school year. She said they want to pull in USC-Aiken's downtown history. They are working with ADDA to get the downtown merchants involved, so when there are groups in town they can encourage them to go downtown.

Councilman Dewar stated he supports whatever arrangements USC-Aiken makes with staff in terms of the exact locations for the banners. Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price that Council approve USC-A's placement of 50th anniversary banners in the downtown area at locations approved by staff from August 1 to October 31, 2011. The motion was unanimously approved.

SPCA – ORDINANCE 07112011Capital Sales Tax FundsReserve Fund LoanShelter ConstructionOne Cent Sales TaxAnimal ShelterSociety for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to advance capital sales tax funds by a reserve fund loan for the SPCA jointly-owned shelter construction.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING BORROWING FROM THE CITY OF AIKEN'S GENERAL FUND RESERVE ACCOUNTS AS OUTLINED IN THIS ORDINANCE FOR THE PURPOSE OF FUNDING THE CITY-OWNED ANIMAL CONTROL SPACE TO BE CONSTRUCTED AT THE PROPOSED SPCA BUILDING.

Mr. Pearce stated one of the construction projects listed in the 2010 Capital Sales Tax list, that was approved by our voters last November, is proposed city-owned space to be located in the new SPCA shelter that is being built on Willow Run Road. Council committed \$1,000,000 in Capital Sales Tax funds toward this project.

The Aiken SPCA broke ground for this project on May 19, 2011. They anticipate beginning making draws from these designated funds this fall. An ordinance has been proposed to prepare for these draws for the building. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed by the City and SPCA regarding the building. The proposed ordinance allows the City to advance the funds committed from the Capital Sales Tax for the city's portion of the SPCA animal shelter from reserve funds and then reimburse these funds when the sales tax funds are collected.

The proposed ordinance follows the model we used to advance the funds used to purchase new mobile laptop computers for our patrol division public safety officers.

Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the June 27, 2011, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to advance CPST anticipated revenues from city reserve funds for construction of the city-owned portion of the animal control shelter to be built on Willow Run Road by the Aiken SPCA.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilman Dewar asked when the City takes funds from reserve funds to fund a project, how does the City account for the loss of interest. Mr. Pearce pointed out the City collects interest on the funds loaned and the loan is paid back with interest to the reserve fund.

Councilman Ebner pointed out that the money that comes in from the Capital Projects Sales Tax is invested and interest is earned on these funds. He pointed out there is interest gained when the money is not in use.

Councilwoman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilwoman Clyburn, that Council pass on second and final reading an ordinance to advance CPST anticipated revenues from city reserve funds for construction of the city-owned portion of the animal control shelter to be built on Willow Run Road by the Aiken SPCA.

ZONING ORDINANCE – ORDINANCE 07112011AManure ContainersResidential Zoning Districts

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding the location of manure containers.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PARAGRAPH 3.3.21.C.4 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE.

Mr. Pearce stated the Planning Commission has reviewed a request from our Equine Committee to modify our Zoning Ordinance. Specifically, our Equine Committee asked that Section 3.3.21.C.4, Aiken Zoning Ordinance, be modified to delete the requirement that manure containers be located at least 25 feet from property lines in residential zoning districts.

Both the Planning Commission and the Equine Committee have voted unanimously to remove this 25-foot setback for the covered manure containers. It has proven most effective for removal of manure to have these containers located as conveniently as possible. Many times, this location is at a zero-setback location from a property line. He pointed out this ordinance applies only to residential districts. He pointed out even though covered containers are not required in RSH and RSS, they were subject to the 25 foot minimum setback. The proposed ordinance, which was passed on first reading, would delete the 25 foot minimum setback. HD is a commercial zone, and as the Equine Committee studied this and then reviewed by the Planning Commission, it was felt there was no need for any change to that ordinance, as it applied to commercial operations.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the June 27, 2011, meeting. For City Council consideration is second reading and public hearing on an ordinance deleting the 25-foot setback requirement for covered manure containers from Section 3.3.21.C.4, Aiken Zoning Ordinance.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Mayor Cavanaugh, that Council pass on second and final reading an ordinance deleting the 25-foot setback requirement for covered manure containers from Section 3.3.21.C.4, Aiken Zoning Ordinance. The motion was unanimously approved.

ZONING ORDINANCE – ORDINANCE 07112011BPlanned Institutional ZoneUse Table

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding allowed uses in the Planned Institutional Zone.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE NONRESIDENTIAL DISTRICT USE TABLE AT PARAGRAPH 3.1.6 OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING ALLOWABLE USES IN THE PLANNED INSTITUTIONAL ZONE.

