

TOWN OF GREENSBORO
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
April 5, 2018

In Attendance: Mayor Noon, Commissioners DeSimone, Williamson, Reichart and Mackey

Jeannette Delude, Nicole Armour, Dave Kibler, Chief Petyo,

Public: Gary Wyatt, Michael Washington

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

Minutes from the March Town Council Meetings were reviewed. Mr. Reichart motioned to approve the March Council Meeting and Workshop minutes. Mr. Williamson seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

Ms. Delude introduced and gave a background on the new Town Clerk, Nicole Armour, and Mayor Noon swore her in.

GVFC- Rick Faust

Mr. Faust went over the GVFC report.

The Tractor Pull is scheduled for May 5, 2018.

Parks Board-Comm. Williamson

Fishing Derby May 5, 2018-volunteers needed

There will be a Grand Prize this year, but there are still discussions of what it will be.

Riverfest is scheduled for September 8, 2018; however, the committee is just in the beginning stages of planning.

Public Works- Dave Kibler

The Tree Planting will be April 14th with everyone meeting at Town Hall at 8:30 am.

Goldsboro wells are going in and the next step will be grinder pumps going in.

The guys will be starting grass mowing next week and the cleaning up of the riverbank in preparation of the Fishing Derby.


Police Department- Chief Petyo

For the month of March complaints increased by 20, but traffic arrests were down.

There were 2 Criminal Arrests.

Foot patrols in town are up and will continue to increase as the weather improves.

There was a homicide in town that called for assistance from MSTAT and MSP. All officers were called in to assist the other agencies.



Mr. Gary Wyatt stated that he felt we needed to do something to attract businesses and contractors to the town. He felt that possibly restricting fees, or waiving hook ups fees for connecting the water and sewer would help. Mr. Kibler explained that if we were to do that we would lose the USDA grant and then the residents of the town would be covering those expenses. Mayor Noon asked Mr. Wyatt to come up with some ideas and bring them back to council.

Mayor Noon went over upcoming events around town and showed a plaque for the tree planting.

Comm. Williamson made a motion of exc. session at 8:00 pm for administrative business unrelated to the public; Comm. DeSimone seconded the motion. All in favor; motion passed

Mayor Noon, Comm. Mackey, Reichart, DeSimone and Williamson were in attendance.

Creating guidelines for town boards and giving more direction to the boards was discussed.

The further advancement of the North County Sewer System was also discussed. The Council unanimously agreed not to extend the sewer any further north at this time.

Meeting adjourned 8:33 pm from exc. session.

Respectfully Prepared by
Nicole Armour



Mr. Washington of Greensboro Speech to Town Council April 5th, 2018
Regarding Greensboro Hotel Being Made Into "Transitional Housing"

Good evening Mayor Noon, Town Commissioners and Staff.

Thank you for your time to allow me to voice my opinion on some news recently shared with Greensboro residents like myself.

I will admit that I am a relatively new resident to Greensboro. I became fond of the town and the area in 2016 because it was quiet and seemed like a great place to establish myself and begin a family as I have seen so many of my neighbors do. I decided to purchase my first house here despite the one hour commute to my career on the Western Shore. I have been grateful for the hospitality shown by my neighbors and the community which has reinforced my decision to establish myself here.

I generally remain quiet when it comes to the community and any potential issues because I was raised to not sweat the small stuff and to pick your battles. Fortunately I can say that up until last week, I had no issues to raise. The only news I would pursue about my town was when something caught my eye in the news, on social media, or in the flyer sent out in my water bill. Needless to say, the "Riverside Rentals" flyer that was sent out was incredibly misleading and to be honest I glanced right over it. There was no mention of it being "transitional housing" and the only evidence of the program being about recovery was the contact email at the bottom left. It was filed along with prior flyers and was not considered until a friend of mine who was not a resident brought to my attention that there was a "halfway house" being built in Greensboro. I didn't immediately believe them, but in today's instant information age, they provided me with the WBOC article that was published on March 27th titled, "Old Greensboro Hotel Opening as Transitional Home, Concerning some."

