

Special Meeting
Mount Holly City Council
November 18, 1991

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by Mayor Charles B. Black, Jr. Those present were Councilwomen Faye Little and Lib Nichols, Mayor Pro-Tem Bob Jessen, Councilmen R. L. Duke, Archie Small, Interim City Manager Charles McGinnis.

The invocation was led by Councilman Archie Small.

The minutes of November 11, 1991, were approved with the following correction: Page seven, sixth paragraph, add after attended ", with Shay Huggins," upon motion made by Councilwoman Little, with a second by Councilman Duke, carried with five ayes.

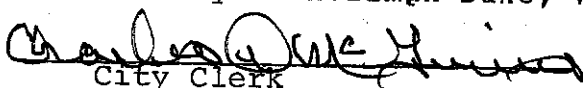
Priority One presented the budget for Rollins Square apartments for July 1991 through July 1992. Councilwoman Little moved to approve the said budget as presented, and that the City waive the property tax and garbage fees for this budget period, which was seconded by Councilman Duke, and carried with five in favor.

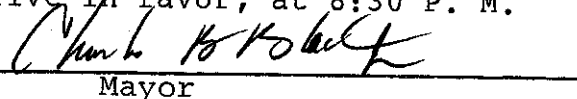
The meeting was recessed and the public hearing called to order for consideration of the Gaston Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan. Mr. Jeff Cox, the representative from N. C. Department of Transportation, was recognized. Maps of the proposed Plan were placed about the room, and the audience invited to look at them, ask questions, and make comment. Mr. Cox said the routes of travel have been studied along with the growth pattern for the area and this Plan endeavors to meet the needs of the Area in the year 2005, the target year. Councilman Jessen noted that this Plan is based on computer models and such, and wondered if this was really an accurate estimate of the growth for this Area considering it has not grown that much in the last 20 years. Mr. Cox said the figures from 1983, the base year, until 1990, are close to the 1-1/2% to 2% figures in the Plan. A man in the audience asked if those figures are for the whole area or Mount Holly. He said that is the average of the whole Area, that the Mount Holly and Belmont area on the east side of the Southfork River has a higher than the average growth. Mayor Black said that in light of the beltway being planned around Charlotte for 15 or 20 years from now, there might be another bridge across the Catawba River and this is when the site needs to be addressed for that. Merlin Brown asked if the map shows the definite routes of the roads; it does not. The Area is from Bessemer City to Mount Holly, and the major road improvements would be: a 321 & 74 by-pass around Gastonia; a 274 by-pass around Bessemer City; a 279 by-pass around Dallas (including the Ranlo North loop between Spencer Mountain and Ranlo); a Gastonia to Mount Holly connector road; a Mount Holly-Belmont loop 273 & 27 by-pass (this should have high priority since it has been on the books since 1977 and before); and possibly a cut-through from Clearwater Lake Road to Highway 27 near Aldersgate Church. Hudson Boulevard is already scheduled for construction. Mr. Cox said the corridors are

identified by this map but the exact path cannot be determined yet. The right-of-ways are not obtained until budgeting for construction is made. Merlin Brown said they should tell people if it might cross them so realtors don't buy up the property and get rich. Mayor Black said that is the purpose of the public hearing. Mr. Cox said that if the City is serious about having these thoroughfares, the corridors must be protected by them via zoning so that the right-of-ways can be obtained later at a reasonable cost. He stated that after the Plan is adopted, DOT can establish the best corridor and prepare "functional designs" which show the centerlines and right-of-ways. Then the City and County must use their zoning power to preserve the corridor and keep down development in it; possibly even buying some of the land, although he did not feel this very likely. The Council agreed they could not do that. Councilman Jessen said the City would need a commitment from DOT before it could buy any land. A woman in the audience asked who decides what priority rank to put on each road. Mr. Cox said DOT has a priority system and considers the Area as a whole. He felt the most urgent need at present is the widening of Highway 273 south of Mount Holly. In his opinion, the Gastonia-Mt. Holly connector road would be built before the bypass around Mount Holly. Mr. David Berg asked if they have an estimated construction date for any of the roads. Mr. Cox said the design date for the whole Area is 2005, with construction following 10 to 20 years later. Councilwoman Little asked if the Gaston Urban Area will get a fair amount of funds, considering what Mecklenburg will be getting. Mr. Cox said there is a "3C" process that DOT must follow which should balance the money funded across the State. Nancy Dills asked if DOT had considered including the commuter train line on the old P & N track in this Plan; he said they are aware of that idea, but it is not on this Plan. Mayor Black noted that the County has already adopted this Plan, as have most of the other cities who have already met. The Plan, if adopted, will be sent to Raleigh and it must be approved there before the designing process goes any further. Hazel Michael asked how long it will take Raleigh to decide on the Plan. Mr. Cox said five years or so. After that, environmental impact studies will be done. He stated he had attempted to avoid wetlands, historical sites, etc. when preparing the Plan. A man asked why I-85 was not going to be eight lanes. Mr. Cox said it should have been, because will be at capacity with six, but the money was too little to replace all the bridges. Mayor Black stated that he hopes the State legislators do not pass a law requiring the City that gets funding to put up a percentage, because that will mean the large cities will get almost all the funding. There were no other comments. The public hearing was adjourned.

The special meeting resumed, and Councilwoman Nichols moved to approve the Gaston Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan as presented, which motion was seconded by Councilman Jessen and carried with five ayes.

The meeting was then adjourned upon motion by Councilwoman Little, seconded by Councilman Duke, with five in favor, at 8:30 P. M.


City Clerk


Mayor
