



**CITY OF ST. GABRIEL**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**  
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2018 - 6:00 P.M.**  
**ST. GABRIEL CITY HALL COMPLEX - 5035 IBERVILLE STREET - ROOM 32**  
**ST. GABRIEL, LOUISIANA**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting of the Mayor and City Council was called to order at approximately 6:07 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Councilwoman Deborah R. Alexander  
Councilman Ronald Grace, Sr.  
Councilman Melvin Hasten, Sr. /Mayor Pro-tempore  
Councilman Kelvin York, Sr.  
Councilman Freddie Frazier, Sr.

5 of 5 Council Members were in attendance for a quorum.

Presiding: Mayor Lionel Johnson, Jr.

Recording: Constance Barbin, City Clerk

**PRAYER & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

A moment of prayer was led by Mayor Lionel Johnson, Jr. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**MOTION TO APPROVE - Mayor requested to amend agenda to add item 3a-Presentation by Mr. Jerry Hebert of Grace Hebert Architects and Billy Braeland of The Department of Corrections regarding the demolition and rebuilding of LCIW.**

On a Motion by Councilman Hasten and a Second by Councilwoman Alexander motion was approved.

ROLL CALL: 5 YEAS

**PUBLIC FORUM – 3 minute limit (Please register with the City Clerk prior to the beginning of the meeting indicating your topic of discussion.) Topics should be on agenda items and/or city government concerns.**

Jake Hoffman with American Alloy Steel - Roads in bad condition and would like to have them permanently repaired. Says business is being hurt because customers complain about condition of roads. He provided photos of the roads to council.

Councilman Hasten – Asked if companies in that area are willing to help with cost to repave roads due to the heavy equipment that they use to carry heavy loads.

Mr. Hoffman – Said that they would look at options to do that.

Councilman York – Mentioned the heavy loads carried by the companies that use that road.

Mr. Hoffman - Mentioned that half of Delta Drive was repaved 2 years ago and that the repairs stopped.

Councilman Hasten – Responded saying that funding was an issue and that’s why the repairs topped.

Mayor Johnson - Sated that when the bond money became available which was \$3.5-\$4 million) the cost to repair *the “U”* (area of streets reviewed for repair) was estimated at \$3+ million. City had to make a decision to repair the “U” or retouch neighborhoods. Mayor says studied companies in that area and found that the city has received just over \$100k in taxes from them. Said he talked to assessor October 17, 2018 about this issue and says assessor is willing to meet about it in the future.

Mr. Hoffman - Mentioned that he was very pleased with the service he received from City Hall.

Dominique Forrente – Running for School Board Member At Large. Spoke on platform.

**MOTION TO APPROVE – Minutes for Regular Meeting dated September 25, 2018**

On a Motion by Councilwoman Alexander and a Second by Councilman York the minutes for regular meeting dated September, 2018 were approved.

**PRESENTATION – Jerry Hebert of Grace Hebert Architects presented on the demolition and rebuilding of LCIW.**

Working with Office of Risk Management and Facility of Planning and Control to rebuild the campus by demolishing most of the buildings with the exception of 2. Cost is \$80-\$100 million. Safer more secure campus. 21<sup>st</sup> century design. Asked council to have flood plan managers to review for agreement with budget numbers.

Councilman Hasten - Asked how long project would take.

Mr. Hebert - Phase 1A to move female inmates from Hunt’s Correctional Facility (1-1.5 years). Phase 1B to bring in a medical side, mental health housing and administration buildings (depends on funding from FEMA). Final Phase includes kitchen buildout and dormitories. Total timeframe 3-3.5 years. FEMA and state will fund.

Councilwoman Alexander – Asked what 2 buildings would remain.

Mr. Hebert – Leo (x building) and Chapel.

Mayor – Informed council that as Mayor and Flood Pan Manager he will review information and submit letter on city’s position with request. Asked Mr. Hebert and Mr. Breeland to be available within next 2 weeks with documentation for council to review. Mayor asked council for resolution of support.

On a Motion by Councilwoman Alexander and a Second by Councilman Grace request for resolution of support was approved.

ROLL CALL: 5 YEAS

**MOTION TO BEGIN – A Public Hearing**

- A. Proposed application for Preliminary Plat for University Club South – 3<sup>rd</sup> Filing Adam Davis – 260 S. Club Avenue – Biggest concern is that they haven’t received anything from Mr. Daniel showing that the new homes will meet the standards of the current homes. Says residents have no assurances of what Mr.

