

## The Commissioner's Corner

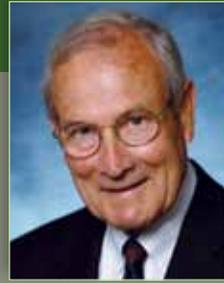
### Citizens, church reach compromise on expansion

The democratic process was alive and well in Forest Hills during the events culminating in the approval by the Forest Hills Board of Commissioners on July 16 for the expansion of the Hillsboro Church of Christ.

The Church asserted their rights to build on their property. The neighbors in the immediate vicinity of the Church asserted their rights to make sure that the suburban character of their neighborhood was maintained. Through a petition distributed by the immediate neighbors, 850 Forest Hills citizens expressed their concerns on the impact

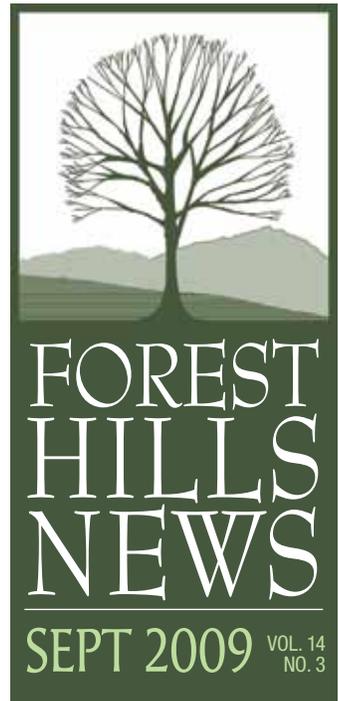
the development might have on the character of the City of Forest Hills.

Through meetings and discussions marked by their civility, compromise solutions were found that paved the way for the expansion to be approved. The Hillsboro Church of Christ will not construct a building as large as they originally envisioned, and they have agreed to specific conditions for



Bill Coke  
Mayor

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A civil crowd shared their support and concerns on the church project at a public meeting.

### Church's steady growth spurred need for expanded facility

Hillsboro Church of Christ recognized its need for a larger facility several years ago, as the congregation of more than 850 has seen steady growth in recent years.

Currently, around 650 adults and children attend worship services on Sunday morning, and attendance at Bible study classes fills the church to capacity. "We currently have Bible classes meeting in every nook and available space," said Stan Lowery, church life minister for the congregation.

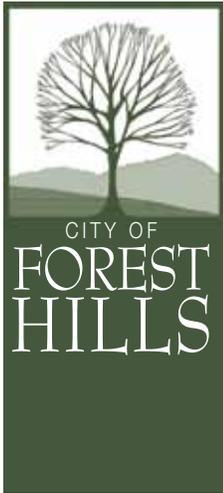
In addition to church services and fellowship events, Hillsboro opens its doors to area residents through community ministries, counseling, holiday events for Halloween and Easter, and participation with ministries such as Room in the Inn, Meals on Wheels, and Inner City children's classes. In recent years, the church has also served as a staging ground for community storm relief efforts, and several times a month the facility is used for community meetings, weddings, parking, seminars, and social events. "The new facility and upgrades will allow the church to be available consistently to the community for these needs," Lowery said.



Sid Smith of Ragan-Smith, the architects for the expansion, discusses the project at the public meeting.

The current facility, which has been in use since 1973, was built with small classrooms and limited flexible spaces and of the community around it," Lowery said. "Based on our current uses, we need additional space and more flexible space for our ministries, Sunday School classes, and other activities."

The church anticipates that the final cost of the expansion will be around \$7.5 million.



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NASHVILLE, TN 37215  
615/383-8447  
CityofForestHills.com

**City Manager**

Al Deck w 383-8447

**Board of Commissioners**

William G. Coke, Mayor H 665-1992  
John Lovell, