

CITY OF MOUNT HOLLY
MOUNT HOLLY CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, September 26, 2022
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
6:30 PM

Call to Order

Mayor Hough called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. The following were present:

Mayor Bryan Hough	Miles Braswell, City Manager
Mayor Pro Tem Phyllis Harris	Brian DuPont, Assistant City Manager
Councilman Ivory Craig	Brian Reagan, Police Chief
Councilman Jeff Meadows	Ryan Baker, Fire Chief
Councilman David Moore	Greg Beal, Planning Director
Councilwoman Christina Pawlish	Tony Walker, Streets and Solid Waste Director
Councilwoman Lauren Shoemaker	Jonathan Wilson, Director of Utilities
Marie M. Anders, City Attorney	Mark Jusko, Recreation Supervisor
Kemp Michael, Assistant City Attorney	Michelle Wood, Finance Director

Invocation

Councilman David Moore led the Council, staff and attendees in prayer.

Set the Agenda

With no changes to the agenda, Councilwoman Pawlish made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Councilwoman Shoemaker seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of Proclamation recognizing October 3-7 as Customer Service Week
2. Approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Services Provided by the Regional Stormwater Partnership of the Carolinas
3. Call for a public hearing to consider rezoning a 1.06-acre tract of land, owned by the City of Mount Holly and located at 14 Caldwell Drive, Parcel ID # 184762, from RA Residential Agriculture to B-3 General Business South Gateway Overlay District
4. Call for a public hearing to consider a proposed text amendment, as submitted by City staff, to Article 12 in the Zoning Ordinance, to include the authorization of Watershed Density Averaging Credits as a recently-approved duty of the Mount Holly Board of Adjustment.
5. Approval of minutes from the September 12, 2022 Council Meeting

Mayor Pro Tem Harris made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilwoman Shoemaker seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Agenda-Joint meeting between City Council, Mount Holly Historical Society and the Save the Museum Group

Mayor Hough thanked everyone for attending the meeting and gave some introductory remarks regarding the upcoming discussions. Mayor Hough expressed great appreciation for the countless hours spent preparing the presentations that will be presented. Mayor Hough expressed the City of Mount Holly's appreciation to the Mount Holly Historical Society for the work that they have done to preserve the City's archives. Mayor Hough stated that the City of Mount Holly wants to further the mission of the Historical Society and will support its efforts by providing a new location which is cost free as well as annual funding for operations, programming and a state of the art museum. Mayor Hough stated that in no way does the City want the Historical Society to disappear or dissolve. Mayor Hough stated that the City is dedicated to cultivating our partnership and continued collaboration.

1. Presentation from the City of Mount Holly

Miles Braswell

Mr. Braswell gave a presentation regarding the possible relocation of the Mount Holly Historical Society. Mr. Braswell gave a brief history of the relationship between the City of Mount Holly and the Historical Society. Mr. Braswell stated that Garrie Brinkley was included in the 2021 Annex sale discussions and was allowed to present to City Council. Mr. Braswell gave a timeline of when discussions began regarding a possible relocation of the Mount Holly Historical Society. Mr. Braswell pointed out that the 2022 Council Retreat held on February 25, 2022 was advertised appropriately and listed an agenda item regarding the Historical Society and a discussion of Municipal Complex vacant space. Mr. Braswell stated that on March 10, 2022 the Mount Holly Historical Society Council Liaison Ivory Craig and Miles Braswell met with the Historical Society Board President Mr. Richard Browne and Garrie Brinkley regarding the retreat discussion and decision. Mr. Braswell stated that on April 8, 2022 City Staff met with Richard Browne and Garrie Brinkley to tour the Municipal Complex vacant space ahead of a Mount Holly Historical Society Board meeting. Mr. Braswell discussed the importance of maintaining the historical building in order to preserve the City's historical downtown that people have come to know and recognized as downtown Mount Holly. Mr. Braswell stated that the Old City Hall building is a capital asset and its preservation is important to the City's bond rating and ability to finance capital projects. Mr. Braswell stated that there was no end user in mind at the time of the retreat. Mr. Braswell discussed the possible number of spaces that could be available in the building where the Historical Society is currently located. Mr. Braswell stated that there are four (4) potential spaces with three (3) possible revenue generators at the Old City Hall building. Mr. Braswell discussed the City of Mount Holly's Strategic Vision Plans and their goals around extending the downtown. Mr. Braswell gave some statistics around the businesses located at the Municipal Complex. Mr. Braswell discussed the increased traffic to the Municipal Complex area with the addition of the Mount Holly Police Department Memorial, the River Hawk Greenway, and the continued activities at Arts on the Greenway. Mr. Braswell discussed and showed pictures of the Old City Hall building that are in need of repair. Mr. Braswell discussed the potential of the vacant shell location at the Municipal Complex. Mr. Braswell stated that the building is an 1882 historical building. Mr. Braswell discussed the 13' 10" high ceilings, open ceiling, and concrete floors. Mr. Braswell stated that the vacant shell at the Municipal Complex will allow for creativity through design, updated technology, office and