Mr. Pearce stated the Planning Commission has voted to amend Section 3.1.6, Aiken Zoning Ordinance, regarding the allowed uses of property in the Planned Institutional Zone. The specifics of the proposed changes are contained in Exhibit A to the ordinance.

Council will recall that these proposed changes are a result of requests that Council made at our annual joint meeting with the Commission for Planning Commission review of the

Use Table for Planned Institutional Uses. The proposed revisions expand the scope of project review by City Council. Another reason for the review was the announcement that the County Complex would be located on the by-pass, and, if this property were annexed under the Planned Institutional zone, the Use Table would not allow "public projects" in the PI zone. The amendment would allow "City Public Projects" and "All Other Public Projects" in the PI zone if approved by a concept plan approved by City Council.

A review of the Use Tables for Planned Commercial developments will be the subject of a public hearing at the July 12, 2011, Planning Commission regular monthly meeting.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the June 27, 2011, meeting. For Council consideration on second reading and public hearing is an ordinance to amend the Use Table for properties zoned Planning Institutional.

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Price moved, seconded by Councilman Homoki, that Council pass on second and final reading an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Use Table regarding Government Facilities for properties zoned Planning Institutional. The motion was unanimously approved.

RESOLUTION – CROFT AVENUE 07112011C

Crosland Park

1078 Croft Avenue

Purchase

Safe Routes to School

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a resolution had been prepared for Council's consideration to purchase 1078 Croft Avenue.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY IN THE CROSLAND PARK NEIGHBORHOOD IN THE CITY OF AIKEN.

Mr. Pearce stated Council will recall that we are the recipient of a Safe Routes to Schools grant. We identified the installation of sidewalks in Crosland Park as an important use of these funds. In order to connect the new sidewalks built on Aldrich and Croft Avenues in Crosland Park to Aiken Middle School, staff proposes purchasing 1078 Croft Avenue for \$50,000.

A resolution approving this purchase is subject to City Council approval. He pointed out we have a Safe Routes to Schools grant, and General Fund money would not be used to purchase the property. Property has already been purchased on Aldrich Street. He said one of the major components of the Northside Revitalization Project, in addition to renovating the homes in the neighborhood, was the construction of sidewalks. We became aware of the Safe Routes to Schools program to put sidewalks to schools. A study of the subdivision showed that access from Aldrich Street and Croft Avenue to the Aiken Middle School and North Aiken Elementary campuses would be very helpful. Another potential amenity would be a walking track for the residents of the neighborhood. These two properties will provide access from two areas of the neighborhood to the schools.

For City Council consideration is approval of a Resolution to purchase 1078 Croft Avenue in order to use this property as part of our Safe Routes to Schools grant program.

Councilman Dewar asked where the money comes from for the Safe Routes to Schools program, and how much money was received from the grant. He also asked what the City plans to do with the house. He pointed out that in looking at a satellite view of the area, it appears there is already a path to the school a little further down Croft Avenue. He wondered if the grant money is allowed to be used to purchase the property, and what

the City plans to do with the house when purchased. He asked why use the Safe Routes to School grant money to buy the house rather than use the city's money designated for Crosland Park rehabilitation, if the plan is to rehab the house.

Mr. Pearce stated his understanding is that the grant is approximately \$400,000, and the grant is through the Federal government. He pointed out there are other schools in the Aiken area where sidewalks have been installed to the schools. He said the proposal is part of the project. He said in addition to the sidewalks there will also be street lighting installed.

Mr. Larry Morris stated selection of the home was done in conjunction with the school authorities. He said there is a pathway as noted by Councilman Dewar, however, the pathway comes into an area that is not conducive to safety. The proposed pathway would connect where they unload their buses each morning, and there are teachers monitoring the area and lighting in the area. In response to a question as to whether there had been safety problems with the current pathway, Mr. Morris stated there had been some problems. He pointed out one of the property owners in the area had put up barbwire behind his home. There is also broken glass along the pathway. Mr. Morris pointed out the school property comes up to the rear of the property proposed to be purchased. In response to the question as to whether grant money can be used to purchase the property at 1078 Croft, Mr. Morris stated he would have to check the rules of the grant program. Mr. Morris stated there is enough room between the property at 1078 Croft Avenue and the adjacent house to place the sidewalk. The house could be rehabilitated and used. The School Board has authorized the pathway on their property to the school.

Mr. Pearce stated using City designated money for the Crosland Park rehabilitation is an option for purchase of the property, if that is the preference of Council. He said staff is trying to maximize the funds designated for Crosland Park, and, if grant money is available for the purchase, it was felt the City's 112 Fund could be used better for other homes. In response to a question as to the \$50,000 cost for the house, Mr. Pearce stated this was a negotiated amount for the house and not a set fee for the purchase of homes in Crosland Park. He stated he had received a call from John Wade, a resident of Crosland Park, and Mr. Wade is in favor of the City purchasing the Croft Avenue property.

Councilman Dewar stated it seems that the proposed purchase of the property is an excellent purpose, and he was not opposed to it, but just wondering if the grant money could be used for that purpose. He then pointed out the report giving an update of the status of the Crosland Park project. He was concerned about the number of homes completed, but not sold yet. Mr. Pearce stated the City is in the process of pursuing a more aggressive marketing plan for the homes, and it is felt it is a good idea to get an inventory of houses to market while we have the best value for labor and materials. Councilman Dewar stated he felt the City needs to be careful and not have too many vacant homes.

Councilwoman Price stated she felt there is a need for the housing. She pointed out the situation in Crosland Park is not more unusual than it was in Toole Hill, with the vacancies there when the City started working in the area.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price that Council approve the resolution to purchase 1078 Croft Avenue for use as part of the Safe Routes to Schools program in providing sidewalks to access schools in the area. The motion was unanimously approved.

MOTEL – MONTEREY DRIVE

Neel Shah
NMR Hospitality
Monterey Drive

Mayor Cavanaugh stated for Council consideration is review of a proposed development plan on Monterey Drive.

Mr. Pearce stated Neel Shah, of NMR Hospitality, has contacted Planning Department Director Ed Evans and his staff about a proposed development on Monterey Drive. Under our existing Traffic Management Ordinance provisions, a traffic study was necessary for the project, since this development will involve traffic levels on Whiskey Road. With the results of that traffic study, Council review of this project is necessary.

Director Evans has provided a memo with a detailed description of the proposed construction. Gary Smith will also have comments for Council's benefit as to Council's scope of review in this situation.

Mr. Pearce stated representatives of the project are present to discuss the project. He pointed out the City has had the Traffic Management Ordinance for a number of years, but this is the first time this particular situation has come up. Even if this development does not happen, based on the Traffic Study presented, the Whiskey Road traffic will deteriorate. He pointed out, however, when a Traffic Study is done it is based on the number of cars. The flow rate of the cars is not talked about. He pointed out with the technology of the fusion traffic management system on Whiskey Road, the traffic does flow. However, just counting the number of cars with no development at all, there will be deterioration from Level D, to E, to F on Whiskey Road. Based on the Traffic Management Ordinance, if there will be a degradation in the traffic rating for that section of road that is in the Traffic Management Study, it is mandated that this matter come to City Council for consideration. Mr. Gary Smith has some legal comments on the situation. He said the matter is not a situation where you say that the development cannot take place at all. City Council's scope of review is to look and see if the site plan needs to be altered to reduce the impact of traffic to be generated by the proposed project. However, the proposed project is only having a small to minimal impact on traffic on Whiskey Road. He pointed out the City does have on the drawing board an extension of East Gate Drive across Whiskey Road to Oak Grove Road up to Centennial Drive and eventually to Powderhouse Road. The effect this improvement would have on the proposed project is not considered in the calculations presented. However, looking at Table 5 of the Traffic Study submitted by the developer and the conclusions of the study, it does say that "No traffic from the motel is added to the WalMart exit due to the Extended Stay Suites proposed project." The study area does not create a loss in service levels. He also pointed out some comments of Roger Dyar, who is the City's contract engineer, say that the report should be approved as a reasonable review. He also states that even with the change in the traffic levels this is not the result of traffic coming to or from the proposed Extended Stay facility. He said he was highlighting those particular aspects of the two reports so Council can consider them in full.

Mr. Gary Smith, City Attorney, stated the Traffic Management Ordinance requires that this project come before City Council for Council review and determination as to what should happen. The Traffic Management Ordinance does not necessarily give Council the best guidance as to what the determination should be with respect to what Council does with the information provided by the Traffic Management Ordinance. He said the matter that concerns him as legal counsel is that, regardless of whether or not the motel is built, the level of service on Whiskey Road and the areas that the Traffic Study took into consideration will be the same. If the motel is built the level of service is going to be the same as it would be if the motel is not built. He said to him the obvious thing to do would be to consider reducing the number of motel rooms, but that would not have any impact on the level of service. He said it is concerning that Council is presented with this situation where the Traffic Management Ordinance wants the City to keep a level of service D or better on all of the roadways in the City. He pointed out the motel is clearly allowed by right under the Zoning Ordinance in the location where they want to locate it. The traffic service level will go to E within three years regardless of whether the motel is built. He said based on what the Traffic Engineers said, based on their Traffic Studies, it would not be the motel causing this problem of going to a level of service E. It will happen anyway because of the existing developments on Whiskey Road.