Of course, I was one of those concerned. I was raised in Calvert County until I was 18 and was never exposed to drugs or addiction. When I moved to the Eastern Shore (Queen Anne's County) in 2005 the only time I was concerned about drugs or related behavior was when I drove to Towson University due to the area being known for nefarious activity. Until I

graduated from Towson, the Eastern Shore served as a reprieve from not only the traffic of the Towson/Baltimore area, but also from the potential for being exposed to drug-related activity or related crime. Thankfully drugs or addiction have never been a part of my or my family's life.

That is, until I chose Greensboro as my home.

I always saw Greensboro as the tight-knit family town that would in no way accept such a business before (I'll explain my use of the term business in a minute). When I read the article, and thanks again to the information age that we live in, I had to learn more.

Thoughts of security of Greensboro residents, concerns about the kids that I see freely walking up and down the sidewalks of town right by this "transitional housing" and the related crime were just the beginning. Remember that I just moved here in 2016- I thought to myself "should I pick up and leave before I can't due to the tarnished town image and resultant drop in housing market?" As I said I commute for an hour each way every day of the week and I was naturally concerned for property security if an influx of crime were to result from the Town of Greensboro volunteering this community to absorb the impact of "transitional housing".

Naturally, questions about town image came to mind. How would this BUSINESS have any positive effect on the Town of Greensboro or its image? Other than additional tax revenue, I could not immediately think of any.

In another article titled, "Riverside Inn Converted to "Sober Housing", it mentions Dr. Gary Sprouse "assuring those who are fearful that the residents of the building will be recovered addicts who have been carefully screened." Samantha Parker, project manager for this new business said, "Our number one concern is to offer safe and sober housing for recovered addicts trying to get back on their feet." How exactly? One would think that to "get back on their feet" someone would need to have gainful employment. According to AreaVibes, 1 in 10 Greensboro residents are unemployed. Greensboro does not have jobs to offer. The article goes on to say that the residents must have completed only a 30 day recovery

program, which by MANY readily available studies is not sufficient in preventing relapse. When, NOT IF relapse occurs, the Town of Greensboro administration has now volunteered its citizens to bear the brunt of another drug user and criminal. This is unacceptable.

In the article, Dr. Sprouse went on to say that no treatment will take place on site, though some residents might take medicine that helps them from rekindling their addictions. Again through more research I found that these medicines can have their own addictive qualities and should they fall into the wrong hands could cause members of our community to become addicted. Dr. Sprouse even said that in the event one of the residents were found to be using by the ONE "caretaker couple" that is responsible for 24/7 monitoring of the 30 resident building, they would be kicked out. Draw your own conclusions as to where they would end up: again addicted to opioids and wandering the streets of Greensboro.

But I still had this burning question in the back of my head about why Dr. Gary Sprouse would choose Greensboro as the home of his new "transitional housing" and the facts that came to light from this research were appalling. Some history into Dr. Gary Sprouse, the now owner of Riverside Rentals: Dr. Sprouse began practice in March of 1985 (approximately 33 years ago) as a Board Certified doctor of Internal Medicine. Unfortunately, in under 10 years of practice he was already being reprimanded for issues with his ethics. He was first investigated in February 1995 for pre-signing prescriptions in blank and playing fast and loose with medical standards of care and ethics practices. He was found guilty of violating Maryland law and was fined \$5,000 as a result. This was just a sign of things to come for Dr. Gary Sprouse. From 1996 to 2016 Dr. Sprouse has had a medically and legally documented history of violating the medical standards of care to include overprescribing opioids to his patients. According to legal documents even patients of his that displayed signs of addiction like running out of prescriptions early or having their prescriptions stolen 4 different times were not properly referred to pain management specialists. As a result, Dr. Gary Sprouse faced multiple reprimands and multiple license suspensions concerning patients that he treated from 1992 all the way through 2016. That is THIRTY FOUR YEARS of this "doctor" completely ignoring Maryland law and paying the price for it

legally. In fact, when one looks up his license on the Maryland Board of Physicians Practitioner Profile System one will find his License Status as "Probation" related to an order dated in 2016 of which he violated the terms of probation and furthered his probationary period.