Daniel will build.  
Chad Stevens of MR Engineering– 9345 Interline -

**B. University Club South Townhomes**

Mike Smith – 410 S. Club Avenue – Stated there are 131 lots that have houses on them with one only one vacant. Only access to property would be through Club South Avenue and will have a significant impact on the residents of the community. Did community survey. 93% opposed to townhomes. HOA, residents did not have enough time to review proposal. Asking that the city delay the proposal so that they can review options of purchase by HOA. Stated HOA funds may have to be raised in order to cover cost of property. Says they have no guarantee that property will be constructed to meet the agreement presented. Plat does not show if there is enough room to place a fence as Mr. Daniel has previously agreed to. If council cannot delay then ask that they refuse proposal.

Councilman Grace- How much time is HOA asking to delay the proposal for?

Mr. Smith – asking for one month delay.

Adam Davis – Concerned about retaining the value of the current homes in the neighborhood. Stated that the area is zoned C2 according to the city's ordinance which does not allow for town homes. Asking that the proposal be denied based on this. Should council approve then requesting to have some sort of standard or restrictions/adherence be provided by developer to preserve the value of the neighborhood.

Arend W. A. Van Gemmert – 275 South Club Avenue – Opposed to townhomes. States they will be too close to Highway 30. Stated that if rental property increases in neighborhood then causes property value to decrease. Developers will have a hard time selling townhomes because so close to highway that no one will want to purchase and will therefore cause the developer to have to rent them out.

Eric Roquemore – 170 Villas Avenue- Concerned about townhomes so near to LA 30 that he feels needs to be 4 lanes. Curious as to whether townhomes will increase the purchase of a right away for St. Gabriel. Concerned about maintaining property value. States that the City of St. Gabriel represents the residents and is the only source of protection for its residents. Concerned about increased volume of traffic with new development. Asked council to decline proposal.

James Johnson – 230 Chancellor Avenue – Has doubts that the cost of the town homes will start sat \$160k and proposed by the developer. Requested a serious proposal by the developer on what they plan to build and if not provided, then asks that council deny the proposal.

Todd Pourciau – States that townhomes will alter the way that people view St. Gabriel. Daughter and nephew have purchased homes in St. Gabriel since he's been a resident. Townhomes will turn away those looking to purchase a homes in St. Gabriel.

David Lacerte – 250 Fieldhouse Avenue – Would like to see something in the Mortgage and \_\_\_\_\_ that would hold the property owner accountable to certain

standards. This would put residents at ease. They have no assurances that the developer will meet standards and restrictions. Renting, density, ingress and egress are all issues. Asked council to reject proposal.

### **MOTION TO END - A Public Hearing Session and RETURN to Regular Meeting**

On a Motion by Councilwoman Alexander and a Second by Councilman Grace motion was approved.

Chad Stevens – MR Engineering 9345 Interline, Baton Rouge, LA – 7 lots were included in the drainage study of 2005. Approved by Owen and White. Pump station at rear of University Club South is sized appropriately to handle 7 lots. Will build infrastructure on the extension of Clocktower Drive. Sewer will be extended from existing sewer system. Utilities companies will review utilities. Homes will be built to 1800 sq. ft. minimum. New homes will have same restrictions as original 7 lots. Performed neighborhood outreach the week of October 8<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman York – Stated that residents may not have a problem with new 7 lots if they meet the same standards as the original 7 lots but that they aren't presenting concrete proof that this will be the case. Mentioned that he spoke with Mr. Daniel on September 25<sup>th</sup> and asked him if the new 7 lots would match the current lots and was told yes they would. Asking for concrete evidence that second set of 7 lots will match the first 7 lots. Has no issue with the new 7 lots as long they meet the same standards as the original 7. Townhomes, however, will take away from the neighborhood and that if Mr. Daniel lived there he would not like the idea of townhomes in his neighborhood.

Mr. Stevens – The 7 lots will be included in the restrictions and that the restrictions are filed with the final plat is filed. Therefore, he cannot join those restrictions until the lots are developed. There is concrete evidence that he will join the restrictions.

Councilman York - Stated that this information should be shared with University Club South HOA.

Council reminded Councilman York that they were only speaking on agenda item IV. A.

Councilman Hasten – Stated that the residents have an issue with the 7 lots and the issue should have been resolved prior to the meeting.

Mr. Smith – Mr. Daniel agreed to follow same restrictions as first 7 lots which is acceptable by the residents, HOA. Only issue is that the restrictions are somewhat undermined because a couple of the homes have siding on the side which was not stated in the restrictions. Asking that the developer be more faithful to the restrictions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> filing.