Councilman Dewar stated this matter has been a frustration for him since he has been on Council. He pointed out each individual project can stand on its own, but the fact is that the traffic on Whiskey Road is getting worse and worse. He said Whiskey Road is one of the worst roads in the City, and there is no plan as to what the City is going to do to

resolve that issue. He pointed out that if more projects continue to be built the traffic will continue to get worse on Whiskey Road. He said it seems that the City needs to come up with a plan for doing something with the traffic on Whiskey Road. He thought the Powderhouse connector road would help with the situation, but that is far into the future. He was concerned about how many structures will be built along Whiskey Road in the meantime before 2024. He said he would like for the City to focus on doing something about the traffic on Whiskey Road.

Councilman Wells stated he understands Councilman Dewar's frustrations with the traffic situations at certain times of the day on Whiskey Road. He pointed out there is not a tremendous amount of property left to be developed along Whiskey Road, short of tearing something down and putting something else in its place. He felt the City of Aiken has been proactive, and through unfortunate circumstances the Pawnee connector road has not been opened yet, although it should have been opened by now. He said the City is moving forward to get that connector road open. He felt that would alleviate some of the traffic on Whiskey Road. Also, the Powderhouse connector road is in the City's plans in the future. However, there are plans now to extend East Gate Drive across Whiskey Road to Oak Grove Road and then make a connector road to tie into Centennial Parkway. This will give another alternative route to Whiskey Road to get from Pine Log to the Aiken Mall. He felt there are things in place to help with the traffic on Whiskey Road. He felt we are going as quickly as possible to get some of these in place. He pointed out the Traffic Studies that are being done are not taking any of the proposed improvements into consideration. He felt that with the connectivity that is planned for the area the traffic count could actually go down by 2014. He pointed out that with the traffic signals that have been installed along Whiskey Road and the synchronization of the signals, the traffic flow on Whiskey Road has improved tremendously. He said there are some improvements in place so the City does have plans to help the situation.

Councilman Dewar stated he agreed that on paper the City does have some plans, but he felt the Powderhouse connector road will not be developed until there is a sense of what is going to happen to the land between it and Powderhouse. He wondered if the traffic signals and synchronization of the signals increase the capacity of Whiskey Road.

Mr. Pearce responded that the traffic signals increased the flow rate. The Traffic Management studies talk about the number of cars rather than flow rate. He said it may be appropriate at some point to consider adding flow rate in as a consideration. That may give a truer picture of what a road is capable of handling.

Mr. Gary Smith stated the reason the request for review of the project is before Council is that the ordinance has some very specific language that if the level of service on a road near the project is going to degrade to worse than a level D that the Planning Director cannot approve the development. It has to come to City Council for review. He said if it was clear that the motel would be the cause of the change to level E, then Council would have a reason to deny a development, but that is not the case.

Councilman Homoki stated his feeling is that there is no reason that the development on Monterey should bear the brunt of this issue. He said if Council rejects the development to abide by the Traffic Management Ordinance they would be penalizing the development. If it is not this development, it will be others in the future. He said the problem is that the City needs to solve the problem of traffic on Whiskey Road. He said the City is doing some things, but he did not feel the City should penalize the developer for something that the City should be doing to help alleviate the problem.

Councilman Dewar stated the alternative is to approve the project and do nothing as has been done in the past. He said then when Whiskey Road gets so congested he hoped Council would be upfront and admit they had a part in it. He felt if nothing is done the situation will only get worse as more projects get built on Whiskey Road.

Councilwoman Price stated she does not share the passion of the traffic concerns of some. She pointed out she has worked at the Savannah River Site for many years and remembers the days when there were 25,000 employees at the plant and the traffic issues at the time. She said there were no real alarms in those days. She said they welcomed

the jobs that came with the issues and Aiken managed to develop and flourish. She pointed out some of the frustration with traffic is that we don't leave early enough to allow for the traffic. She said she personally does not see a traffic problem that causes alarm at this time.

Councilwoman Clyburn stated to say that the City has not been doing anything is not exactly the case. She felt the City had really been trying to do something about traffic. She pointed out when you open up an area for a different route then something is built in that area. She felt it was hard to control it. If another road is built, then development occurs along that road. She felt this is good for the economy. She did feel that people need to be a little more patient when they travel Whiskey Road. She felt the problem is not going away unless we build a bridge overhead. She said Council has allowed developments, and to deny this request would not be the right thing to do. She pointed out the Traffic Study clearly says that the proposed development would not contribute to the deterioration of the level of service because it will deteriorate any way without the project.

Councilwoman Price stated given the job losses that the community is having, she is supporting whatever it takes to keep people employed. She said she did not want our people in the unemployment line. She said we may have to sacrifice traffic to do this. She said people need jobs.

Councilman Homoki stated he agreed with Councilwoman Price. He stated he was in New Jersey recently driving on a turnpike. He said the turnpike is being expanded to 12 lanes from New York and it will already be overloaded before it is completed. He felt it is very difficult to get ahead. He said we have to do the best we can to keep traffic moving.

Councilman Dewar stated the traffic is not as bad as it is in the Northeast. However, it is frustrating because the City has the Traffic Management Ordinance for a purpose. It is supposed to guide the City in approval of projects, and install a measure of control over traffic. He said the ordinance is not a perfect solution, nor are the Traffic Management studies perfect, so this is frustrating for him.

Councilwoman Price asked if the project is approved when the motel would open, and how many people the motel would employ.

Mr. Neel Shah, of NMR Hospitality Group, stated depending on financing, approval of the project, and completion of construction drawings, he would anticipate opening the motel in the spring of 2013. The motel would employ between 20 and 30 people. He said the proposed motel would be adjacent to the Sleep Inn, but the motel is an Extended Stay complex with Marriott. He said an extended stay complex does not create a lot of trips because the people don't go out to eat a lot, but use the kitchenettes in the rooms. He felt the demand for extended stay is large. The proposed motel would attract extended stay travelers. The length of time at extended stay is usually at least five nights.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he supports the project because it will only slightly affect the traffic on Whiskey Road. He said the traffic does not bother him, though he leaves early sometimes if he thinks the traffic will be heavy. He said the traffic means people are buying something, and this helps our tax base, the merchants, and makes jobs. He said the City does have plans for some projects to help with traffic issues, and the City will have to try to keep them on schedule. He felt the projects to Powderhouse and to Centennial Drive will help traffic on Whiskey Road. He said he does not have a major problem with the proposed project, as it will not add that many cars on the road. He pointed out the synchronized traffic signals along Whiskey Road seem to be helping the flow of traffic.

Councilman Dewar stated his concern is traffic. He felt the proposed project is a good project for the City and will create revenue and jobs. He said he wished we could make more of an effort for a long range plan for traffic.

Councilman Ebner stated he felt there were some simple things that can be done. He pointed out we are not installing drop off or deceleration lanes so people can make right turns and not have to wait at a light before making a right turn. He pointed out a deceleration lane at Corporate Parkway would speed up the number of cars that can continue. He pointed out that the turn lanes at Dougherty Road off Silver Bluff Road had made a tremendous difference in the backup of traffic on Silver Bluff Road. He pointed out another place that a right turn lane would help move traffic is at the intersection of Whiskey and Dougherty.

Councilman Wells moved, seconded by Councilwoman Price, that Council approve the proposed development of a four-story Extended Stay motel on Monterey Drive by Neel Shah, of NMR Hospitality as presented to the Planning Department. The motion was unanimously approved.

AIKEN CORPORATION – ORDINANCE

Loans
Consolidate

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council’s consideration to consolidate various Aiken Corporation debts into a single loan.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE CONSOLIDATING VARIOUS AIKEN CORPORATION LOANS WITH THE CITY OF AIKEN.

Mr. Pearce stated over the course of several years, Council has approved a few loans to Aiken Corporation in the name of better economic development. These loans have so far been maintained separately, with each having been accounted for separately. The Aiken Corporation has conducted a review of its outstanding debt to the City of Aiken. There were three debts that were identified as appropriate to consolidate into one note, based on the terms of the individual notes, to help with accounting purposes and streamline the reporting of the balances. The Executive Committee has met and unanimously voted to consolidate three of these loans--each having similar terms--into one consolidated debt. These loans are:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Blue House Loan | \$67,500 |
| Willow Run Paint Bill | 11,300 |
| Toole Hill & Northside Revitalization Loan | <u>250,000</u> |
| Total | \$328,800 |

A proposed consolidated note is attached as Exhibit A to the proposed ordinance for Council’s review.

For Council consideration is first reading of an ordinance to consolidate the three loans listed into one consolidated note.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked why we could want to consolidate these loans.

Mr. Pearce responded it is mostly an accounting mechanism. This was discussed by the Executive Committee of the Aiken Corporation. For a number of years the finances for the Aiken Corporation were reported on an accrual basis. A Subcommittee worked on the finances in an effort to simplify the reporting of the accounts for Aiken Corporation. A cash basis was seen as a more streamlined method. It was felt this was an easier way to trace cash in and out for Aiken Corporation.

Councilman Ebner stated he had worked on this matter. He said the accrual basis for managing the money, is very difficult to do. He said there are four ordinances affected in this change, beginning in 2003. He pointed out a keyword in the first paragraph of the ordinance is “to renovate homes on the Northside of the City.” He pointed out everything

else had been a specific word. He said the northside of the city would pretty well cover a lot of the area, but they wanted to make sure it was the whole area so we don't have to go through this again. The other part is that the audit reports keep asking why they are keeping so many loans open for the same purpose. He said there is a multiple purpose for doing this. He said the provisions of the loan are still the same with the loan being able to be called by the City Manager in two years. He said the purpose is to collect everything from 2003 and get it in a basis for going forward rather than every three or four years when you go to a different area having to get another ordinance. He pointed out that revitalization is long term.

Councilwoman Price asked how we would know when one of the loans is paid off. It was pointed out the loans would be consolidated so there would just be one loan, and any payment would show as paying towards the total of the loan. It was stated these are loans to renovate properties and properties are not really involved.

Councilman Dewar asked if the loan is called, will the total amount of the loan be called. It was stated that is correct. If the loan is called, it will be for the total amount of the loan.

Councilwoman Clyburn moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council pass on first reading the ordinance to consolidate three loans of the Aiken Corporation into one loan, and that second reading and public hearing be set for the next regular meeting of Council. The motion was approved unanimously.

HISTORIC MARKER

Coker Spring

Sons of Confederate Veterans

Whiskey Road

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the City has received a request for the placement of an historical marker for Coker Spring.

Mr. Pearce stated the Sons of the Confederate Veterans have petitioned our Design Review Board for the installation of an historic marker for Coker Spring. They also requested that this proposed marker be placed on Whiskey Road at Rond Point, about 1/4 mile from the springs, as a more visible location in their view. Mr. Jones' group petitioned the S.C. Department of Transportation for approval to place the marker at Whiskey and Rond Pont and obtained their approval.

The Design Review Board unanimously approved the marker, but unanimously rejected the proposed location, because the marker, in their view, would detract from the historic brick wall at Rond Point. The DRB members recommend placement at the Coker Spring site, at the Aiken County Historical Museum, or in the island at the Newberry Street and South Boundary intersection, immediately below the Museum property, as alternative locations for this marker. The marker location is now before City Council for its final determination.

A memo from DRB Chair Philip Merry with additional information from the application, as well as the wording for the marker, was given to Council for review.

Mr. Pearce stated Wayne Jones of BG Barnard E. Bee Camp Sons of Confederate Veterans, is present to answer any questions.

For Council consideration is approval of the location of an historic marker commemorating our Historic Coker Spring property. He said the location of the marker is the issue for Council's consideration.

Mr. Wayne Jones stated he was present on behalf of the Sons of Confederate Veterans Barnard E. Bee Camp 1575. He said the group sponsors the Battle of Aiken each year. He said they raise some funds and every year try to find an historic project and give back to the community. He said the historic marker for Coker Spring is a project which they selected several years ago, and it has taken some time to get it to this point. He said in

looking at this project they looked at other historic sites within Aiken County, where they were located, and how they were marked. They found there were 37 sites on the Historic Register, of which Coker Spring is No. 10. They also found there were 48 historic markers in Aiken County and with the addition of the Coker Spring marker, there would be 49. He said in looking at a 175th map, he did not find Coker Spring on the map. He was concerned about Coker Spring not being on the map. He pointed Coker Spring was instrumental in the founding of Aiken. He stated the spring was used not only for the Indians that lived here earlier, but it was also a major stopping point for the stagecoach from Charleston that went through Aiken. He said Coker Spring was where the City of Aiken initially got its water. In 1892 the City of Aiken passed a resolution stating they would open artesian wells on Newberry Street. After that Coker Spring was not used for the City's water source. He said since Coker Spring was not marked, the Sons of Confederate Veterans wanted to find a way to mark it properly. He said they did some research and read the history of Coker Spring and the paper work submitted for the National Register. He said they picked the intersection of Whiskey Road and Coker Spring for the location of the marker. The Design Review Board was not pleased with the location and felt the marker would be a safety hazard at that location. He said DRB suggested an alternative location of South Boundary and Newberry. He said to locate the sign at Newberry and South Boundary would require changing the wording on the marker to indicate the spring is 1/2 mile southeast rather than 1/4 mile southwest. He said he had contacted the Historical Society and the sign company. They say there is no problem in changing the wording on the marker. Of the locations suggested only Whiskey and Coker Spring and South Boundary and Newberry were appropriate for the marker. He asked how someone could visit the historical monument of Coker Spring and not know how to get there. He said this project was their way of giving something back to the community with this historical marker.

Mr. Jones stated his first choice for the location of the marker is Whiskey Road and Coker Spring because there is a street sign there indicating Coker Spring. He said the Design Review Board was concerned about people being able to read the marker at this location. He said he felt the sign helps him find the site he is looking for. However, they would accept the South Boundary and Newberry location.

Mayor Cavanaugh suggested that perhaps the marker could be placed on the other side of Coker Spring Road which would be on the side of the Corey's property.

Mr. Jones stated when he appeared before the Design Review Board the Coreys had sent an email objecting to the marker at this location. He pointed out the location at Whiskey and Coker Spring would be on street right of way, and the location had been approved by the SCDOT.

Councilman Wells pointed out that Rond Point is where Whiskey Road takes a turn. He said he had seen numerous accidents at this location. He felt anything that would take a person's eye off the road at this intersection would not be good. He was concerned about safety at the intersection of Whiskey and Rond Point.

Mr. Jones stated because of Design Review Board's concern about safety at Whiskey and Rond Point, the Sons of Confederate Veterans had deferred to the second location, which is South Boundary and Newberry. In response to a question regarding the appearance of the marker, Mr. Jones stated it would look very much like all the other historic markers around town and would be the same size sign as the marker for Hitchcock Woods. The top of the sign would be 7 feet above the ground. The sign is approximately 2 feet wide by 3 to 4 feet high. The request at this time is to place the marker at South Boundary and Newberry Street. In response to a question as to whether people near South Boundary and Newberry objected to that location, Mr. Jones stated he had not talked to people in the Newberry Street area.

Mr. Wilkins Byrd, Berrie Road, presented copies of the email letters from Pat Corey and Lucy Tower relating to their objection to the marker being located at Whiskey and Coker Spring Road, because of safety concerns. Their feeling is that the marker should be located at the site of the spring. He said his opinion is also that the marker should be at the site of the spring. He said the spring is an interesting point but is not well explained

at the site. He felt since there is an extensive and interesting text on the spring, that the marker should be on the site of the spring where one could easily read it. He felt the marker should not be located away from the site. He pointed out Mr. Jones had indicated that Coker Spring was not on the map, however, he has a map published by the Historic Aiken Foundation of historic sites which shows Coker Spring. He felt placing the marker on South Boundary at Newberry is just another version of the issue on Whiskey Road. He pointed out there is extensive wording on the marker, and he felt it could not be read driving by. He stated people don't walk on the triangle of land and don't safely walk along South Boundary. He felt vehicular traffic would be moving in this area, and it would be undesirable for someone to stop to read the marker. He said in the past the historical markers, which are very interesting, are only placed as a distance from the site itself for special reasons such as the site is not available by a public means of access, possibly being on private property, etc. He pointed out there is a public road that goes by Coker Spring so it would be appropriate for the marker to be at the site. Mr. Byrd felt that most traffic down to the spring would be pedestrian rather than vehicular. He felt vehicles would probably park at the end of Newberry and walk to the spring.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out that Coker Spring Road is a dirt road, so it is not in shape for a lot of traffic, and the equestrian people do not want it paved and a lot of traffic in the area. He felt that unless people know by some means that the spring is there, they will not visit the site. He said in looking at the site he had concerns about increased traffic down to the spring and horses in the area.

Councilman Homoki stated he had visited Coker Spring when first coming to Aiken. He said it would have been nice to have something to give a dialog on the spring. He felt the marker should be close to the site of the spring. The wording on the proposed marker gives a good explanation of the spring.

Councilman Ebner asked if the marker was put some distance away from the site, would we be setting a precedent for other sites. He said most of the markers he had seen in the city were on the site. There are some markers in the County some distance from the site because of private property and other reasons. He felt we should be cautious in putting markers away from the historic site.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that the Hitchcock Woods marker is not right by Hitchcock Woods and the Neutrino project is by the Chamber of Commerce. He said there are some on the sites and others that are some distance from the site.

Mr. Wilkins Byrd pointed out that he understood that Hitchcock Woods owns the parcel by the road where the marker is located. He pointed out the marker relating to the Neutrino sign was place in front of the Chamber of Commerce despite the fact that the science involved occurred at the Savannah River Site. However, the SRS site is not publicly accessible. He said he understands the Neutrino sign was placed there with the understanding that if the site at the SRS becomes accessible the sign will be moved to the site. He pointed out the markers are not meant to be billboards to direct people to sites, but provide historic information.

Councilwoman Price asked if we would be setting a precedent if we placed a sign on the street sign that says Coker Springs Road with a sign that says historic marker and an arrow pointing down the road, and then place the historic marker on the site.

Councilman Dewar stated he also feels the marker should be on the site. He said the proposed marker is well worded and explains what it is.

Mr. Wayne Jones stated putting the marker at the site is not desirable for them. He said when you don't know where a site is, and you can't find the site, you can't read a sign. He said the site may be listed on the historical marker map. However, the map he had was the 175th map. He said he agrees with the concerns about traffic. He said Mr. Byrd made an interesting comment that the only people that are going to stop and read the sign and the only people who will pursue getting to the location are the people that are interested in the history and in finding the location. He said what his group was trying to do was to give them a marker to lead them to the location. He felt the people would

already know the history. There is currently a sign at Coker Spring that says the site is on the National Register. He said his Camp used to maintain the place, but over the years the interest was lost and it went back to weeds. He pointed out the Aiken County Museum had cleaned the area up and done a great job and is in the process of doing more work. He said the Sons of Confederate Veterans was trying to get a marker that will indicate where to go to see the site. He pointed out that the only people who will go to the site are the people interested in history. He felt it would only increase traffic somewhat. He pointed out the area on South Boundary at Newberry being considered to place the marker is where horse trailers and trucks park. He felt there is plenty of room to pull off the road and read the sign. He felt this area was not a highly congested area. He said a lot of traffic moves down the road, but there is plenty of room to stop, park a car and read the sign. He said in looking at the arguments, he understands and agrees with them, but there is a fallacy. The marker on the site will not do any good if people can't find it.

In response to a question as to where the historic map listing Coker Spring may be found, Mr. Byrd stated the Chamber of Commerce has some of the maps and they are available at other sites.

Mr. Wayne Jones stated he is an advocate of southern history and a living historian. He said most historians looking for a particular site have already read the information on the site; they need a sign to locate the site. He stated Coker Spring may be on the historical map. However, when he went to the Aiken County Museum, no one on the staff could produce a map showing the site of Coker Spring.

Mayor Cavanaugh said it had been pointed out there are maps showing the site of Coker Spring, so we need to be sure the various agencies have copies of that map.

Councilman Ebner stated Councilwoman Price might have mentioned a legitimate compromise of a direction sign to the spring. He pointed out there are signs pointing to Banksia and Rye Patch, so possibly a directional sign could be placed on the street sign at Coker Spring Road and at Banksia.

Councilwoman Price asked Mr. Jones how he felt about the suggestion to place a directional sign on the Coker Spring Road sign at the corner of Whiskey Road stating Historic Marker and an arrow pointing to Coker Spring.

Mr. Jones stated if he could be assured that the sign would go up, it might be something he could take back to the board and have them consider. He said in all that they have looked at there is nothing that gives an indication that someone who is looking to search history is going to find this location. He said he has no guarantee that such a sign would happen. He said he would have to take the suggestion back to the board for reconsideration. He said he could only ask for what the board had approved for him to present.

Mr. Pearce asked Public Safety Director Pete Frommer if such a directional sign could be placed on the street sign. Mr. Frommer responded that the City would have to obtain permission from the SCDOT to place a sign on the street sign. He stated the City could make such a sign. Mr. Pearce stated the City could make a sample sign indicating an historic site and an arrow with the distance and could apply to DOT to get permission to place it on the street sign.

Councilman Ebner asked if the request could be continued until a sign is made and permission obtained from SCDOT to place the sign on the street sign.

Mr. Jones pointed out that he was trying to understand the concerns expressed. However, they also had concerns as they were investing \$2,000 for a sign and want to make sure they get their money's worth and that it is put somewhere so people will be able to find it.

Mr. Pearce stated if the suggestion is a consensus of Council the City could make the application and bring it back once permission is obtained from SCDOT.

Mr. Wade Brodie suggested with the discussion about maps, it seems to be appropriate to assign the task of determining the various locations of the markers around the city and get those listed on the map. He pointed out there are several maps of Aiken, and it would be nice to have the historical markers listed on the maps.

Mr. Pearce stated when this matter is brought back to Council, staff could provide historic maps for Council to review.

Councilman Ebner moved that the request of the Sons of Confederate Veterans for location of a historic marker for Coker Spring be continued and brought back to Council when staff has obtained further information on the matter, such as placement of a directional sign on a street sign. The motion was seconded by Councilman Dewar and unanimously approved.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE SUBMISSION

6-1 Plan Referendum

Mr. Pearce pointed out the submission had been made to the U. S. Department of Justice asking for preclearance to hold a referendum on November 8, 2011, on a 6-1 plan. He provided copies of the letter of submittal to the Councilmembers for information.

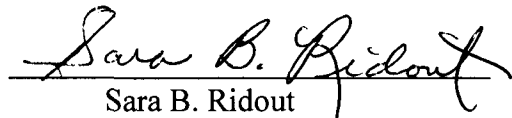
COMMENTS

Richard Johnson

Mr. Richard Johnson, Chairman of the Municipal Election Commission, stated he was delighted that Council agreed to the request of USC-Aiken allowing them to place banners for their 50th anniversary celebration in the downtown area. He pointed out that USC-Aiken had opened their doors to the Municipal Election Commission in the past. The City has used their facilities for elections in the past, including their computer system. He felt allowing the banners was a good way of reciprocating for their cooperation in the past.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk