

PUBLIC NOTICE

Livingston Parish Master Plan Review Committee
20355 Government Boulevard, Livingston, Louisiana, 70754
Minutes for January 14, 2025 6 pm

Pursuant to notice duly posted in the public lobby of the Livingston Parish Governmental Building, the Livingston Parish Master Plan Review Committee met on January 14, 2025 at the hour of six o'clock (6:00) p.m. in the Parish Council Chambers, located in the Livingston Parish Governmental Building, 20355 Governmental Boulevard, Livingston, Louisiana with the following members present:

Zabrina Pitre
Gerald Burns
Brian Clemmons
Steven Smith
Ralph Burgess
Zach Thomas
Merrill Hess

Absent: Julie Dyason-Norris, Coley Johnson, Steve Larkey

1. Call to order - Clemmons
2. Prayer
3. Pledge of allegiance
4. Roll call - Pitre
5. Election of 2025 officers:
 - a. Council chair - **Ralph Burgess** Nominated by Clemmons, second by Pitre
(All in favor: Zabrina Pitre, Gerald Burns, Brian Clemmons, Steven Smith, Ralph Burgess, Zach Thomas, Merrill Hess)
 - b. Council vice chair - **Zabrina Pitre** Nominated by Clemmons, second by Burns
(All in favor: Zabrina Pitre, Gerald Burns, Brian Clemmons, Steven Smith, Ralph Burgess, Zach Thomas, Merrill Hess)
6. Approval of December minutes -(Motion: Smith, second by Hess)
(All in favor: Zabrina Pitre, Brian Clemmons, Steven Smith, Ralph Burgess, Zach Thomas, Merrill Hess; Abstain: Gerald Burns)
7. Presentations:
 - a. How does zoning and land use affect assessments? - J. Taylor
 - I. How does zoning affect property values?
 1. "Everything that we do is based off of a sale price. [...] It stays the same until we get any kind of a sale."
 2. "If it's commercial the land stays at 10% All land is assessed at 10%. The building for a commercial establishment is at 15% assessment whereas residential is at 10%."
 3. "...example, if you have a piece of property that comes in and we zone it as commercial and all of a sudden its an ABC

company, whatever you want it to be and somebody comes in and they want to purchase a piece of property and they sell it for more [...] whatever that price that then establishes what certain areas within a four-year period [...] be careful because sometimes when you zone it, it will decrease of value if somebody don't feel like it's going to be worth anything anymore. Example, if you have a tire burning plant that comes in. They're commercial [...] the land around it may depreciate [...]."

4. "It really has to do with the sales that happen with that piece of property after you zone it."
5. "The residential will sell for something different (than the tangent commercial land) and it all depends on what you class it as but it still does not matter until you get a sale in that area. We don't just take one sale. [...] you take a multitude of sales."
6. "If they're selling everything in that subdivision for \$20,000, it really doesn't matter how big it is because if the 1 acre lot is selling for \$20,000 and the $\frac{3}{4}$ acre lot is selling for \$20,000 then the land in that subdivision is \$20,000." If the acre lot decides to sell their land at \$25,000. Then it resets, but it is only done every 4 years.
7. "Everything is based off of as is January 1st."
8. If ya'll ever need... I can bring some things, a year or so, in to show you how things have changed.

7. Old Business:

- a. Amendment to Bylaws - Pitre
 - i. These bylaws will be reviewed once more by Clemmons and Pitre for verbage and added to the next Master Plan Review Committee Meeting.

8. Ongoing Business:

- a. Flood/FEMA Discussion - Gary O'Neal
 - i. Burgess: Currently the situation with flood zone A's is that the permit office reaches out to the Core of Engineers for a BFE designation. Zone A is an approximate Zone, an estimated area. There's a general coverage. The core uses a grid model with the base flood elevation. In the past two years, FEMA has begun using base level engineering. BLE takes collected information from the state along with the model. You can go online and render a more accurate BFE than the core. This will help auditing

from FEMA, along with updating our FEMA flood map. This is something we should look at to include in our Master Plan.

- ii. “BLE data is designed to cover gaps where they don’t have mapped areas or they don’t have a flood study or something that provides a way for a community to understand what its flood risk is. BLE data boils down to high level, very accurate level data.”
 - iii. “Region 6, Texas, was done as a pilot project. It is publicly available for free.”
 - iv. “As it relates to Livingston Parish, we actually have more accurate data than [...] BLE. [...] by virtue of the Louisiana Watershed initiative, which has conducted hook 8 watershed models.”
 - v. We are also in the midst of conducting a drainage master plan. Jack Young is the project manager. He and his firm worked for FEMA Region 6.
 - vi. “The goal of the administration is to hopefully bring people out of the flood zone. [If you are able to get out of the flood zone] and you go get flood insurance or a quote [...] the cost of the flood insurance will be dramatically reduced.”
 - vii. Liaison between Drainage Master Plan and Comprehensive Master Plan
- b. WSP’s progress with Master Plan - Pitre
- i. GIS / Interactive Link - public can comment on suggested zones
 - ii. Public Meetings -
 - 1. January 14 (5:30-7:30) Springfield High School
 - 2. January 15 (5:30-7:30) Levi Milton Elementary
 - iii. Changes/Requests for Suggested Zones
 - 1. Current - Electronic, verbal, and/or written requests
 - 2. Friday, January 17 - Written requests only
 - 3. Friday, February 7th - Any requests should be submitted for review
 - iv. Other Dates
 - 1. Thursday, January 9th - recommended ordinance amendments (Parish Council Meeting)
 - 2. Thursday, February 27th - Consider & Vote on Proposed Change (Parish Council Meeting)