Now, I am not here to rehash Gary Sprouse's history as a doctor. This information is to merely make aware the Town Council and the present citizens the type of person we are welcoming into our town to start a business housing recovering addicts not dissimilar from those he helped to create over his more than THREE DECADES of practice. Even Governor Hogan, who has declared a State of Emergency relating to the Opioid Crisis cites that the crisis "started with prescription opioids." We are welcoming a business owner into this community who was one of the doctors whose medical practice helped to create the opioid crisis through –I'm sorry- "pill pushing" and overprescribing some of the most addictive narcotics in the world and we are now allowing him to profit on the back end of his vicious cycle by housing recovering addicts? Does his blatant and documented disregard for state medical law concern this council? We already have a roadmap of his intentions with regards to state law – what makes this council think that he has any regards to Town law or ordinance? There is something very sick about giving someone a venue to profit off of people who suffer from the same dependency he created for over THIRTY years. And we, the Town of Greensboro, have done that.

Of course, this article was far more revealing and alarming than the WBOC article, and was far more information than was offered to Greensboro residents through any other means. What concerned me most was that in the WBOC Article Mrs. Delude said that, "everything that we've done with them has been in an open meeting, public meeting, town council meeting, planning and zoning meetings that everyone is, of course, welcome to." I will give kudos to Mrs. Korell for replying to my request for all of 2017's Town Council Meeting Minutes where this project was mentioned only one time in July of 2017. The Minutes read, "They have requested a use permit to have a group house in the Old Riverside Hotel. The Planning Commission has asked him for more information and no decisions were made at the meeting. He will be back at the next meeting to discuss further."

In Planning and Zoning Minutes from August 2017, "Mr. Shaffner stated he felt residents should have an opportunity to learn more about the proposed facility before permits are issued by the town." To which Ms. Delude explained that the Town must follow the law and cannot discriminate. Again in January of this year Mr. Shaffner raised a similar concern and it was explained that the Town has no standing to forbid the use of the old hotel for Dr. Sprouse's housing of qualified individuals with disabilities.

This concerns me as a citizen of Greensboro. This is an issue that should have been at the forefront of discussion at Town Council meetings and should have been brought to the attention of Greensboro citizens long before the project was approved. According to an article, "Mrs. Delude said that there are still some licenses to be approved, but that the town commissioners as well as the planning board have signed off on Riverside Rentals." The author of the article was provided a memo from the Planning and Zoning board that continually referred to the alleged residential facility as a "drug treatment center" despite the new owner's claims. Was this project approved by Planning and Zoning as a "Drug treatment center" or as "sober homes". The application of the Americans With Disability Act and the protection of the recovering addicts therein depends on that answer.

The difference between this just being a refurbished hotel designed for housing people is that this project has just created a magnet for addicts in and out of recovery and has placed the responsibility of the aftermath squarely on the shoulders of Greensboro and its residents.

So I stand here incredibly concerned. Concerned for the future of Greensboro, the future of my neighbors and their children. Concerned for my future and the family I was looking to build here in Greensboro. I am troubled that the Town of Greensboro Administration collectively has approved the use of a historic staple of Greensboro to be a "drug treatment center" loosely run by a "doctor" who has a serious problem with authority and feeding his patients with addictive opioids. We elect the officials of this Town to best represent the citizens in matters concerning our Town and community and it is this Greensboro citizen's opinion that you have failed us. But as I was able to muster this information by researching over the

past few days I will continue my research and find the real motivation behind who has what to gain from this project that will ultimately cripple Greensboro, a town that already requires the regular assistance of the drug task force. We have a grand total of four officers to control not only the influx of drug-related crime that is creeping into news articles lately but now to also handle addicts coming from the Riverside Drug Treatment Center. God Bless them and their efforts.

Again I thank you for your time and I will see everyone at the Community Night in front of Riverside Rentals on April 17th