

Aiken City Council MinutesREGULAR MEETING

October 8, 2012

Present: Mayor Cavanaugh, Councilmembers Dewar, Diggs, Ebner, and Homoki.

Absent: Councilmembers Price and Wells

Others Present: Richard Pearce, Gary Smith, Stuart Bedenbaugh, Larry Morris, Alicia Davis, Glenn Parker, Charles Barranco, Tim Coakley, Ed Evans, Kim Abney, Sara Ridout, Amy Banton of the Aiken Standard, Andrew O'Byrne of the Aiken Leader, and about 40 citizens.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. Councilman Dewar 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.

MINUTES

The minutes of the regular meeting of September 24, 2012, were considered for approval. Councilman Homoki moved, seconded by Councilwoman Diggs, that the minutes of the September 24, 2012, meeting be approved as submitted. The motion was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATIONWater SourcesDr. Jim Heffner

Mayor Cavanaugh stated a presentation would be made on future water supply sources for the City of Aiken by Dr. Jim Heffner.

Mr. Pearce stated Geochemist Dr. Jim Heffner has recently spent time reviewing our current City water utility supply sources, current demands for water, and expected future demands for water from our citizens. His research has revealed some interesting results that he will share with us at this time.

Dr. Heffner was responsible for studying the impact of drilled wells, water quality, and availability as well as soil quality at Savannah River Site for more than 30 years. With this experience, he brings valuable working knowledge to his presentation. Our hope is that Council will have a useful reference point for future discussions relating to the expansion of our water utility. We have recently received good news that SCDHEC has permitted our proposed Silver Bluff water plant, so that we will be able to proceed to obtain formal bids on it. Dr. Heffner will be able to provide us with guidance for best practices to meet demands for water. He did this research under our Senior Tax Write-off Program.

He will also be ready to answer questions related to the areas that are readily suited for us to locate and tap future water sources.

Dr. Heffner stated he was called and asked if he would like to be a Senior Worker for the City. It was pointed out the City was interested in its future water supply. He said he is a retired Geochemist, so that was of interest to him. The question was whether Aiken can

get more water from wells to meet growing demands for the future. He said that brings up three questions. Can we use wells to produce more water without depleting the ground water resource and have a sustainable, long term source? The second question was, if we can drill wells and get more water from them for the long term future, where should we put them or not put them. The third question is would water quality from wells be satisfactory or whether we should be worried about it. He said that is what he would address.

Dr. Heffner pointed out Aiken has several water sources today, including Shiloh Springs near the Aiken Airport, Shaws Creek Plant on U.S. Highway 1, and a network of seven wells scattered along East Pine Log Road and Silver Bluff Road. All together they produce about 9 million gallons of water a day. The peak demand was in July 2009, with a peak output of 15 million gallons. Presently the water system is stressed on some of the hot days and has a hard time keeping up, especially for the peak use hours of the early morning. The question is what do we do about more water. Two wells along Silver Bluff Road will be ready to put on line sometime next year. Those wells should get the city caught up with the needed demand and even provide a little surplus capacity for the next couple of years. He said the people from the Engineering and Utilities Department had called and asked what should be done for the water supply for 10, 20, 30, 40 or 50 years in the future. The question was should we be planning to drill more wells or should we be making other arrangements.

Dr. Heffner stated the first question was can we get more water out of wells. He pointed out about two years ago the US Geological Survey published a book entitled "Ground Water Availability in the Atlantic Coastal Plain of North and South Carolina." Included in the book are a model and series of calculations about ground water availability. This includes where the water comes from in the ground, which aquifers hold the water, how much recharges to the ground from rainfall every year, and how much discharges to streams every year. The model shows there is somewhere between 6 or 7 million gallons a day of ground water that could be produced in and around Aiken without depleting the resource. He said the answer to the first question is yes, there is plenty of water available to be withdrawn for long-term sustainable production. The next question is whether he believes the numbers. He said he felt the numbers were very conservative. He felt there was more water than 6 or 7 mgpd that could be withdrawn if wells are located correctly.

Dr. Heffner pointed out the city's existing wells. He said the city draws water out of two aquifers, the two lowest aquifers in the Coastal Plains. They are the Crouch Branch Aquifer and the McQueen Branch Aquifer. In this area the aquifers are somewhere between 100 and 150 feet thick and the bottom of them is around 500 feet below the surface. The City wells on the south side of town are about 500 feet deep and produce about 1 mgpd each, and they are drilled in a place where the combined thickness of the two aquifers is somewhere between 200 and 300 feet. He said the Coastal Plains structure gets thinner as you go towards the Edgefield County line. Going toward the Barnwell County line they get thicker and deeper. He said the conclusion is that if the City wants to drill more wells they should be moving southeast, not northwest. The aquifers to the southeast will be thicker and deeper.

Dr. Heffner stated the answer to the first two questions: Can we get more water out of wells—yes. Where should we put more wells—start with the current line of wells and move southeast. Don't move to the northwest.

The next question is water quality. Can we reasonably expect to get good water quality out of additional wells? He said the answer is yes. He said looking at production wells at the Savannah River Site, where he has more familiarity, the water quality is quite good from the aquifers and is likely to be that way from most any place the City of Aiken would be interested in drilling additional wells. There may be patches where there is water with larger iron concentrations, etc. but the City knows how to cope with that. One specific focus on water quality that he was asked to look into is radium. He pointed out the notices in the water bills at times regarding radium in the water. He stated this level has been about 10% above the drinking water limit, and this last happened in 2010. He said he was not worried about the water quality. He pointed out there is a belt from Jackson to Eureka to Kershaw County to Chesterfield County where many times the

areas have some amount of radium in their well water. He said he spoke with the U.S. Geological people about it, and he also has his own thoughts about the radium. He said he believes the radium is all natural. It comes from natural decay of uranium and thorium, probably in crystal and rocks below the bottom of the Coastal Plains. All the cities that have radium in their water are in places where the Coastal Plains is relatively thin and their wells are drilled to the bottom. If the City were to encounter a drilling location that has radium they can take certain steps. He said the City had done some smart things when putting in new wells. They drill a test hole first to see where the aquifer is, how deep, and if it is a quality aquifer. They take samples and check the water quality from each of the aquifers and figure out how deep they can drill. He said the City would have the samples to determine whether there is radium or not at a particular drilling site. If radium does appear, it is most likely to appear in the bottom of the well. Then they could either not drill the well to the bottom of the aquifer, but leave a 50 foot buffer at the bottom or move one-half mile down the road and try again. If that does not work out, another remedy is to treat the radium. Radium treatment is not a complicated treatment; it does add to expense, but it can be done. He said that summarizes the answers to the three questions he was asked to work on. Can we get water out of more wells—yes. Where—the southeast. Would the water quality be okay—almost certainly. Just in case there are problems there are ways to deal with them.

Councilman Ebner asked Dr. Heffner to talk about the recharge rate, what area that covers, and how much rain we need each year for the recharging of what we already have.

Dr. Heffner stated the conventional hydrologic model shows for our climate that about one-third of our rainfall in an average year gets into the ground to recharge ground water. About one-third runs off promptly and runs off into streams or ponds, and about one-third gets into the shallow soils and eventually evaporates or is taken up by trees and evaporated through the vegetation. If you take the long term average of about 48 inches of rainfall a year for the area, that would be about 16 inches of rainfall recharging the ground. The U.S. Geological Survey model shows about one-third of what gets into the ground eventually migrates into the deeper aquifers that the city wells tap. He stated 12 inches of water getting into the ground and translating into 4 inches further down would be about 1 million gallons per day for every 4 or 5 square miles. He said that indicates to him that the City could plan in the future drilling a well every 4 or 5 square miles and have a sustainable water production.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked how much water capacity he had stated as being in the aquifers. Dr. Heffner stated according to the model that the US Geological Survey produced, which is a minimum model, it presently shows 6 to 7 million gallons per day. He said he felt the estimate is low, partly because the area they model includes a fair number of square miles that doesn't have any Coastal Plains aquifers.

Councilwoman Diggs stated over the weekend she heard Larry Morris talking about the City's water quality and the fact that the City had some radium in the water. She asked if his opinion was that it would take a consumption of about 70 years for the radium to cause some harm. Dr. Heffner responded, yes. That agrees with some calculations. EPA sets the drinking water standard based on what they think is a one in a million life time cancer risk. They assume you would be drinking that water from the same place for 50 years at a rate of 2 liters per day. He said that is a very conservative calculation. Almost no one lives in the same place for 50 to 70 years, and very few drink 2 liters of water a day. He said it is the standard method that is used by EPA, and they are considered the experts. He said he was not worried about the water.

Mr. Pearce pointed out that the Shiloh Spring well only provides about 800,000 to 900,000 gallons per day into the total city water flow.

Council thanked Dr. Heffner for his very informative presentation.

RECOGNITION

Boy Scout
Jonathan Ploeger

Mayor Cavanaugh recognized Jonathan Ploeger who was present as a Boy Scout working on his Citizenship Badge. He is part of Boy Scout Troop 110 from First Presbyterian Church.

BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Appointments
Recreation Commission
Suzanne Haslup

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider appointments to various boards and commissions.

Mr. Pearce stated Council has 7 pending appointments to fill vacancies on different City boards, commissions, and committees. One appointment is presented for Council's consideration.

Councilmember Wells has recommended that Suzanne Haslup be reappointed to the Recreation Commission. If reappointed Ms. Haslup's term would expire September 1, 2014.

For City Council consideration is approval of one appointment to the Recreation Commission as recommended.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council reappoint Suzanne Haslup to the Recreation Commission with the term to expire September 1, 2014. The motion was unanimously approved.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE

Ashok Patel
Naman Hotels
Ferrell L. Holley, Jr.
Charles Holley
Larry Holley
Whiskey Road
Stratford Drive
TPN 123-10-06-002 (po)

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to annex 5.71 acres on Whiskey Road at Stratford Drive, zone it Planned Commercial (PC) and approve a Concept Plan.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY CONSISTING OF 5.71 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, OWNED BY FERRELL L. HOLLEY, JR. ET AL AND TO ZONE THE SAME PLANNED COMMERCIAL (PC) AND APPROVE THE PROPOSED CONCEPT PLAN.

Mr. Pearce stated Ashok Patel, CEO, of Naman Hotels, has joined with landowners. Larry Holley, Charles Holley, and the Holley family to seek annexation of a portion of the Holley family lands into the Aiken City limits. Mr. Patel's group is proposing to build two different hotels on this site--a Holiday Inn Express and a Staybridge Suites.

A diagram of this tract, a proposed concept plan and a detailed memo from Planning Commission Chair Wilkins Byrd were provided to Council for details relating to this

annexation request. Proposed zoning will be Planned Commercial (PC).

The Planning Commission met September 11, 2012, reviewed the annexation application and heard comments about the proposed Planned Commercial concept plan. At this meeting, they heard from several area residents. After this hearing, the members present voted 5-0 to approve the annexation application and the proposed concept plan with nine conditions:

1. That proof of recording of a plat creating lot lines to correspond to the property proposed for annexation be submitted to the Planning Department;
2. That a stub-out to the northern boundary to allow a future interconnection be provided;
3. That the Planning Director be able to approve changes in the amount of open space as long as the total for the entire site is not less than 25%;
4. That the requirement of the Access Management provisions that the driveway on Whiskey Road be aligned with the driveway across the street be waived;
5. That any freestanding signage must meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of a monument sign;
6. That the provisions of the LDR study, other than the requirement for street trees, apply to the project unless deemed impractical by the Planning Director;
7. That, if applicable, a revised Concept Plan be submitted showing any changes required by City Council;
8. That the conditions of approval be listed on the Concept Plan; and
9. That the applicant and contract purchaser sign an agreement with the City stating the conditions and that the agreement be recorded at the RMC Office.

City Council approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 24, 2012, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 5.71 acres to the city, zone it Planned Commercial and approve the proposed concept plan.

Mr. Pearce stated at the meeting on September 24, 2012, there was a citizen that expressed some concern about the traffic signal on Whiskey Road at Stratford Drive. Staff has looked into this and found there was a software issue that was causing some delay and this has been revised. In looking back at the history, we think the times have improved. There was another question regarding a potential frontage road for this tract. Mr. Evans, Planning Director, looked into this issue. Under the development regulations for the city, before a frontage road could be required by Council, it is Mr. Evan's understanding that there would have to be at least 1,000 feet of frontage on Whiskey Road. This particular annexation is for 500 feet on Whiskey Road. He said that Tilden Hilderbrand is present representing the developer, and Mr. Ashok Patel is present as well. He said his understanding is that the signage for the hotels is meant for the Whiskey Road border of the property, and they are present tonight to stipulate an additional drive. He pointed out on the concept plan in the right hand corner, they are proposing a stub-out which would go northerly, and Mr. Hilderbrand will speak on that. Regarding the driveway that is proposed for Stratford Drive, it is his understanding that the developer is willing to place a sign there indicating "service vehicles only" for that entrance. He said these comments were to provide Council and the citizens with additional information since the September 24, 2012, meeting.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he would like to have those proposing the development to speak first and explain the development so everyone understands what is proposed. He said everyone will have an opportunity to speak.

Mr. Tilden Hilderbrand, of Hass and Hilderbrand, stated he was representing the owners of the property—the Holleys, and the developers—the Patels. Mr. Hilderbrand stated the concept plan does show the cross connection providing interconnectivity both north and south and east and west. Also, on the site plan there is a routing for emergency vehicles from Whiskey Road through the hotel development to Stratford Drive. He said they typically do that on all their commercial developments to show that emergency vehicles can maneuver through a development. Since the last Council meeting, because of the

concerns of the nearby residents, they consulted with their Traffic Engineer, who prepared the traffic study to get a simplified explanation of the impact of the proposed development on the intersection of Stratford Hall Drive and Whiskey Road. The level of service on Stratford Hall Drive onto Whiskey Road presently is a Level of Service B. That Level of Service after the development of the hotels will not change. He pointed out the Whiskey Road Level of Service, primarily the left turn lane into Stratford Hall and the left turn onto Powderhouse, both are Level of Service D currently and will not change after the development of the hotels.

Mr. Hilderbrand pointed out Mr. Patel has agreed to include some additional signage that will direct customers and service vehicles that the entrance/exit on Stratford Drive is to be a service drive only to discourage people from exiting onto Stratford Drive. There would be no signage along Whiskey Road that would indicate that there is an entrance on Stratford Hall Drive. There was also some concern about the height of the buildings. The buildings will be approximately 48 feet high. However, there are existing trees in the buffer along Stratford Hall Drive that are in excess of that height that will help soften the view from the southern direction. Also, the houses that exist in Spring Stone, Spring Stone Villas and Stratford Hall are 700 to 1,100 feet away with buffers along the backs of those houses that will also serve to hide the view of the hotel. Also, there is a potential for at least one additional drive on Stratford Hall Drive. There is also the potential for at least two additional drives on Whiskey Road. He said any developments on the remainder of the site of approximately 24 acres will go to the Planning Commission and City Council. At that time it will be considered whether connector roads from Whiskey to Stratford Hall Drive would be more beneficial tying in further down Stratford Hall Drive and also further down Whiskey Road. As of now the owners of the property have no plans for the remainder of the property and have no idea where the drives or connector road should be installed. He felt it would be in everyone's interest to have better defined plans for the rest of the property before choosing the location for any interconnecting road from Stratford to Whiskey Road, and also consideration could be given to the property across the street so any additional driveways on this property would align with those. It is felt it is premature to design expensive roads through the remaining 24 acres. He said interconnectivity had been provided and the exit onto Stratford would allow an additional emergency access in case the intersection of Whiskey and Stratford is blocked.

Councilman Ebner asked if the two exits out of the parking lots, including the new one just pointed out and the other one, were required by Code for emergency vehicle use and would have a crash gate or if they were really roadways. He said in the past he thought there was an ordinance which requires an emergency exit out to a future property. He pointed out that when the Woodside Medical Center was done off Silver Bluff those were considered emergency exits with crash gates. He said where they are located and how they are used makes a difference. He said a crash gate means you can't drive through it with a normal vehicle.

Mr. Pearce stated he was not sure it was limited just to emergency exits, but typically they look to interconnect parcels to take traffic off main arterials.

Mr. Evans stated for this development the Zoning Ordinance requires a connection to the north, but does not require the connection to the west. These connections are supposed to be open to the public and not just for emergency service.

Councilman Ebner stated then in this particular case both of the connections would have to be open for public use. These roads would then be maintained and would be for any future business there as an interconnecting road. He pointed out then that the roadways would have to be highway designed to carry the load of traffic.

Ms. Lee Rand, 204 Khaki Court, stated for a few moments she was happy about the signage. She said she has no objections to the hotels, just the use of Stratford Drive as many people indicated at the last Council meeting. She said she had reviewed the traffic study and according to the study approximately 50% of the trips going north on Whiskey from the hotel will use the entrance on Whiskey Road. She said that means those people will have to wait until southbound traffic eases up so they can get into the center median

and then wait for the northbound traffic to ease before they can get into the lane to travel north. The same thing was approximated for people coming from the south. Fifty percent would use the Whiskey Road exit and 50% would use the Stratford Drive exit. She pointed out once people see the situation, they will not continue to use the Whiskey Road exit, but will use the Stratford Drive exit and go out at the light. She said no one will want to wait and subject themselves to the danger to cross Whiskey Road when they have the opportunity to get out from the Stratford exit at the light. She said there will not be a 50% exit from the Whiskey Road exit and 50% from Stratford Drive. She said she did not see in the Traffic Study any study about the possible increased risk of traffic accidents on Whiskey Road from exiting onto Whiskey from a non-controlled exit. She felt exiting onto Whiskey from a non-controlled exit is dangerous. She pointed out there had been many accidents at East Gate Drive, and there are traffic signals there. She reminded Council that they had sworn to protect and ensure the safety and welfare of the citizens and those who come to visit Aiken. She said Council has the power, based upon the problem of Stratford Drive, to make sure that something is done to restructure the proposal plan—perhaps another exit onto Whiskey Road.

Mr. Calvin Zippler, 129 Sessions Drive, stated he had a question about water. He stated in the summer early in the morning everyone is watering their yard and the water pressure is very low, making it difficult to take a shower. He was concerned about the additional use of water by customers of the hotels and how that would affect their water pressure. He said the water pressure is not a problem in the winter time when sprinkler systems are not being used. He said he was also concerned about traffic on Stratford Drive. He said he would like for the entrance to Stratford Drive to be a crash gate. He pointed out the hotel at the Target Shopping Center and stated they only have one entrance and exit and it exits onto Whiskey Road.

Mr. Larry Morris, Engineering and Utilities Director, stated since the last Council meeting, the City has received the permit from DHEC to proceed with the Silver Bluff water treatment plant. Bids will be received on November 8, 2012, for the project. Construction should start shortly after that. The plant will provide an additional 3 million gallons of water per day. That will suffice for our present needs and give some additional water for the future. Construction of the new plant will handle the water pressure problem. He said there is a pressure problem in the mornings in the summer when everyone is watering their yards. That will be an issue until the new water plant is constructed and operating. It will take more than a year to build the plant, so we will have to work with the citizens next summer to help alleviate the pressure problems.

Mr. Richard Mason, President of Spring Stone Homeowners Association, stated he was speaking for Stratford Hall and the Spring Stone Villas. He said a meeting was held at his home last week with about 23 residents in attendance. He said they reviewed some of the concerns of the residents. He pointed out that the concept plan showed tonight showed the emergency vehicles coming in off of Whiskey Road from north to south. He wondered why they would come this way when the closest fire station to Stratford Hall is south at College Acres. He said if the vehicles came from the closest fire station they would be coming north on Whiskey and would either turn in on Stratford and then make a right turn into the hotels or go up to the Whiskey Road entrance and make a turn across Whiskey Road traffic into the hotels. He felt that needed to be reexamined.

Mr. Mason stated he spent some time examining the existing road systems where one goes in on East Gate Drive and makes a left turn. He said one can travel all the way from East Gate Drive past Target and come back out onto Whiskey Road at Brookhaven Drive. There is also an option to travel all the way behind the Mall. He said he had used his measuring wheel and confirmed that Larry Morris' 900 feet to the property line directly across from the existing property does meet. It is right at the fire hydrant. He said he discovered something new to be considered. He said 125 feet north from there is an existing access and a cleared road that travels the entire right side of the property. The entrance off of Whiskey Road is very much on the grade, so there is no embankment or any other way to impede a vehicle from being able to turn into the road. He said this is further than the 500 feet that the developer is working on. He said he was in a development where Mr. Waters was asked to include the streets, water, and lighting before he developed the property. He asked why in the commercial development plan it

is not the responsibility of the developers to provide the same services. He said there are millions of dollars possible in the development of the 20 acres on the northeast, the 33 acres of their property, and an additional 11.5 acres on the southwest corner of Whiskey Road. He said this is an area of an additional 60 acres of commercial development. He felt development of this property would increase traffic in the area in the future. He said someone had told him he was wasting his time, as the deal was done. He said he pointed out the history of Council shows better response than that. He said in 2006 the citizens presented a petition of opposition to the Sam's Club, and it was turned down. Recently the citizens opposed a proposed shooting range on the northside and it was denied by the Board of Zoning Appeals. He asked that Council consider one of two motions. The first would be to approve the hotels with the proviso there be no service road exits onto Stratford because there is no way to enforce whether or not people will go in or out of that road. There would be no gate and people would use it. The second motion he would ask for a Councilmember to make if the first suggestion is not acceptable to Council, is that Council table the vote until a more intensive study is done on the service road issue. There are alternatives, and he felt we need to be far reaching in our thinking before a decision is made on the site.

Councilman Dewar asked if the project was approved with the requirement for a frontage road, and there was no access to Stratford Drive, would it be acceptable to the community. Mr. Mason stated that is what the community was looking for. He said he would ask that a Councilmember make a motion on either of the two motions he had suggested.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council wanted to hear other citizens and have more discussion before making a motion and taking a vote.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if he understood Mr. Mason to say no traffic from the hotels onto Stratford Drive. He said in that case there would be one entrance and exit for the hotels. Mr. Mason responded no traffic onto Stratford from the hotels. He said he was suggesting that the developer be responsible for providing two roads on Whiskey Road for access to the development--one to be within 900 or 1,025 feet which would qualify it for a DOT traffic signal. This would help with the safety issues that had been discussed earlier, and people would be able to enter and exit the hotels at a traffic signal.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he did not understand not wanting any traffic onto Stratford Drive. He stated there is a traffic signal at Whiskey and Stratford, and it would be the logical and safest way to get onto Whiskey Road. He said he did not understand not allowing traffic to be able to go onto Whiskey or to Stratford onto Whiskey.

Mr. Mason stated it is self-perpetuating. After that road is opened and the back end of the property developed because the stub is already there, then they will be wanting to open another road onto Stratford Drive. He felt it is self-perpetuating and the 11.5 acres on the southwest corner will be developed. Mr. Holley had already suggested that the next logical development would be a sit down family restaurant on another portion of their property. He was concerned that someone might decide to put a gas station on the southwest corner. He was concerned about further development and future traffic being created from other development, not just the hotels.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he understands and there may be more development on the land. He pointed out, however, that the property had been vacant for many, many years. He said it is only fair that a property owner have a fair chance to be able to put something on their property. He pointed out the proposed hotels would be 800 feet from the nearest homes and be separated from the homes by some trees. He said he understands that the major point is that there be no traffic from the proposed hotels onto Stratford Drive.

Mr. Mason responded that is the point. He said the current traffic flow is not a problem. The future traffic is the concern. He said we can project there will be more traffic. He pointed out we are in the worst economic times we have had since 1996 and now that is starting to open up. Once there are other developments there, the property values will go up once the roads are put in. He said in real estate when there are access roads and there

is a viable area to build, people will build there. He felt the hotels would perpetuate the food people and the food people perpetuate somebody else, etc. He said we are in a growing community; we are not stagnant. He pointed out that traffic flow from commercial development will have a negative impact on the existing community. He said they are not arguing that they not build the hotels. They feel the hotels are a very positive idea. They just think someone needs to consider that the road system be put in to avoid future problems.

Mr. Peter Stein stated he is on the Board of the Stratford Hall Association. He said there had been meetings of residents of the joint developments attended by about 23 people. He said there was also a statement of having a consensus of about 200 plots of land. He pointed out Mr. Mason was not speaking for him, and he felt he was not speaking for many people who have known about the meetings. He said in his opinion the only way the proposed project can go forward is to have an entrance/exit onto Stratford Hall. He stated there was discussion on the concerns about safety in coming out onto Whiskey Road and crossing the traffic. He said if a vehicle comes out of the road from the hotels onto Stratford Drive, there will be a stop sign. Those people will have to wait for any traffic that might be on Stratford Drive in order to make a left turn to get to the traffic signal. He was concerned that a group of people would be opposed to the hotels because of the entrance onto Stratford Drive. He stated there is already almost a third lane now on Stratford Drive on the entrance side. He pointed out the proposed exit from the hotels is not located far down on Stratford Drive where it would impede people going into the Villas or to Stone Creek. He pointed out there are a number of people who were not a part of the residents who were at the community meeting that represent the Villas, Stratford Hall, and Stone Creek. He said Mr. Mason does not speak for all the residents of the area.

Mr. Gene Sansone stated he lives on Spring Stone Court. He asked if there had been any consideration given to putting in right turn lanes along Whiskey Road so traffic can pull over and slow down to turn without impeding the traffic on Whiskey Road. He pointed out the right turn lanes on Whiskey at East Gate Drive as an example. He stated he felt there will be a lot more commercial activity on Whiskey Road in the future, and he is concerned about the traffic flow with more development in the future. He pointed out presently the right lane on Whiskey Road gets impeded with right turns. He wondered if the developer could be required to put a turn lane for the development.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated it would not be up to the City to make that decision. The Highway Department would make that decision. He said a need has to be proven to be able to get another lane, similar to the need to be proven in order to get a traffic signal. He said that is some of the problem. He said City Council does not have the authority to make these decisions. He said certain criteria have to be met to prove the need for turn lanes and traffic signals.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated at times there is congestion on Whiskey Road, and at times there is congestion on any busy road. He said if we think about it, however, we realize we don't have traffic problems like there are in many other places. He stated people have to take responsibility for their own movement of traffic. He said there are several ways to get from the north to south of Aiken without using Whiskey Road. He also pointed out the new traffic signal system which allows one to travel down Whiskey Road many times without having to stop at any signals. He also stated people can schedule their time to go on Whiskey Road and not go at the busiest time.

