

**MINUTES**  
**VILLAGE OF FLAT ROCK COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING**  
**HIGHLAND LAKE ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROJECT**  
**ASSEMBLY ROOM**  
**AUGUST 30, 2017**

Mayor Staton presided over the Highland Lake Road Improvement Project meeting on August 30, 2017, at 9:30 a.m. Those present in addition to Mayor Staton were Vice Mayor Weedman and Council Members Brown, Coletta, Dockendorf, Gooch, and Jamerson, Village Clerk Parker and Village Administrator Boleman.

He led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Staton explained this meeting is a special called meeting for the purpose of Council's discussions among its members on the proposed improvements of Highland Lake Road. A meeting for the public to have the opportunity to review the proposed plans, ask questions, and give comments has been scheduled by NCDOT for September 12, 2017, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., at the Hendersonville City Operations Center.

Mayor Staton welcomed Blue Ridge Fire & Rescue Chief Brent Mendenhall and Assistant Fire Chief Will Sheehan who spoke about the future plans for Station #2, which adjoins village hall property. They presented to Council for review preliminary drawings of a number of options for a new station.

**Discussions:**

Mayor Staton gave a brief history of the proposed North Highland Lake Road project and stated that, some time early last year Council attended a meeting called by NCDOT with representatives from NCDOT, Henderson County, and City of Hendersonville, at which preliminary plans were revealed for the redevelopment of North Highland Lake Road between Greenville Highway and Spartanburg Highway. The improvements discussed by NCDOT included the widening of the road and the addition of bicycle and pedestrian lanes on both sides of the road. At NCDOT's request, Council advised the department of elements it would like to see included in the project. Among other things, Council indicated it wanted a bike/pedestrian multi-use trail on only one side of the road, that being on the north or park side. Council also indicated a preference for a 22 foot wide road, i.e., 11 foot wide travel lanes, with curb and gutter. At some point NCDOT indicated that a multi-use path or trail on only one side of the road may be acceptable, but a wider road would be required if curbs and gutters were to be included. Plans were developed accordingly, but with 14 foot wide travel lanes, a multi-use path on the north side of the road, and no curbs and gutters. Since then two council members have expressed opposition to this plan or any plan that changes North Highland Lake Road. NCDOT is now prepared to present the proposed plans to the public. He stated most improvements will affect the north side of Highland Lake Road.

Council Member Dockendorf reported he had mentioned to Mr. Brian Burch, NCDOT Division 14 head, the opposition of council members to this project, and Mr. Burch was in disbelief. Mr. Dockendorf stated this project has been in the works for years, and it has now been funded. But while we have the ability to effect changes in the project, the project is going to happen, in his opinion.

Council Member Coletta spoke about the number of trees that will be removed, the aesthetics of the road, the historic district designation, and a “sidewalk to nowhere.” Council Member Dockendorf feels the sidewalk or multi-use path from Greenville Highway to the Park at Flat Rock, rather than a sidewalk to nowhere, will be a part of a future greenway plan currently in drafting and contemplating a greenway from Carl Sandburg to the park.

Council Member Jamerson stated she had spoken with Reese Shuler, the project engineer, who stated the road is not up to current standards and is currently unsafe.

Vice Mayor Weedman stated he was in agreement with Council Member Coletta with respect to greenways. He opposes the road improvements but feels the trails can be done independently from a road project. He feels that widening the road, taking property on both sides of the road, and straightening the curves, will increase speed on the road. He feels the safest entrance to the park is the current entrance. The railroad tracks act as a speed dampener; moving the entrance down the road and farther away from the tracks will also increase speed on the road.

There were discussions of the safety of the current entrance to the park. Council Member Dockendorf thinks there is a need for a left turn lane into the park. Mr. Steve Jamerson stated there are issues with the current entrance for larger vehicles entering the park, drainage, and safety.

Council Member Coletta feels that Council should take no action today, and that Council should await the receipt of more information about the project. Council Member Gooch disagreed and suggested that action needs to be taken now, and a motion should be made.

Council Member Coletta made a motion that Council reject NCDOT’s proposed changes to North Highland Lake Road, seconded by Vice Mayor Weedman. With Council Member Coletta and Vice Mayor Weedman voting yes and Council Members Brown, Dockendorf, Gooch and Jamerson voting no, the motion failed.

Mayor Staton advised that the effect of the vote was that the Council would continue to work with NCDOT to minimize the proposed project’s impact on the village.

Council Member Jamerson made a motion that Council commit to the alternate new entrance to the park that will be added in the future, and to work with NCDOT to establish such entrance as identified on the master plan. The motion was seconded by Council Member Dockendorf and

carried on a five to one vote, the one no vote being cast by Vice Mayor Weedman.

A final discussion involved Council's preference between a five-foot sidewalk adjoining the road and a nine-foot multi-use path or trail separated from the road. Council Member Dockendorf made a motion that Council recommend to NCDOT the installation of a multi-use path or trail, nine to ten feet wide, on the north side of the road and separated from the road surface. The motion was seconded by Council Member Gooch and carried on a four to two vote.

With no further discussions, the meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

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Michelle Parker, CMC  
Village Clerk

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Robert V. Staton  
Mayor