meeting space options, lighting appropriate for displays and options for stationary and moveable walls. Mr. Braswell stated that an architect would be able to think outside of the box and create the new museum to the liking of the Historical Society. Mr. Braswell showed pictures of the current new kitchen that is located in the vacant space at the Municipal Complex. Mr. Braswell went over the current floor plan and the square footage of the proposed area for the proposed new museum location. Mr. Braswell discussed a space comparison graph that shows the breakdown by areas for both the Old City Hall and the proposed area at the Municipal Complex. Mr. Braswell discussed that Richard Browne and Garrie Brinkley have toured the vacant space and the floor plan has been shared with them by City Staff upon their request. Mr. Braswell stated that there is \$85,000 in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget for an architect design. Mr. Braswell stated that the Request for Qualifications has been prepared, advertised and Qualification Packages have been received. Mr. Braswell stated that an architectural firm selection can be presented to the City Council soon. Mr. Braswell stated that a contract and design should be complete by April 2023 with a construction estimate prepared with this architect in time for next year's fiscal year budget. Mr. Braswell stated that once we know how much the construction of the museum would cost, then staff would ask City Council to approve this estimate through the budget process. Mr. Braswell stated that if approved during the budget process, the anticipated construction period of the new museum would be between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024.

2. Presentation from the Mount Holly Historical Society

Mr. Garrie Brinkley spoke on behalf of the Mount Holly Historical Society. Mr. Brinkley presented on the history of the historical society. Mr. Brinkley stated that the nonprofit was formed in 2010. Mr. Brinkley discussed the memorandum of understanding between the City of Mount Holly and the Historical Society. Mr. Brinkley stated that the museum is the proof of the pudding that the Historical Society was working. Mr. Brinkley discussed the importance of enthusiasm. Mr. Brinkley stated that the pandemic was not their friend as many of the board members are elderly. Mr. Brinkley discussed that the enthusiasm amongst workers has gone down since the annex and move discussion began. Mr. Brinkley stated that the museum traffic from the downtown events would be lost at the new location. Mr. Brinkley discussed the cross traffic options from the suggested new location would be limited. Mr. Brinkley stated that he feels that the suggested new location will be approximately 30% smaller. Mr. Brinkley stated that the group handcrafted the exhibits to the space. Mr. Brinkley emphasized his feelings of less visitors, less volunteers, less space and less exposure if the museum is moved to its suggested location. Mr. Brinkley does not feel that this would be the best use of precious City resources.

Mr. Richard Browne continued speaking on behalf of the Mount Holly Historical Society. Mr. Browne is the current President of the Mount Holly Historical Society. Mr. Browne recognized those that have assisted in these discussions. Mr. Browne discussed a timeline around when the annex move happened. Mr. Browne discussed that the City had hired movers to help the Historical Society move items from the sale of the annex. Mr. Browne discussed when the Historical Society was informed that the museum was going to be relocated and that Mr. Braswell took them on a tour of the suggested new location. Mr. Browne stated that the Historical Society proposed a new location on April 8th. Mr. Browne stated that a request for qualifications for a new architecture was sent on July 29, 2022. Mr. Browne stated that the

Historical Society began discussions in August to formally object to the relocation of the museum. Mr. Browne stated that a letter of objection had been sent to council. Mr. Browne thanked everyone for having this town hall discussion. Mr. Browne stated that it is his sincere hope that the museum stays in its current location.

3. Presentation from the Save the Museum Group

Mr. Richard Thompson began speaking on behalf of the Save the Museum Group. Mr. Thompson thanked everyone for having this town hall meeting discussion. Mr. Thompson stated that if things continue in the way they are going then the City will be heading straight into a hornet's nest. Mr. Thompson pulled out an exhibit of a hornet's nest. Mr. Thompson paraphrased a reading of a memo from the Historical Society in 2013 to the City of Mount Holly which discussed some expansion and plans for the museum. Mr. Thompson discussed his family's personal history. Mr. Thompson discussed that the museum is currently losing space for their exhibits and do not want to have to turn down donations of exhibits. Mr. Thompson discussed the library that was dedicated to Willie Bert Rhyne who was a WWII Veteran and is now packed up because of the sale of the annex. Mr. Thompson discussed the many items that had been donated and the history behind them.