Mr. Clarence Beehler, of Stratford Hall, stated he had not had a problem with traffic out of Stratford Drive. He said in some of the earlier discussions it was stated there was one way in and one way out of Stratford development, timing of the light at Whiskey and Stratford Drive was a problem, and the motel would exit on Stratford Drive. He said on Wednesday, September 26, 2012, he spent two hours at the traffic signal at Stratford Drive and Whiskey Road between 4:15 P.M. and 6:15 P.M. There was no problem entering Stratford Drive because of the signal at Whiskey Road plus there is a right hand turn going south. He said 128 vehicles entered Stratford Drive and 76 vehicles left. The traffic signal sequence was 45 seconds to 1 minute and 16 seconds. He said that was all

the time vehicles had to wait on Stratford Drive to get onto Whiskey Road. During that time period, the maximum number of cars at the light was 4, with 3 in the left lane and 1 in the right lane. He pointed out at this point Stratford Drive has three lanes. He said he had taken some measurements on Stratford Drive. He said the Stratford Drive entrance is 42 feet wide at the light at Whiskey. Powderhouse Road is 35 feet wide. He said the Stratford Drive two lane section is 7 feet wider than Powderhouse. He said the 42 foot width of Stratford Drive runs for 302 feet, then it turns to the narrow section which is 28.5 feet wide. He said Spring Stone Villas has stop signs going out into Stratford Drive. He pointed out the motel would have a stop sign on Stratford Drive. He said he did not see a problem with traffic on Stratford Drive. He pointed out that the 300 feet of Stratford Drive that is 42 feet wide could hold up to 12 cars in each lane or 25 cars waiting at Whiskey Road. He felt the Stratford Drive area at Whiskey Road could handle more traffic than it presently does.

Mr. Gerry Unverzagt, 152 Antietam Drive, asked some questions. He wondered how far the entrance on Whiskey Road at Stratford Drive is from the entrance road for the hotels on Whiskey Road. Mr. Hilderbrand responded that the distance is 315 feet from Stratford Drive to the entrance drive. Mr. Unverzagt also asked the length of the left turn going to Powderhouse Road. Mr. Hilderbrand stated he did not know the length of the turn, but it is his understanding there is room for at least two cars to stack turning left northbound into the hotel. Mr. Unverzagt stated his thought is that there would not be much room for people coming north on Whiskey Road to turn left into the hotel entrance on Whiskey without a problem with people coming south and turning left onto Powderhouse. He stated during rush hour the number of people coming south and turning left from Whiskey onto Powderhouse is pretty heavy and the cars stack up. He felt there may be a problem with the entrance on Whiskey Road to the hotel with cars backing up on Whiskey Road turning left onto Powderhouse Road. He said at times there may be 5 to 7 cars turning left onto Powderhouse Road. He said there may be a problem with the entrance on Whiskey Road to the hotels. He said if there is only room for about 2 cars to stack, there will be some issues getting in and out of the hotels. He stated some of the issues along Whiskey Road are problems getting in and out of some of the shopping centers and restaurants. He felt that may be a problem for the hotels. He also asked if a restaurant would go on the proposed road that would be parallel to Stratford Drive. Mr. Hilderbrand responded that there are no plans at all for the rest of the Holley property at this time. He said he understood that the connector road is a requirement from the City to provide interconnectivity north and west. There are no plans at this time to use the connector road for anything.

Mr. Unverzagt presented a petition to Council that was signed by a number of people throughout the community, some in Stratford Hall, some in Chukker Creek, and some from throughout the community at large. The petition is about the proposed hotel, some about congestion on Whiskey Road, some just about general development, and some about issues that face the community at large. He said he had talked to people and put together a petition for people against the proposed hotels at the corner of Whiskey Road and Stratford Drive. He said he had 185 signatures on the petition from people opposed to the hotels. He said there are a number of reasons people are opposed to the proposed hotel complex. People feel we don't need more hotels. They are concerned about the loss of green space. They are concerned about traffic on Whiskey Road. They are concerned about Whiskey Road becoming a Washington Road (Augusta). They want to see Aiken stay beautiful and control the growth. He said there are infrastructure issues on Whiskey Road, and the Whiskey Road corridor is becoming overwhelmed with growth. He said there is a northside corridor that is great as far as road system. There is a corridor on East Pine Log Road that can handle growth. There is a system that goes around Aiken that can handle growth. He said people are saying we need to develop the areas around Aiken that we have instead of continuing to put everything on Whiskey Road. He said that is what people told him when he talked to people about signing the petition. He said they are not against the hotels or against growth, but they want to see it done wisely. He said the petition is not signed just by Stratford Hall residents, but is signed by people from various areas in Aiken.

Mr. Unverzagt stated he would like to talk about connector roads. He said there had been some good ideas about connector roads. He said an idea he had that might have some

plausibility about connector roads is that Sessions Drive in Stratford Hall has an empty lot at the bottom of Sessions Drive and goes back to a creek through Spring Stone, which goes back to Chukker Creek. He pointed out that Stratford Hall, Chukker Creek, Chime Bell Church Road all have single entrances onto Whiskey Road. He suggested a connector road could be done from Stratford Hall down through the creek, picking up Chukker Creek and Chime Bell Church Road and go all the way over to Anderson Pond. He said there are plans for Anderson Pond to be a connector road from Whiskey Road over to Silver Bluff Road. This could be a way to give a second entrance, rather than using Whiskey Road. He said that would cost a lot of money, but it is an idea, and may be a way to reduce traffic so people have another way to go rather than Whiskey Road. It could relieve some of the infrastructure problems on Whiskey Road.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated the city is always looking for connector roads. He said over the years we have found many spots where areas could be connected. One mentioned early was from the Mall to the Target Shopping Center. He said he agrees that we need to get as much traffic off Whiskey Road as possible to connector roads.

Mr. Jim Jewett of Spring Stone Villas, stated in looking at the plan for the hotels, he noticed there is no provision for oversized vehicles—vehicles that pull trailers, semi-trailers, etc. He said he had noticed at hotels when he has traveled that there are all kinds of vehicles that come in to the motel. He said if there is no parking space, they will park somewhere. He suggested that if they keep the entrance on Stratford Drive, that Stratford Drive be marked for “no parking” on both sides of the road. He said he would not want to see Stratford Drive become a parking lot for the hotels.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there would be any oversized parking spaces for large vehicles. Mr. Patel responded there would be no parking for large vehicles. He said usually those driving large vehicles will look for a site or website that allows large vehicles. He pointed out over the last few years, the hotels he has built in Charleston and Columbia, and none of them have parking for large vehicles. He said if the person were driving a large vehicle they would not be able to stay at the hotel, as there would be no parking for their vehicle.

Mr. Jewett pointed out that the entrance to the hotels is on the opposite side of the building facing Stratford Drive, so the hotel employees would not know what kind of vehicle the person may be driving

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he assumed that the hotel would have someone on duty monitoring the parking areas and will probably have cameras on the parking lot. He said he agreed there should be no parking of vehicles along Stratford Drive, as that could cause some traffic concerns.

Mr. Tilden Hilderbrand stated he would like to address some of the comments made earlier. He said there was a comment about the emergency vehicle routing from north and south. He pointed out that the routing shown could work both ways, whether it be north or south. He felt there would not be an issue as far as which way the fire truck would come. He stated he is not an expert on traffic matters, but in the summary of the Traffic Study the traffic engineer stated that “related to the traffic from the hotel in terms of actual delay, the additional traffic generated by the hotel development would result in an increase in approach delay of 2 seconds per vehicle in the a.m. peak and 4 seconds per vehicle in the p.m. peak. This represents an increase in delay of less than 9%.” He said typically, when a traffic study is done, 50% of the traffic is assumed to use one exit and 50% is assumed to use the other exit. With 50% of the total traffic generated from the hotels using the Stratford Hall exit, there would be a 9% increase in the delay at the traffic light which leaves the motion at the traffic signal at a Level of Service B. As far as the need for access in and out of the hotel site, the exit to Stratford Drive is critical. He pointed out both hotels would be four stories, and they want to have emergency vehicles able to get in and out as quickly as possible. They feel it is critical that there be access to Stratford Drive.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated he is an advocate for interconnecting properties. He pointed out that the hotel site is a small portion of the overall property that has potential to be developed. He stated interconnectivity had been provided on the parcel proposed to be developed, as required by the City. He pointed out no one knows the potential development for the surrounding property. He felt it would be a better use of infrastructure to plan the infrastructure when a development comes before Council. Any proposed development will come before the Planning Commission and City Council to address those issues when there is a concrete plan for development. He said if they install driveway stub-outs and connector roads there is a good chance the driveways or connector road will be in the wrong place for the next development. He said this happens in planning shopping centers when driveways are stubbed out to outparcels. He said it is difficult to plan where the roads should be until there is an idea as to what will develop there. At this time there is no idea as to what might develop on the property.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated a gentleman was concerned about a potential right turn lane for the entrance off Whiskey Road. He pointed out that the City of Aiken is only one review agency that has to be dealt with in considering a development. He said if the proposed development is approved, they will then have to deal with the SC Department of Transportation. He said DOT has their own traffic engineers who study the driveways, especially Whiskey Road, and there is some potential that they will require a right turn lane on Whiskey Road. He said they would not know that until they make the submittal to DOT and they make their review of the proposed plan. He said DOT's reviews are very thorough.