Councilman Hasten – Residents are asking for something to be written out so that they can have concrete evidence of what will be built.

Mr. Stevens – Restrictions are already written out and will apply to the 2<sup>nd</sup> filing.

Councilman York – Mentioned Mr. Smith's statement about homes having siding on the sides of them which were supposed to only have siding in the rear according to the restrictions.

Mr. Stevens – There are variances that are granted to allow some change. Variances are granted to make changes as they continue to build. Variances can be caused by shifts in what the buyers in the market are expecting for a house for that price range. Sometimes it's a cost control issue or a living area issue.

Councilman York – Restated that the residents don't have anything in writing and that as developer they can say anything but do something else.

Councilman Grace - Asked Mr. Stevens if he is opposed to postponing the development of the townhomes.

Mr. Stevens – Doesn't feel that a postponement or negotiation is not necessary. Is the development meeting the rules of what the city requires should be the question at hand. The review process is what this should be about not zoning. Postponing will cause increase in cost for his business.

Councilman Grace - Asked Mr. Stevens if the cost would change that much in 30 days?

Mr. Stevens – stated that it depends on what he gets done in that 30 day period. For example, there are fees if construction plans are drawn. The weather also plays a part in getting things done timely.

Councilman Grace- Asked Mr. Stevens if he can get a yes or no for postponing.

Mr. Stevens – Answered no to postponing but agrees to continue to speak with HOA about possible purchase of property. Does not think city putting a postponement on them discussing a private contract is necessary.

Mr. Biggest concern is property value and density. No density requirement in the city's code. Townhomes are considered single family attached not multi family. Chose townhomes because more congruent with the current neighborhood. Zoning is C2 which allows apartments and townhomes. Trulia Real Estate did a study in 2016 that looked at 3,100 developments that were built 10-20 years ago and were low income and next to market rate. There was no loss of value. There is a stigma that renters bring crime and do not keep up their property. This is not true. In townhomes subdivisions the rental rate is the same as their subdivision. Every neighborhood is going to have restrictions. Property's value will not be effected by 11 townhomes. Will need to put entrance into townhomes. Has identified two trees that will need to come out. Will try to save one tree. There will not be much impact to the landscape. Mr. Daniel never committed to 160-190 sq. ft. Gave a price of \$190k-\$220k per unit which works out to 155-160 per foot. Had a neighborhood meeting on this project and the complaints were renters bringing crime and property values declining. Mr. Smith gave survey and received 93% opposition but didn't ask if residents prefer townhomes or apartments; townhomes or liquor store. He asked if they would like townhomes. Would you like to see zero lot line houses, offices or nothing? In our view the survey was flawed because it was geared to get the answer they desired. They can continue to negotiate. Property has been for sale since the subdivision was created. HOA had ample time to purchase property. Property has been zoned commercial since created. Has report from Owen and White that states that the property was included in the pond and there will be no impact. The same goes for the sewer. Asking for support for townhomes.

Councilman Grace – If you felt that study was flawed then did you conduct your own study?

Mr. Stevens – We had a meeting. Concerns were renters bring crime and property values.

**MOTION CONSIDERATION** – Discuss and take appropriate action on the proposed application for Preliminary Plat for University South 3<sup>rd</sup> Filing and University South Townhomes.

John Chumba – Overview of what applicant is asking for which is to subdivide lot into 7 lot. On a Motion by Councilwoman Frazier and a Second by Councilman Grace motion was approved.

ROLL CALL: 4 YEAS, 1 NAY

Dallon Bush – City Attorney – Planning and Zoning has acted and made a recommendation. Councilman Grace asked about deferring action and agrees that that would be appropriate under the statute that states that the planning commission has to take action within 60 days. One of the citizens raised a question about appropriateness of zoning that they (Mr. Dallon and Phil Canova) would like to research and make recommendation to council. Recommends that council table until next regularly scheduled council meeting.

On a Motion by Councilwoman Frazier and a Second by Councilman Hasten a motion to table until next regularly scheduled council meeting was approved.

ROLL CALL: 5 YEAS

**INTRODUCTION** - Application by American Homeland LLC for Preliminary Plat - Riverstone Subdivision – 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> filings – 462 lots.

Derrick Murphy of Quality Engineering representing American Homeland, LLC – 18320 Highway 42 Port Vincent, LA 70726

Asking for introduction of Riverstone Subdivision off of Highway 30. Subdivision consists of 144 acres with 462 lots. Lots are comprised of 50, 60 and 70 ft. widths. The plan is being developed into 3 phases. Asking for variance change from 10 to 5 ft. set back on the sides and zoning change from R1A to R1B. Had a drainage impact study which has been reviewed and approved by Owen and White. Drainage was a main concern for officials. They looked at every aspect of the drainage before coming to council because aware of the concern with drainage. Completed a traffic impact study that will be submitted to DOTD on Monday regarding improvements to intersection at highway 30 among other things. Plan to make project a neighborhood that St. Gabriel can be proud of. Neighborhood participation meeting to be held Tuesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Notices sent to 121 homeowners on 150 tracts of land. Set up an email account for residents to email questions and concerns. Will have documentation for next meeting to show this information. There are 4 bayou's going through property which is 20 acres of pond. Have taken drainage seriously. No sewer capacity in area so planning to put in private sewer treatment plant near highway 30 because no way to tie into city.

Council woman Alexander – Where is property located?

Mayor and Council – On Highway 30 adjacent to Lori Lane.

Councilman Grace - You want to put sewer close to Highway 30?

Mr. Murphy - Yes. Wanted to tie into city but no way to do that.

Councilman Hasten – What about a turning lane?

Mr. Murphy – Will construct right and left turn in as well as double lanes out. Have already done geometry for it and submitted traffic impact study to DOTD.

Councilman Hasten – You haven't received it yet?

Mr. Murphy – Not yet. Study has been done but approval from DOTD not received yet.

Councilman Hasten – How many homes will there be?

Mr. Murphy – 462

Councilman Hasten – 462 multiplied for 2 equals more than 900 cars coming to and from the subdivision.

Mr. Murphy – We are also looking at the Bayou Paul Lane and Bluebonnet/Highway 30 traffic impact. We've had a lot of conversations with DOTD. We just don't have the approval yet. DOTD has spoken with us on what our scope needs to be for traffic and where they need to look.

Councilman Hasten – And what was that?

Mr. Murphy – Bayou Paul Lane at Highway 30, Bluebonnet at Highway 30 and our intersection.

Council York – I know you stressed drainage which is important. What needs to be stressed is when Thanksgiving comes and the house is 50 ft. wide and your sisters and brothers come over and they can't get into the driveway. You are cramping these houses together. The more houses you put in the more money you make but you have to think about how people feel when they want to have functions at their house. 50 wide is no yard. You want setbacks to go from 10ft. to 5ft. you have houses right next to each other. Your neighbors can hear everything you do. would to keep 60-70 across the front and 10ft. setbacks. This way people won't have to worry about their driveways being blocked because everything is so cramped. People forget that people have families too. They don't just live by themselves.

Mayor Johnson – Do you have a timeline on when you may get DOTD approval?

Mr. Murphy – DOTD usually takes about 45 days.

Mayor Johnson- Do you have a response for Councilman York.

Mr. Murphy – We will consider that. Having mixed lots brings about different price points. This is the reason for having 50, 60 and 70 ft. wide homes for buyers to choose from. This allows us to market all the way across the board.

Councilman York – I understand but what happened to 100ft across the front and 150ft. across the back?

Mr. Murphy – By the time you get there these days with the rules and regulations those homes become \$300k and \$400k homes.

Councilman York – Not really. People need yards not just a flower bed. People need yards where their kids can have a place to play.

Councilman Grace – Have you thought about a price range so far?

Mr. Murphy – The cost will be \$200k-\$300k depending on lot size.

Mayor Johnson – Reminded council of the NPP scheduled for October 23, 2018 from 6-8pm.

**MOTION TO APPROVE** – Resolution declaring State of Emergency at City Hall with the ability to rehab and make necessary repairs due to fire and smoke damage.

Mayor Johnson – On October 11, 2018 we experienced an electrical fire. We are displaced at the moment and are working with insurance adjusters for city and vendor. We have a cleaning crew in place. We are waiting to see who the responsible party will be and find out which areas will be need to be reconstructed. We have experienced great duress from customers. Mr. Snowten has been given permission to refurbish and rebuild the inner parts of City hall. Mr. Canova is in constant contact with the vendors. We want to start the process of refurbishing so that we can get back to normal operations.

On a Motion by Councilwoman Alexander and a Second by Councilman Hsaten request for resolution of support was approved.

Councilman Hasten – A lot of people have been asking if the city can get a temporary place to pay bills?

Mayor Johnson – Our original plan was to move to the Community Center. We found out that the Community Center wasn't equipped to run a server. We went back to outfitting council chambers to put temporary offices in. We found out yesterday and the cleaning service believes that City Hall will be able to re-open on Monday. If not, then we will work out of council chambers.

Councilman York – Bills are due on the 20<sup>th</sup>. Will an extension be given?

Mayor Johnson – Yes but this is not an open ended ticket. Customers are already one month behind but we do recognize the situation. Anyone who negatively impacted with City Hall being out of business for last 2 weeks will have their late fees waved.

**MOTION TO APPROVE** – Discuss and take appropriate action authorizing Mayor Lionel Johnson, Jr. on the behalf of the City of St. Gabriel, to negotiate and enter into a contract to purchase a Parcel of Land Located at 2285 Bayou Paul Lane

Mayor Johnson – The property owner came to the city. She wants us to have the property. I've had previous discussions to get funds to refurbish the section near Bartel's. I'm looking at trying to make this area a historic area near Roberto's. We have the St. Gabriel Landing in the making. We want to be able to have that attraction as we proceed with all of the things we are trying to do on the levy and behind the levy.

Councilman York – Is there any way we can take the building on the Bayou and put it up front?

Mayor Johnson - I would keep it where it is but we can discuss it.

On a unanimous motion by all council members, motion was approved.

**MOTION TO APPROVE** – Resolution establishing trick or treat hours for the City of St. Gabriel for 6:00pm to 8:00 pm for Wednesday, October 31, 2018.

On a unanimous motion by all council members, motion was approved.

**PRESENTATION** – Dr. William Blair, Demographer to present on redistricting which is the process of drawing boundaries for electoral and political districts in the U.S.

Dr. Blair – Redistricting is a lot like zoning and variances. If you are interested in changing to 5 single member district then all you need to do is pass an ordinance. This cannot be done within one year prior to an election. After this point, you can adopt an ordinance. The ordinance can consist of 5 single members, 3 single member and 2 at large or 4 single member and 1 at large. You cannot go under 5 or under 9. Once you decide to change it cannot be changed for two years. It can only be changed by 2/3 vote of city council which equates to a 4 to 1 vote. If you choose to redistrict then after the 2020 census is posted, then you have a six month window to examine your current districts to determine whether there is equal representation in each district. If there isn't equal representation in each district, then an ordinance will need to be adopted to correct this. You must maintain population equally in each single member district. You maintain a 10% deviation in each district. For example, if St. Gabriel has 500 people with 100 people in each single member district that means when you draw the districts they must be between 95 and 105 to comply with



state and federal law. When draw districts you may use various redistricting criteria such as contiguity where all boundaries have to touch, compactness, communities of interest and core districts (this doesn't apply in this case because you don't currently have districts). Prior to the 2020 redistricting cycle every district in Louisiana has been under Section 5 of The Voting Rights Act which means that any electoral change that occurs in any jurisdiction state of Louisiana must be sent to the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. for review and pre-clearance. As of today this no longer a requirement however, we still advise that you proceed as if we are still under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act because this doesn't change the fact that every district in this country is under section 2 of the Voting Rights Act and this is the measure of criteria by which you are judged when you draw your districts. This means that just because you don't have to submit to the Department of Justice you are not exempt from a possible lawsuit once you pass an ordinance. You current population is 6,677. The latest population estimate from 2017 is 7,304. This tells me that St. Gabriel is growing. Once you go to single member districts then be aware that you will have to revisit this roughly every 10 years at this rate of growth.

Councilman Grace – Tell me little about the 5 districts.

Dr. Blair – The number of districts determines how many people will need to be in them.

Councilman Grace – Is there a certain number you have to have to increase number the districts?

Dr. Blair – If you want to increase the number of council members you can do so but it cannot be under 5 or over 9.

Mayor Johnson – Do you know whether those who are temporarily displaced from St. Gabriel will be counted as St. Gabriel residents?

Dr. Blair – They will counted based on where they are on census day for 2020.

Councilman Grace – Because of the one year rule, will the board have to wait until after the upcoming election?

Dr. Blair – Yes. This is correct.

Mayor Johnson- I will meet with Dr. Blair at a later date to further discuss and will inform you on when this will be so that you may be a part of the meeting.

## **MAYOR REPORT**

-Motion to approve pay app for KTB Properties for \$24,961.86

On a unanimous motion by all council members, motion was approved.

Mayor Johnson briefly discussed the following:

-Drainage Reimbursements Breakdown

-Coastal Driving –upcoming class

-Breast Cancer Awareness Walk/Run

-Ghostly Get-Together

-Veterans Day Program

-NLC Summit