Melissa Thompson continued to discuss on behalf of the Save the Museum Group. Ms. Thompson stated that there were a lot of people that are upset over the possible move of the museum. Ms. Thompson stated that the group was trying to understand what the thoughts were behind the decision to move the museum. Ms. Thompson stated that when the museum lost space due to the sale of the annex, that they lost 954 square feet in exhibit space and 668 square feet of storage space. Ms. Thompson discussed some of the meeting minutes from the February 2022 council retreat which stated that the space used by the historical society was 3500 square feet and that the square footage at the Municipal Complex would be 2188. Ms. Thompson stated that these numbers could be wrong, but that it appeared as though these were the numbers used to decide for the museum to move and the square footage lost is what upset a lot of people. Ms. Thompson stated that the group does not feel that there is any potential for growth at the proposed new location. Ms. Thompson stated that the group is afraid that the museum will die as a result of the proposed move to the Municipal Complex. Ms. Thompson stated that the museum would not be able to participate in downtown event. Ms. Thompson discussed the perceived challenges for school tours at the proposed new location. Ms. Thompson discussed the proposal for an open space and their dissatisfaction to move the current exhibits that have been specifically designed for the current space. Ms. Thompson stated that she thinks that the museum at its current location should have a tourism spokesperson where people could find out more about the City.

PUBLIC COMMENT—*Limited to 3 minutes*

1. Joy Walker- 6226 Easter Lane Mount Holly: Ms. Walker stated that she would like to see the Historical Society stay downtown at its current location. Ms. Walker stated that she grew up here in Mount Holly. Ms. Walker joined the Mount Holly Historical Society in 2018 for 4 years. Ms. Walker believes in the preservation of history. Ms. Walker discussed the growth of the Historical Society and its exposure.
2. Nancy Wrenn-107 Alexis Forest Drive: Ms. Wrenn is a new board member of the Historical Society. Ms. Wrenn stated that our museum is second to none. Ms. Wrenn stated that the Historical Society as honored the agreement between the Historical Society and the City of Mount Holly. Ms. Wrenn stated that she would like for the Historical Society to stay on Main Street.
3. Angela Blackwood- 118 Old Mine Road: Ms. Blackwood stated that the museum is a fantastic place and encourages all to visit. Ms. Blackwood stated that the museum is open more than four hours per week. Ms. Blackwood opens to accommodate the school children and other programs as scheduled. Ms. Blackwood stated that she would like to see the Historical Society stay on Main Street.
4. Coleston Hilderbran- 203 Sue Ellen Street: Mr. Hilderbran is 10 years old and is a student at Ida Rankin Elementary School. Mr. Hilderbran stated that he loves the museum. Mr. Hilderbran feels that the museum should stay on Main Street.
5. Katelyn Connors-149 E. Central Avenue: Ms. Connors is a new resident to Mount Holly. Ms. Connors stated that the museum is where she first learned about the City of Mount Holly. Ms. Connors stated that she enjoys stopping by the Historical Society after she eats lunch at one of our local downtown restaurants. Ms. Connors stated that she hopes that the City of Mount Holly will reconsider the relocation of the Historical Society and leave it on Main Street.
6. Camille Jessen-109 Brook Lane: Ms. Jessen is a resident of Mount Holly and a board member of the Historical Society. Ms. Jessen stated that all of the work that has been done by volunteers. Ms. Jessen stated that the Mount Holly Historical Society Museum follow the American Alliance of Museum Guidelines. Ms. Jessen suggested that the City consider a shared space. Ms. Jessen stated that she believes that the museum should stay on Main Street.
7. Gary Neely- 212 Dogwood Drive: Mr. Neely stated the he is born and raised here in Mount Holly. Mr. Neely stated that he has been a member of the Historical Society. Mr. Neely discussed the things that he likes about the museum. Mr. Neely stated that the City of Mount Holly has supported the Historical Society for many years. Mr. Neely stated that he feels that there may come a time when moving the museum may not be as disruptive, but that time is not now. Mr. Neely stated that the museum should stay on Main Street.
8. DeLina Furr- 519 Tuckaseege: Ms. Furr stated that the museum offers school tours aligned with the North Carolina standard course of studies. Ms. Furr stated that before the pandemic, 125 3rd graders walked 1 block from their school to the museum. Ms. Furr stated that they would not be able to do this if the museum moves. Ms. Furr stated that they are trying to expand the school tours. Ms. Furr stated that the museum offers research materials for the schools. Ms. Furr stated that Main Street store fronts come and go, but can we not have one storefront that remains the same and is not commercial?

