

Edenton Town Council Minutes
Special Meeting
November 27, 2023

The Edenton Town Council met in special session on Monday, November 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The following members were present: Mayor Jimmy Stallings, Councilman Elton Bond, Councilman Aaron Coston, Councilman Samuel Dixon, Councilman Craig Miller and Councilman Hackney High. Councilman Roger Coleman was present via Zoom.

Mayor Jimmy Stallings called the meeting to order.

Public Hearing-Broad Street Road Diet-Stripping Proposal

Councilman Miller made a motion to open the public hearing. Councilman Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that a public hearing would be held to discuss the proposal from NCDOT to consider the road diet for the upcoming paving of Broad Street. This proposal would reduce South Broad Street from four (4) lanes to two (2) lanes with one (1) center turn lane and a bike lane on each side, from Virginia Road to Church Street. This proposal is to accommodate bike traffic and to help calm speeding vehicle traffic on the Broad Street corridor. This project would be completed during the repaving of Broad Street by NCDOT. This proposal is also part of the NCDOT bike & pedestrian plan.

The following individuals spoke during the public hearing:

Amelle O'Leary, resident of N. Broad Street, stated that Broad Street is a busy street with numerous accidents she has witnessed. She did not think reducing the number of lanes and adding a bike lane would be a good idea.

Allen Swanner, resident of Terry Avenue, stated that bicycles are not needed to travel on Broad Street and felt there were other streets where they can travel and be safer. He felt there would be more accidents with two lanes and a turn lane.

Bob Kirby, owner of property on Broad Street and resident of White's Landing Road, stated that he looked for a traffic impact study but could not locate. He expressed concern about public safety vehicles being able to travel on Broad with the proposed changes. He also had concerns about his residents being able to access the rental property on North Broad Street. He encouraged the town to have a traffic impact study conducted.

Vonna O'Neill, resident of North Broad Street, stated that she found a study from 2007 that outlined bike traffic. She spoke about the number of businesses and homes that are located on Broad Street and the current speed limit. She thought that having turn lanes installed would help calm traffic and lessen accidents.

David Herlong, resident of North Broad Street, stated that there is a lot of speeding traffic and noise on Broad Street. He stated that more pedestrian crossings are needed on Broad Street in busy areas. He encouraged enforcement by the Police Department.

Gary Swanner, resident of Kimberly Drive, stated that he did not agree with changing the street to two lanes and this would create more problems. He encouraged the Town to explore widening the sidewalks to accommodate the bikers.

John Grant, resident of King Street, asked where would this begin and end. He expressed concerns about Church Street and trucks trying to turn onto Broad Street. He encouraged the Town to have public safety submit their opinions of the proposed changes before the next public hearing.

John Mitchener, resident of West Queen Street, expressed concern about the current traffic that comes from Park Avenue on to Broad Street.

Patti Mordecai, resident of North Broad Street, spoke about the challenges for pedestrians to cross Broad Street. He stated that there is a need to slow traffic to bring a more neighborhood feel to Broad Street.

Ollin Sykes, resident of Eden Street, read a Facebook post to the Town Council.

Jimmy Alligood, resident of Hewes Street, spoke about a study that was conducted regarding truck traffic. He asked what the cost is for the proposed changes.

Louise Altman, resident of North Broad Street, spoke in favor of the proposed changes to Broad Street and that traffic needed to be slowed down and the installation of a turn lane and two traffic lanes would help with these issues.

Lameka LaByrd, stated that her concerns were for delivery drivers and their safety. She expressed concerns for residents that are entering or exiting their driveways.

Julia Townsend, resident of Badham Road, stated that crosswalks are needed more than a bike lane.

Ches Chesson, resident of East King Street, stated that the three top items that individuals are looking for when searching for residential housing are greenspace, trail systems and main street shopping. He also stated that from an economic development point of view that to see residential and industrial growth in Edenton walkability and biking need to be addressed.

Public Hearing-Granville Street & West Albemarle/Dr. MLK Jr. Avenue-Four Way Intersection Stop

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that a public hearing would be held to discuss the proposal from NCDOT to consider making the intersection of Granville Street and W. Albemarle/Dr. MLK Jr. Ave. a four way stop. Due to the increasing speeding concerns and the number of collisions at this intersection, this new proposal would add stop signs to Granville Street both northbound and southbound. All vehicles would now be required to stop at this intersection, with the flashing lights updated to red for all four travel directions.

The following individuals spoke during the public hearing:

Allen Swanner, resident of Terry Avenue, stated that his opinion was that this would hinder people trying to get through town. He stated that the installation of stop signs would be a waste of time and money.

Karen Mastin, resident of Granville Street, stated that she has seen several accidents that have happened at the intersection and that she would favor a traffic light be installed instead of stop signs.

John Mitchener, resident of West Queen Street, stated that an effective stop sign is needed at this intersection.

Public Hearing-Terry Avenue and Robin Lane-Four-Way intersection Stop

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that a public hearing would be held to discuss the proposal from the Public Works Department to consider making the intersection of Terry Avenue and Robin Lane a four way stop. Due to the increasing speeding concerns and the safety of children in the area of this intersection (Oak Hill neighborhood), this proposal would add two new stop signs to the intersection, bringing the total to four. All vehicles would now be required to stop at this intersection.

The following individuals spoke during the public hearing:

Allen Swanner, resident of Terry Avenue, stated that he would rather have the stops signs instead of the speed bumps that were installed.

Gary Swanner, resident of Kimberly Drive, stated that if there are individuals that are having issues they should be addressed individually and not penalize all the residents of the neighborhood.

Dympa Madigan, resident of Robin Lane, stated that the speed bumps have not helped the speeding, she still sees drivers speeding up and down Terry Avenue. She did not think that stop signs will help the situation.

Public Hearing-Amendment of the Joint Use Pole Agreement-Roanoke Connect

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that a public hearing would be held to discuss the proposal from Roanoke Connect to amend the joint use pole agreement pricing from \$7.67 per pole per year to \$0. The amendment is in response to the Town's needs for internet services at certain town-owned properties, camera locations, and public Wi-Fi within the parks/public space. This proposal would allow the Town to utilize these services without the annual subscription expense for the services and/or any of the up-front cost for the installation of associated equipment.

There were no comments from the public.

Councilman Miller made a motion to close the public hearings. Councilman Bond seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Presentation-Utility Billing Fees Overview

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that the Town Council recently revisited the Customer Service Policy during the annual budget review process for the FY23/24 budget. Since this review, the Town

Council discussed the utility fee(s) (on 7/24/2023 & 9/12/2023) and requested the staff present the history and the details for the fee structure for delinquent customers. Currently, the Town of Edenton has a total of three total fee(s): (1) a 5% late penalty, (2) a \$25 non-payment fee, and (3) a \$75 disconnect/reconnect fee. The Town Manager provided an overview presentation of the fee structure and the history of customer service policy relating to the penalties/fees. The goal was to provide the Council with a full understanding of the charges and to allow them to review any potential changes for staff to consider for the upcoming budget (FY24/25).

Councilman Coston questioned the \$25.00 non-payment fee and that this was highlighted as a new fee in a handout that was placed in the utility bills several months back that highlighted fee changes to customers.

Corey Gooden, Town Manager stated that he would go back and find this item and report back to Town Council.

There being no further items of business for the special meeting, the meeting was adjourned.