Councilman Homoki stated, as pointed out, the developer does not know what the future holds, so it is difficult to know where to place stub-outs for future development. He asked if the developer had considered making a cut out and having a double entrance off Whiskey Road, which would take the load off of Stratford Drive.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated the proposed development has 584 feet of frontage. The City's Access Ordinance would allow two driveways. However, the DOT requirements are more stringent, and SCDOT will only allow one driveway on the property. He said what is shown is the maximum of driveways allowed by the Highway Department. He stated the driveway into Whiskey Road from the hotels is about 42 feet wide. There is a 16 foot in and a right and a left lane out.

Councilman Dewar stated his concern is that the City only has one chance to have control over how the project is approved. He said the frustration is that Council is being asked to approve a piece of property that is to be developed. The frustration with that is that once Council approves it, they give up the right to look at the piece of property as a whole. He said he was concerned about the buffer for the people on Sessions Drive. He said he wanted to make sure that there is a 10 foot buffer. He said Council can't do that if they only consider this particular project. He said he felt it is a start in the right direction for the residents to have a frontage road and not have to access Stratford Drive. He said he was not sure of Council's authority. He said Council has not been asked to evaluate the entire 31 acres of property, but only being asked to evaluate 5.71 acres. He said if Council approves what the developer is asking for, he felt it would do long term damage to traffic flow when the entire piece of property is developed. He said that is why he had made so many comments about a frontage road. He pointed out there are three signs in the agenda packet. One is a 15 foot sign, and he is not sure of the size of the other signs. He said he would voice his recommendation for the 10 foot sign. He felt the smaller the sign, the better. He said he does recognize the right of the developer to develop the property and the right of the owner to market his property. The challenge is to try to satisfy as many constituents as possible. He said the ordinance says that a revised concept plan will be submitted once it is approved, but it does not say that it is submitted to Council. He said if the ordinance is approved, he would like to make the request that the revised concept plan be submitted to Council. He said that is an internal matter and asked if it is approved that the City Manager give Council a revised copy of the concept plan showing what was approved. He said there is no indication of the height of Hotel B. He wondered if it was the same height as Hotel A. Mr. Patel pointed out there was a drawing at the last meeting that showed the height of Hotel B. He said it is less than 50 feet.

Councilman Dewar asked if the handicapped parking spaces are controlled and where they are located. He said he has seen some handicapped parking spaces around the city that are not close to the front entrance of buildings. He said he always thought they were supposed to be as close to the front entrance as possible. Mr. Hilderbrand stated having the handicapped parking spaces close to the front entrance of buildings is a practice, but he did not know if was specifically stipulated in any regulation, but it is standard practice. He pointed out that ADA requires that you provide an accessible route that doesn't exceed a certain slope, and typically that is close to the front door so you don't have to manipulate slope throughout the site. He said the requirement is 1 handicapped parking space for every 25 parking spaces.

Councilman Dewar asked about the statement that "interconnection to the north is also required but is not shown on the plan." Mr. Hilderbrand stated that would be updated and it is updated on the plan that has been shown at this meeting.

Councilman Dewar asked if the developer would be building sidewalks on Whiskey Road, as he thought that was a requirement. Mr. Hilderbrand stated it was not their intention to build sidewalks on Whiskey Road.

Mr. Evans pointed out that on page 49 of the agenda package under Streetscape Improvements there is a statement regarding sidewalks. He said that in November, 2001 Council adopted a policy that all annexations on Whiskey Road comply with the provisions of the LDR Study, including piping the stormwater, street trees, and sidewalks in the street rights-of-way to be consistent with the streetscape improvements on Whiskey Road north of Corporate Parkway, which includes sidewalks. He said it had been Council's policy for previous projects on Whiskey Road that they comply with the LDR Study which requires sidewalks, piping ditches and street trees. The condition recommended by the Planning Commission was that the ditches be piped and sidewalks installed, but not street trees planted. He pointed out that was Condition 6 in the proposed ordinance for annexation.

Councilman Dewar stated he felt most of the residents don't object to the project, however, there are some that do. He felt the proposed project is a good project. It appears to be well thought out and designed; however, his major concern is with the traffic and looking at the overall piece of property. He said he felt there needs to be a frontage road, and he felt we need to start with the first portion of the property that is proposed to be developed.

Councilman Ebner stated he could echo the concerns of a lot of the citizens as well as those mentioned by some of the Councilmembers. He said as far as he was concerned there is nothing wrong with the hotels being developed on the property. He said the property has been planned for commercial development for decades. He said he did feel that if we don't develop the site plan as we go, someone in the future will be dealing with how many more entrances we put in. He pointed out Mr. Evans had alluded to a loop road being put in some day to take care of the other businesses. He felt we need to take a look at how we develop the rest of the site. He said the next person who comes in might want another entrance off Stratford Drive and then what do we do. He said we trap ourselves for the future. He said he understands the development cost is more for the first person. He said he had a struggle with not doing a site layout now versus 10 to 15 years from now. He said he has no objection to the proposed hotels being built.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked Councilman Ebner how he would propose to do the site layout. Councilman Ebner stated Mr. Morris had talked about possibly putting a road across from the other property line. He said something needs to be laid out today for future planning. Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt it would fall to the owners to say they will do something, even though it may change in the future. He said he wondered how many more cuts could be made on Whiskey Road and how many more traffic signals could be installed on Whiskey Road.

Mr. Hilderbrand stated that according to the Access Management ordinance there could be two more driveways on Whiskey Road for the Holley property. He felt two more driveways would meet the DOT regulations also. He pointed out the Planning Commission and City Council would review that and could limit it possibly to one more on Whiskey Road. He said he thought the DOT minimum spacing on traffic signals is 900 feet, so there could be one traffic light somewhere along the frontage of the property.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt there will be more cuts on Whiskey Road and also on Stratford Drive as the area develops.

Councilman Dewar stated a concern is that if you allow one cut onto Stratford Drive without a provision for a frontage road, then you are running the risk of possibly two more cuts on Stratford Drive, which he said was not acceptable to him.

Mr. Hilderbrand pointed out that it could work out that the cross easement, so to speak, on the hotel could align with other developments up the line so it could be that would be the frontage road. He said it just is not known at this time.

Mr. Pearce stated to the citizens' questions and Mr. Hildebrand's presentation, there are two driveways stubbed out, one to the west and one to the north. He asked if in future development Council could require a connection there as opposed to Stratford Drive or Whiskey Road.

Mr. Gary Smith stated that is correct. That is the purpose of having the stub-out there and that is why Council came up with the stub-out requirement for developments several years ago.

Councilman Homoki stated he did not object to the hotels and felt they might be good for the community. He said he was sure the developer had done their market research to know that the hotels could be profitable. He said one thing that did concern him was trying to turn left from the hotels onto Whiskey to go north. He said it had been stated that the Stratford Drive exit could be restricted to emergency vehicles. He said he felt that after people at the hotel see the traffic, 99% of the people will be using Stratford Drive so they can enter and exit at a traffic signal. He was concerned that there could be more cuts into Stratford Drive with future development in the area. He felt the ideal solution would be some kind of access road that would be parallel to Whiskey Road, which could run the traffic to the intersection or to the north to some intersection in the future. He said we don't know what the future holds, but he felt we would be setting a precedent if we approve the plan as is. He said chances are that in the future if the plan is approved as is, there may be traffic problems in the future. He wondered if it would be beneficial to table the request for further study.

Mr. Charles Holley, 557 Sudlow Lake Road, stated he owns property in the City of Aiken and is one of three owners of the property being discussed at this meeting. Mr. Holley thanked Council, the Planning Commission and the residents in the area for the discussion on the proposed project. He felt there had been a good exchange of ideas and concerns. He said he would like to give a little history and try to refocus on what they are trying to do. He said around 1985 he met with the owners of Woodside. At that time the East Gate entrance had not been decided. He said Woodside stretches all the way from Silver Bluff to Chukker Creek. He said Woodside approached them for an entrance for Woodside. He said they agreed to sell it. He said at that time they talked with Pat Cunning and the owners of Woodside about how Stratford Drive should be designed and what uses should be there. He said he would like for Council to switch their thoughts from a frontage road and think about Stratford Drive. He said Stratford Drive is a service road. He said it is not just a subdivision road, it was built with the idea that multiple uses would come down the road. He said in a typical development you will see residential on the back land, multiple family, professional, and then commercial uses. He said Stratford Drive was designed with that in mind. It came before the Planning Commission at that time. Also, in the minutes of City Council it was discussed, and they agreed, that there was to be limited access to Stratford Drive. It was felt that on the Whiskey Road side and with the width the service road would act as the frontage road basically. If you have 31

acres you don't have the luxury of planning another major road through it. He said he agrees with the City regarding interconnectivity and that interconnectivity is the frontage road and is the access road. Using limited curb cuts you have helped to provide for moving vehicles and the safety of the vehicles. He said they concur that there should be limited access both for Stratford Drive and on Whiskey Road. He asked that Council rethink the matter on a frontage road. He said a frontage road would kill the project because of economics. He said if you think about it, the economics would not work. He said he was not sure that a frontage road would really solve what they are wanting to do. The traffic engineer has said in the traffic study that Stratford Hall can handle the traffic. If Council limits the access to Stratford, which they agreed to, then that will solve some of the residents' concerns and maybe some concerns about what will happen in the future. He said from 1985 until today there have always been signs advertising the property for commercial use. They always wanted everyone to know of their desire for use of the property, including the Planning Commission. He said they have no idea what will happen to the rest of the land. That will be driven by the market. He said Council will have the opportunity to approve or not approve the use. He asked that Council vote in the affirmative for the project. He said commercial use had been planned for the property since 1985. They had communicated with the Planning Commission and had brought to the City a developer and a product that would be the best use of the corner of the property.

Councilman Homoki said Mr. Holley had stated they would restrict access to Stratford Drive and access to Whiskey Road. He wondered how this would be effected.

Mr. Holley stated he could not effect that, but Council could. He said they understood there would be limited access on Stratford Drive. He said that could be one, two, or three, but not ten, etc. He said that would be Council's decision whenever another use comes about. He said it had always been in the plan that there would be limited access to Stratford Drive. The road was designed to have several cuts, but not many, many cuts. He said he would call it limited cuts. He said he could see the need for no more than two other cuts on Stratford Drive and perhaps just one more. He said probably the most likely use of the rear property is something residential whether it be apartments or townhomes like across the street, and only one entrance would be needed. If the multi-use subdivision comes in then there would be interconnectivity with the hotels or with a restaurant if there is one in the area. He said this interconnectivity would help alleviate traffic problems on Whiskey Road. He said presently there is no use for the rest of the property. It is for sale and has been for sale for many years. He felt with the economy improving there may be something on the property in the near future.

Mr. Richard Mason stated his comment is that 27 years ago, when the plan was put together for the entrance to Woodside Plantation, Mr. Waters was not developing Spring Stone, nor was much of Stratford Hall there, nor the most recent development of Spring Stone Villas. He said the developments have been in stages of growth for 10 years. That means there has been a 17 year difference in the projected use of the area from the time Woodside Plantation gave up the entrance on Stratford to what is there today. Mr. Mason asked if his earlier request for a motion from Council still stands.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated after everyone has spoken Council will make a motion on the request. He pointed out there are some conditions in the proposed ordinance which were recommended by the Planning Commission for annexation of the property.

Mr. Pearce read the conditions recommended in the ordinance:

1. That proof of recording of a plat creating lot lines to correspond to the property proposed for annexation be submitted to the Planning Department;
2. That a stub-out to the northern boundary to allow a future interconnection be provided;
3. That the Planning Director be able to approve changes in the amount of open space as long as the total for the entire site is not less than 25%;
4. That the requirement of the Access Management provisions that the driveway on Whiskey Road be aligned with the driveway across the street be waived;

5. That any freestanding signage must meet the Zoning Ordinance definition of a monument sign;
6. That the provisions of the LDR study, other than the requirement for street trees, apply to the project unless deemed impractical by the Planning Director;
7. That, if applicable, a revised Concept Plan be submitted showing any changes required by City Council;
8. That the conditions of approval be listed on the Concept Plan; and
9. That the applicant and contract purchaser sign an agreement with the City stating the conditions and that the agreement be recorded at the RMC Office.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked Mr. Mason if he would repeat the motions which he was requesting Council to make.

Mr. Pearce stated what he had written down from Mr. Mason's comments was that Council make a motion to approve the hotels without a road exit on Stratford Drive or to table the vote until more study on a service road entrance is done.

Mr. Mason stated the first request was that Council approve the hotel project with the proviso that no service road exit onto Stratford Drive. The second proposed motion was to table the vote until a more intensified study is done on the service road issue.

Councilman Dewar asked Mr. Mason if when he said service road he was referring to a frontage road on Whiskey Road.

Mr. Mason stated service road, access road, or parallel road running parallel to Whiskey Road south to north is what he was referring to.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he thought the first motion was that no traffic be allowed on Stratford Drive. Mr. Mason responded that was correct. The second proposed motion was that the request be tabled until such time an intensive study is made relative to the parallel road on Whiskey Road.

Councilman Homoki stated he felt Mr. Mason was basically saying he would like to see the new stub-out heading towards the northwest and that access to Stratford Drive be eliminated.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated his opinion was that he did not feel we should limit access to and from Stratford Drive for the project. The access to Stratford Drive would give two ways in and out of the project. If access is eliminated on Stratford Drive that would mean all traffic from the project would have to come in and out on Whiskey Road.

Mr. Mason stated if Council did not want to do that, then go to motion B and table the project until there is an option of coming out with a second exit onto Whiskey Road. He said he mentioned the 900 feet from the traffic signal at Stratford Drive meets DOT recommendations as far as distance between traffic signals.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he was going to support the project and moved that Council approve the ordinance for annexation of the 5.71 acres of Holley property on Whiskey Road at Stratford Drive and the concept plan based on the fact that there be an exit/entrance on Stratford Drive. He felt the exit to Stratford Drive is a safety issue.

Mr. Mason stated he would like to reiterate his position that the second relief road be on Whiskey Road north of the current proposed entrance/exit on Whiskey Road.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out the frontage of the property on Whiskey Road is only 584 feet, not 900 feet.

Mr. Mason stated that is why he has proposed that the project be tabled until a later date. He said the traffic engineers could be brought back into the project and possibly some

discussions between the City and SCDOT. He felt there should be a long range plan that is inclusive rather than fragmented. He said the residents are trying to avoid dealing with a traffic problem on Stratford Drive.

Mayor Cavanaugh pointed out a resident of the area had spent hours at Whiskey and Stratford Drive watching and making notes of the traffic at the intersection. Also, traffic engineers had studied the intersection as well. He said he felt the request should not be delayed. He said there had been good discussion on the issues. He said he supports the project.

In response to a question by City Attorney Gary Smith, Mayor Cavanaugh stated his motion was that the ordinance be adopted as written with the conditions in the ordinance and with the proviso that Stratford Drive be able to be used for entrance and exit to the hotel project.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if City Council had any control over turn lanes or turn signals because of safety reasons.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council could recommend as part of the motion that SCDOT look at the matter and see if they would consider turn lanes or turn signals in this area. He said SCDOT has the authority to make the decision on this matter.

Councilwoman Diggs asked if a request could be incorporated into the motion that SCDOT consider turn lanes or turn signals in this area. She said she also liked the suggestion that no parking be allowed along Stratford Drive in case a large semi-truck came to the hotel, and there is no parking allowed for semi-trucks.

Mr. Smith stated SCDOT would not be bound by the proposed ordinance to do anything, but the City could always ask SCDOT to consider these matters.

Mr. Pearce stated regarding parking along Stratford Drive, under the City Code the Public Safety Director can designate no parking areas.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there was a second to his motion to approve the ordinance for annexation of the 5.71 acres and approve the concept plan with the conditions in the ordinance and allow access to and from Stratford Drive from the hotels. No one seconded the motion.

Councilman Dewar moved that Council deny the ordinance for annexation and the concept plan of the 5.71 acres of the Holley property on Whiskey Road. He said he bases that on the fact that this is Council's only chance to start the project for the 31 acres. He said Council only has one chance to control the development of this large piece of property. If Council approves the request as submitted, Council will be giving up an opportunity to do what is best for traffic on Whiskey Road overall. He said there are many areas in the city that we wish we had frontage roads and had taken care of that in the beginning as development took place. Councilman Homoki seconded the motion.

Councilman Ebner asked the City Attorney if a motion is made and it dies for a second, is the ordinance dead. Mr. Smith responded it is not, that Council has to pass or not pass a motion.

Councilman Homoki asked if the request is denied, would the property owners have the opportunity to present another concept plan or some new development, and, if so, how soon could they come back to address some of the concerns.

Mr. Evans responded that if there are substantial changes to the plan, they can come back right away.

Councilwoman Diggs stated she was in favor of the hotels. She was just concerned about the traffic. Councilmembers expressed the feeling that they are all in favor of the hotels, but have some concerns about traffic.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated someone had asked the residents if access on Stratford Drive was closed off, and there was no access to the property from Stratford Drive, were the majority of the residents in favor of the hotel project. It seemed the consensus of the residents was that they favored the project if access was closed to Stratford Drive.

Councilman Dewar stated he sensed that the residents were not objecting to the hotels. They know it is commercial property, and they know that something will be built on the property. He felt the issue is traffic. He said he had a concern for a buffer for the residents on Sessions Drive, but he did not know how to address that at this time, as that is not part of the present request. He said, however, traffic to the hotel is an issue.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated if he changed his view regarding the entrance/exit onto Stratford Drive would Councilman Dewar move to approve the proposed project, or if he still wanted to have other access to the hotel project from Whiskey Road.

Councilman Homoki stated he was willing to withdraw his second if the new motion proposed is to approve the annexation and concept plan with the conditions, but without any access to Stratford Drive.