- v. Burns: A majority of the community is unaware of the zoning changes that are going on.
- vi. Thomas: Let's utilize our councilman to push this information out to the community.
- vii. Smith: Can we recommend to the council to post these meetings on the Livingston Parish website or the Parish President page?
- viii. Burgess: I think what Gerald is getting at is the general public does not know what's going on, regarding the zoning.
- ix. Burns: My concern is moving extremely fast. I would like to have them stretch it out a little farther.
- x. Burgess: The plans are moving way too fast.
- xi. Clemmons: We gave WSP a set of parameters, a timeline. When you take into account the state mandated timelines for notifications, there was barely enough time for the public meetings and council meetings. Once we signed the contract we are now bound by it. We're not going to slow this thing down unless we resend that contract. We're dealing with a WSP contract that has a hard coded timeline. After you have a public meeting, then you have to present it. It has to be published for 10 days before you can present it. If we put something off by 1 day, it puts everything off and it will put WSP into default. All we can do as a committee is recommend to Planning & Zoning to extend the time.
- xii. Burgess: My suggestion is to come up with a good resolution to them to say for the final zoning that's due around June, let's see about extending for that zoning part another month or two to give some more input and then that'll give us time to run it through the zoning, get it to the council, and let them deal with the contract because they can extend the contracts as an administration with the approval from WSP.
- xiii. Clemmons: I believe that is what they did during the last council meeting when they extended the 3 month moratorium.
- xiv. Burns: Why can't we make that motion tonight? Ask for a recommendation to extend the contract.

- xv. Clemmons: I see no problem with it. We're not bound by the revised statutes.
- xvi. Burns: I make that motion right now to ask Planning & Zoning and the parish president to extend the contract so we can have more public hearings for one per council district at minimum.
- xvii. Burgess: We have a motion. Do I have anyone to second it?
- xviii. Hess: Are we writing a separate component of the contract ?
- xix. Burgess: First, let's see if we have a second. Do we have a second for the contract? No second, it fails.
- xx. Hess: Do we need to modify the contract with additional cost or just amend those clauses?
- xxi. Burgess: We don't know that. That is something approved by the council and move forward.
- xxii. Hess: I make the motion that we extend or modify or amend the contract to extend the period? [...] We recommend that the contract be modified or amended in order to give the public more time to give input into these zoning.
- xxiii. Burns: I second that.
- xxiv. Pitre: I would like to reiterate that our original issue was outreach to the community. How do we make sure our society is aware of this zoning? We need to focus on other ways or outlets to spread this information to the community. Although non-written comments are due by January 17th, they are still taking suggestions prior to Feb 7th.
- xxv. Clemmons: I'd like to point out that we have 3 members of the Task Force sitting on this panel. If the task force needs to be told that we need more public input, our 3 members are more than capable of directing that to the source or WSP.
- xxvi. Hess: Word of Mouth is the most powerful thing. We need to find enough people to communicate in their circle of influence.
- xxvii. Burgess: Sending a recommendation to Planning and Zoning to amend the contract for WSP to allow more time for public input. Hess made the motion; Second by Burns.

- xxviii. Vote (Motion passed)
 - 1. In Favor: Hess, Smith, Burgess, Burns
 - 2. Apose: Clemmons, Thomas, Pitre
- xxix. Clemmons: I would like to make a point that this was discussed at a Planning & Zoning meeting. It did not pass.

9. New Business:

- a. Drainage Master Plan Update
(Jack Young - Half Water Resources)
 - i. Infrastructure firm - based out of Dallas Texas (office in Baton Rouge and along Gulf Coast)
 - ii. Cooperating Technical Partnership Program contract with DOTD
 - iii. Partners (GC and Southern Shores Engineering)
 - iv. Funded through state and federal funds
 - v. Working with parish over last 6 months to prepare the application and submit it to OCD for approval
 - vi. Approval was received around a month ago - 4.6 million for the Drainage Master Plan
 - vii. "Now, we are going into contract to actually perform that master plan with the parish and really getting working on this scope in the next couple of weeks. However, the parish was very anxious to get going. Flooding is such a big concern that through a separate contract wanted to get started on a few of these items ahead of time. A lot of them were around the ordinance that we talked about in preparation for that moratorium lifting and the FEMA maps. For the last three months, we've been working on a variety of things with the parish."
 - viii. Three major intents:
 - 1. Mitigating - reduce flood risk within the parish
 - 2. Responsible development
 - 3. Reduce burden for homeowners
 - ix. Accomplishing these intents by identifying
 - 1. Engineering needed to assess risk (analyzing models and various sources to understand the true risk within the parish)
 - 2. What projects can we do where to have the biggest impact in reducing risks

3. How do we advance those projects far enough where they can be funded through grants or the parish themselves until the projects are completed

10. Adjourn - Motion to Adjourn by Smith, Second by Thomas