9. Archie Huffstetler- 319 Oakwood Drive: Mr. Huffstetler stated that he has been on the board two different times. Mr. Huffstetler stated that the museum belongs to the citizens of Mount Holly. Mr. Huffstetler stated that the museum needs to stay on Main Street.
10. Marian Vanni- 5132 Stockbridge: Ms. Vanni stated that she moved to Mount Holly nine years ago. Ms. Vanni stated that she has been on the Mount Holly Historical Society board. Ms. Vanni stated that our museum is better than those from up north. Ms. Vanni stated that the museum's location should stay on Main Street. Ms. Vanni stated that a lot of their exhibits have been boxed up due to the sale of the Annex.
11. Annette Williams-110 Morris Avenue: Ms. Williams is a resident and has been a board member. Ms. Williams stated that the museum tells the story of Old Mount Holly and that the exhibits are donated by the City of Mount Holly. Ms. Williams stated that she feels that the Grand Hall location would be a smaller area than they currently have. Ms. Williams stated that she worked at the movie theatre.
12. Carolyn Breyare-307 Eastwood Drive: Ms. Breyare stated that she was born and raised here in Mount Holly. Ms. Breyare stated that she was elected to the City Council in 2007. Ms. Breyare stated that when discussions began about forming a Historical Society that the Municipal Complex was looked at but parents felt it to be unsafe for children due to traffic. Ms. Breyare stated that she loves the Historical Society and feels that it is a fit for downtown.
13. Becky Farrar-2115 Mountain Island Hwy: Ms. Farrar stated that she has been in Mount Holly for over 50 years. Ms. Farrar discussed the value and how value is determined based on the volunteer hours and the time spent to create the exhibits. Ms. Farrar asked why not let the Historical Society furnish the Grand Hall with rotating exhibits.
14. Pam Roberts-Reynolds-503 N. Hawthorn Street: Ms. Roberts-Reynolds stated that she moved here in 1957. Ms. Roberts-Reynolds stated that she loves history. Ms. Roberts-Reynolds stated that her family donated the bell to the museum. Ms. Roberts-Reynolds stated that she thinks that it is a wonderful thing that is on Main Street. Ms. Roberts-Reynolds stated that she would like to see the renovations done for the benefit of the museum.
15. Joe Haverty-1712 N. Main Street: Mr. Haverty stated that his family roots run deep here. Mr. Haverty is a member of the Historical Society and would like to leave the museum downtown.
16. Rita McElewain- Mount Holly, NC: signed up but did not speak. Was not present.
17. Robert Black- 142 Oakland St.: Mr. Black stated that he is a former Mayor, former councilmember, former board member and current member of the Historical Society. Mr. Black gave some description of the original archives room. Mr. Black stated that you could hardly get into the room. Mr. Black stated that 1992 was when the Historical Society became a committee. Mr. Black stated that he was part of the council that purchased the Municipal Complex. Mr. Black stated that the Historical Society has been the presence of the City downtown.
18. Dickie Leonar-1017 Villias Drive, Stanley NC: Mr. Leonar has lived here is entire life. Mr. Leonar discussed the WWII uniform worn by his Grandfather and given to the Historical Society. Mr. Leonar stated that he would like to see the Historical Society stay on Main Street.
19. Reginald & Jennifer Graham- Signed up but chose not to speak.

20. Garrie Brinkley-176 Tom Sawyer Ln: Mr. Brinkley stated that he grew up here. Mr. Brinkley stated that there should have been conversations with the Mount Holly Historical Society prior to the Council Retreat. Mr. Brinkley recommends that the City Council roll back its vote to move the museum. Mr. Brinkley recommends that a small group of people get together to discuss other possibilities. Mr. Brinkley would like to see the museum remain downtown.
21. Billie Luckey-1727 N Main St: Ms. Luckey stated that she is amazed by the museum and this caused her to donate a uniform worn by her brother. Ms. Luckey stated that Mount Holly should be proud of the work that has been done so far, but there is more to come. Ms. Luckey stated that she would like to see the museum stay on Main Street.

Mayor Hough stated that this concludes the public comments. Mayor Hough stated that the one thing that we can all take away from this is that we all love the Mount Holly Historical Society Museum. Mayor Hough stated that we will continue the discussions with the Mount Holly Historical Society Board. Mayor Hough thanked everyone for being here.

Closed Session

1. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a) (3 and 5)

Councilwoman Pawlish makes a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S 143-318.11 (a) (3 and 5). Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion. All Council members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried) Time was 9:26 pm.

Councilwoman Pawlish made a motion to return to open session. Mayor Pro Tem Harris seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor. (Motion Carried)

Time was 10:15 pm. There was no action taken.

Adjourn

With no additional items for discussion, Mayor Hough entertained a motion to adjourn. Councilman Craig made the motion to adjourn the September 26, 2022 Council Meeting. Councilman David Moore seconded the motion. All Council Members present voted in favor.

(Motion Carried)

The meeting adjourned at 10:16 pm.