Mr. Pearce stated the question would be whether Councilman Dewar would accept the amendment to the motion to approve the annexation and concept plan if access is denied to Stratford Drive.

Councilman Dewar stated if access is denied to Stratford Drive, then there would be one entrance/exit to the project for two hotels.

Councilman Homoki pointed out the concept plan showed two stub-outs one leading north and one west.

Councilman Dewar stated the stub-outs may come into use sometime, but we don't know when. He pointed out the property has been on the market for a long time. He said he would not be comfortable with one entrance/exit for two hotels.

Mr. Pearce pointed out there was some discussion about a crash gate onto Stratford Drive. He wondered if Council wanted to consider that.

Councilman Dewar stated if we do that, it is the same problem. We are giving up the opportunity for a frontage road that would address development on the entire parcel.

Mayor Cavanaugh called for a vote on Councilman Dewar's motion, which was seconded by Councilman Homoki, that the ordinance for annexation and approval of the concept plan for 5.71 acres at Whiskey Road and Stratford Drive be denied. The motion for denial of the project was approved by Councilmembers Dewar, Ebner and Homoki. Voting in opposition to denial of the project was Mayor Cavanaugh and Councilmember Diggs. The motion for denial was approved by a vote of 3 in favor and 2 opposed.

ANNEXATION – ORDINANCE 10082012

486 Jehossee Drive
Habitat for Humanity
TPN 121-20-02-001

Mayor Cavanaugh stated this was the time advertised for second reading and public hearing on an ordinance to annex property at 486 Jehossee Drive and zone it Residential Single Family (RS-8).

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE TO ANNEX TO THE CORPORATE LIMITS OF THE CITY OF AIKEN CERTAIN PROPERTY CONSISTING OF 0.31 ACRES OF LAND, MORE OR LESS, OWNED BY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY AND TO ZONE THE SAME RESIDENTIAL SINGLE-FAMILY (RS-8).

Mr. Pearce stated Habitat for Humanity owns property at 486 Jehossee Drive. They have applied to annex it into the Aiken City limits and to zone it Residential Single Family (RS-8). Please note that their annexation request is for this property only, and not for any other unincorporated lots in this neighborhood. This particular property is contiguous to the Aiken City limits.

At their September 11, 2012, meeting, the Planning Commission reviewed this application and held a public hearing. At the conclusion of their hearing, they voted unanimously to recommend to Aiken City Council that this property be annexed and zoned Residential, Single Family (RS-8), since this property exceeds the minimum requirements for this designation.

City Council unanimously approved this ordinance on first reading at the September 24, 2012, meeting. For Council consideration is second reading and public hearing of an ordinance to annex 486 Jehossee into the city and zone it Residential Single Family (RS-8).

The public hearing was held and no one spoke.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council approve on second and final reading an ordinance to annex 486 Jehossee Drive and zone it RS-8 Residential Single Family. The motion was unanimously approved with the vote of 4 members. Councilman Dewar was out of the room when the vote was taken.

RESOLUTION 10082012A

South Carolina Department of Transportation

Detention Facility

Well

Silver Bluff Road

Hidden Haven Drive

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider a resolution to grant a SC Department of Transportation request to construct an underground detention facility near the City's well site at Silver Bluff Road at Hidden Haven Drive.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the resolution.

A RESOLUTION GRANTING THE SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REQUEST TO CONSTRUCT AN UNDERGROUND DETENTION FACILITY WITHIN 100 FEET BUT MORE THAN 50 FEET FROM THE HIDDEN HAVEN WELL SITE.

Mr. Pearce stated the City is working with the South Carolina Department of Transportation on the project for widening of Silver Bluff Road. He said as part of the project Bradley S. Reynolds, South Carolina Department of Transportation Midlands Assistant Program Manager, has written requesting Council approval of a SCDOT request to construct an underground storage detention facility for stormwater runoff within 100 feet, but more than 50 feet from, our City well site that is located near Silver Bluff Road and Hidden Haven Drive. We refer to it as our Hidden Haven well site.

According to Brad, SCDHEC will permit an underground detention facility that allows no seepage into groundwater if it is built more than 50 feet from the well site. He has provided a diagram of the proposed location for this underground detention facility. Mr. Reynolds is present to answer questions related to this proposed construction.

Larry Morris has reviewed this request and has a list of proposed conditions for this installation:

1. The structure should be made of poured-in-place concrete.
2. All joints should have permanent water stop material embedded in the concrete. Use of caulking type sealants in place of water stop should not be allowed.
3. The structure should be designed to drain completely.
4. The structure should have sealed manhole openings to allow for maintenance cleaning.
5. Costs for any conditions required by DHEC to modify the well to prevent seepage of surface water should be the responsibility of the SCDOT.

Mr. Reynolds, of SCDOT, pointed out the Silver Bluff Road project is a corridor improvement from Richardsons Lake Road to just past Indian Creek Trail. The reason for appearing before Council is that one of the design parts of the project is hydraulic. SCDOT hydraulic requirements state that the post development runoff rates must be less than or equal to the pre-development rates. There are only four outfalls on the project. That means that at the outfall points they cannot introduce additional water to those points at a larger rate than is presently there. This is also in the DHEC regulations. Currently there is a ditch section so the water from the roadway actually goes to a ditch. With the new design there will be curb and gutter. With curb and gutter the water is concentrated to catch basins and the water then goes into pipes. This will concentrate the flow to the outfalls. In order to keep the rates the same at the outfall points, SCDOT has proposed as shown on the public information drawings shown on September 18, 2012, a pond in the vicinity of Richardsons Lake Road. The outfall being discussed at this time is on Tract 33 which is between Woodside Executive Court and Hidden Haven Drive. At this point is an above ground detention pond. At the September 18, 2012, meeting Mr. Morris brought to their attention that at this location there is also one of the City of Aiken's water wells. With that information they met with Mr. Morris, talked with DHEC to see what their requirements would be for SCDOT to use the same parcel of land for underground detention. The requirement from DHEC is that any construction of above ground detention within 250 feet of a well has to be monitored for 12 months to be sure nothing is getting into the drinking water. An agreement between the City and SCDOT would have to be in place. Also, the City's easement for the well may include a 100 foot pollution free radius for construction in this area around the current drinking well. Unless the City gives permission to encroach upon this 100-foot radius, the detention system would have to be constructed outside of this 100-foot radius and monitoring would be required. If the City were to give permission to encroach upon this radius, monitoring would still be required for an open detention pond. DHEC would allow with City permission a totally enclosed detention structure that allows no seepage to groundwater to be constructed up to a 50-foot radius from the well. No monitoring would be required for this type of enclosed structure. The City would have to grant approval for this encroachment.

Mr. Reynolds stated SCDOT is requesting that City Council take action granting the SCDOT permission to construct an underground detention structure within the 100-foot pollution free radius, but outside the minimum 50-foot radius of the well. This type structure will allow for compliance with all requirements and regulations and would eliminate monitoring requirements. SCDOT would then proceed with a design for an underground detention structure and would coordinate with SCDHEC to ensure the Regulation requirements would be met.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if there were similar situations in other areas with an underground detention structure. Mr. Reynolds stated an underground detention structure is not very common. They usually like to use the outfall that exists. However, on this site the outfalls that do exist are in areas that run through developments. In order to make the outfalls meet the requirements, they would have to fix the outfalls throughout the developments.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked how the proposed underground detention facility would fit in with the plan forward for the widening of Silver Bluff. He wondered if it would slow

down the project and if it would make the project cost more. Mr. Reynolds stated the plan was to have the right of way in November. He said this may delay the project a month or two. He pointed out the detention structure had not been designed yet. He said the request is for permission from the City of Aiken to be able to put the structure in this location. He said they have to weigh this option against other alternatives and some other alternatives may not be as good as this option. Mr. Reynolds stated the cost for the structure would have to be added to budget if it is more than is currently in the budget for detention.

Councilman Homoki asked about the size of the structure and how deep it might be. Mr. Reynolds stated the design for the structure had not been done yet. He pointed out that an underground detention would be completely closed off to the outside. There would be access holes to clean it out as it would have to be maintained. He pointed out the structure would be a big holding tank.

Councilman Ebner asked who owns the property where the facility would be constructed. Mr. Morris stated Ron Lewellyn owns the property. The City of Aiken does have an easement for the well and for the piping that serves the well. The City has an easement where the well is located. Councilman Ebner asked if the underground detention would be a cheaper way to go than putting a larger line to the lake. He also asked who would maintain the underground detention. He wondered if there was a way to make the detention an open pond and use it as a swale area. Mr. Reynolds responded that would be part of the analysis that SCDOT would do in considering the other options. They feel at this time that the underground detention is a cheaper option than putting in piping from Hartwell Drive all the way to the lake. He said SCDOT has a hydraulic support office that maintains a contract to clean out all the underground detention areas around the state. He said the original design was to have a pond which would be a large area to contain the water at this location. He said they may not be able to use this location if they have to go with an above ground detention because of the size.

Councilman Ebner asked if Council gives permission for the underground, would he have to come back to Council if it is decided to have a pond above ground.

Mr. Reynolds stated the information they have from DHEC at this time is the only way they could be within the 100-foot and outside the 50-foot radius was to use the underground detention structure. He said a structure could be contained and still be open. He said they could ask DHEC if that would meet their regulations. He wondered if the City may be open to there being an open contained structure.

Mr. Pearce stated we understand that in order for the detention facility to be that close to a city water supply source that it needed to be contained, not open. He said the City had not been given that option to be considered. The only option in the letter was an underground closed detention facility.

For Council consideration is a Resolution authorizing SCDOT to construct an underground detention facility within 100 feet, but more than 50 feet from our Hidden Haven deep water well site.

Councilman Ebner moved, seconded by Councilman Dewar, that Council approve the resolution authorizing SCDOT to construct an underground detention facility within 100 feet, but more than 50 feet from the Hidden Haven deep water well site with the conditions recommended by Mr. Morris. The motion was unanimously approved.

HISTORIC REGISTER – ORDINANCEGaston Livery StableHistoric SiteLandmarkPark AvenueRichland AvenueGaston Street

Mayor Cavanaugh stated an ordinance had been prepared for Council's consideration to designate the Gaston Livery Stable to the Historic Register as a Landmark property.

Mr. Pearce read the title of the ordinance.

AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE GASTON LIVERY STABLE AS AN HISTORIC SITE ON THE CITY OF AIKEN HISTORIC REGISTER.

Mr. Pearce stated the Design Review Board, upon petition filed with it, has voted unanimously to designate the Gaston Livery Stable to the City of Aiken Historic Register as a Landmark property. Their recommendation was then sent to the Planning Commission for review and a recommendation to City Council. Planning Commission met, conducted a public hearing, and voted unanimously to recommend designating the Gaston Livery Stable to the City of Aiken Historic Register as a Landmark property.

Mr. Pearce stated Coleen Reed and Gary Dexter are present to talk about the request for designation. Mr. Dexter has constructed a wood fire kiln to make pottery in the Edgefield tradition, on which he has done extensive study. The application was filed by Lucy Knowles and the request was unanimously approved by the Design Review Board and the Planning Commission.

For Council consideration on first reading is designation of the Gaston Livery Stable to the Aiken Historic Register as a Historic Site and a Landmark property.

Ms. Coleen Reed showed Council several pictures of what the property looked like prior to the purchase by the Friends of the Gaston Livery Stable and pictures of stages of improvements to the property and the barn. She pointed out the Friends had a lot of help from Councilmember Ebner. She pointed out there was a lot of help in clearing the property so the barn could be seen. Originally the barn was covered with ivy, which has now been removed. She stated extensive repairs were done to the east wing. The bricks were falling away and that has been repaired. She said work on the barn had come a long way and that is owed to the volunteers, the fundraising effort, and the generosity of the community. She pointed out the project had been done with no taxpayer funds. There was no city money, state money or federal money involved. It has all been done by the generosity of the community. She said the project is two years in advance of where they thought they might be at this time. She said the ground hog kiln is in place. They hope to do the test firing this week. All the electrical wiring has been put underground. She said they are very proud of this property. She felt it will be a show place in the City of Aiken. It has very significant history. She pointed out that Allen Riddick had donated some old doors that he had kept from a barn that was torn down many years ago. The doors have been refinished and installed on the east and west wings of the barn. She stated the old stair case which was on the exterior of the barn has been removed. She said the barn is almost back to its original glory.

Mayor Cavanaugh congratulated Coleen and the Friends of the Gaston Stable for what they had done to this barn. He asked how much money had been involved in the restoration so far.

Ms. Reed stated there had been a lot of in-kind service. The initial donations received were \$15,000 for the down payment on the barn. The fundraising event raised \$10,000. She said the community had been extremely generous.

Councilman Homoki stated the request is to place the barn on the City of Aiken's Historic Register. He asked if there were plans to place the barn on the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Reed responded the plans are to request the barn to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. The future plans are to use the barn as a living history site. Some of the soldiers from the Battle of Aiken reenactment may be camping at the barn in February during the reenactment.

Councilwoman Diggs moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council pass on first reading an ordinance to designate the Gaston Livery Stable to the Aiken Historic Register as a landmark and that second reading and public hearing be set for the next regular meeting of Council. The motion was unanimously approved.

RADIO PROJECT

Narrow Banding

Funding

Depreciation Funds

Mayor Cavanaugh stated Council needed to consider approval of Depreciation funds for the Radio Narrow Banding Project.

Mr. Pearce stated we have received all required frequency approvals and equipment in order to narrow band our city radios in order to meet the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)--imposed deadline of January, 2013. We recently met with representatives of Motorola, who have the state contract for supplying this radio equipment. They are ready to perform the final upgrades to our radio towers and the repeaters installed on them. Once this work is completed, we will proceed with programming and distributing handheld radios and installing vehicle-based radios in our City rolling stock.

Since we did not receive all the radio replacement equipment we budgeted for in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011-2012 by the June 30, 2012, deadline, we have additional expense in this year's budget. We have funds in our depreciation accounts to pay for it since we did not spend this money last year. In order to do so, our City Attorney and auditors have recommended City Council approval to do so in our FY 2012-13 budget instead. He pointed out that the unspent funds from the 2011-2012 budget that were committed to the project totaled \$41,162. He said we have now received the amount of the total cost for the project which is about \$420,000. In order to pay that we need to use the unspent funds from 2011-12 from the Depreciation Fund. He said we need authorization from Council to adjust the budget and to spend as much as \$50,000 from the depreciation accounts. It is anticipated that the actual amount will be \$48,572.

For Council approval is authorization to expend up to an additional \$50,000 from city depreciation accounts from unspent funds from the 2011-12 budget to pay for radio replacement equipment that has now been delivered that will be used in our narrow banding project.

Councilman Dewar stated he understands that the Aiken Standard runs the police scanner. He wondered if that would change as a result of the narrow banding project.

Mr. Pearce stated we would have to check on this, as we do not know how that might be affected. He said the Aiken Standard does run the police scanner. The city will have new frequencies and will have the ability and more choices for individual conversations. He said in talking with Motorola we will have a much expanded service for the radios for the various departments.

Councilman Dewar moved, seconded by Councilman Ebner, that Council authorize the expenditure of up to an additional \$50,000 from city depreciation accounts from unspent funds from the 2011-12 budget to pay for radio replacement equipment that has now been delivered to be used in our narrow banding radio project. The motion was unanimously approved.

Councilman Homoki pointed out that one of the problems in the attack on the Pentagon was that they could not get through the walls with the FM or VFH communications as they could not penetrate the walls. He wondered if the City had a similar problem.

Chief Barranco said that situation was repeater channels. He stated the city would have the ability to go from radio to radio and bypass the repeaters in situations.

INFORMATION

Laurens Street Bridge Project

Fresh Market

Whiskey Road

Mr. Pearce stated that on the Laurens Street project our understanding is that DOT anticipates completing the project this week. That includes filling in some of the dirt on the other side of the fence.

On Whiskey Road at the Fresh Market, there were discussions with the recommendation from the Planning Commission about handling traffic flow. In preliminary discussions with SCDOT, our preliminary traffic counts did confirm that as one goes south on Whiskey Road from Barnard to the traffic signal at Hitchcock and Kings Grant Way that 70% of the traffic tends to stay in the right hand lane (the lane closest to the Palmetto Golf Club) and about 30% of the traffic goes in the left hand lane. Rather than pursue a permanent installation, and have something that would upset the neighbors, we are proposing to have a temporary installation of traffic cones to have a left hand turn lane southbound on Whiskey to the lane that is closest to the center and gather some more data. Councilmembers Dewar and Wells were present at the Greater Aiken Estates Neighborhood Association meeting, and this was presented for their consideration. The neighborhood seemed to be pleased that the city would do something on a trial basis and take that data to see what a permanent solution might be.

Mayor Cavanaugh asked if that meant there would only be one lane on Whiskey Road from Barnard to Hitchcock. Mr. Pearce responded that would be just for the week when Fresh Market opens for the grand opening and would be on a trial basis. He said typically DOT likes about 5 to 7 days of data for them to consider.

Councilman Dewar stated this would be an evolving issue, because we don't know what else is going in the shopping center. He said if some high volume businesses go in the shopping center, it will change the whole nature of the area.

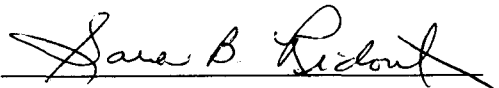
Mr. Pearce stated that was a good point, and that is why putting in a permanent installation might not be helpful. It is felt a temporary change may help determine what might be best for the area traffic-wise.

Mayor Cavanaugh stated he felt we need a lot of publicity and communication about the week when traffic on Whiskey Road will be made one lane southbound and one lane made for turning left between Barnard and Hitchcock. Mr. Pearce responded that we have printed and broadcast media that we can use to inform the citizens.

Councilman Dewar pointed out that the Senior Extravaganza was a great project and well done. He felt that not much we do is more appreciated than the Senior Extravaganza.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:53 p.m.


Sara B. Ridout
City Clerk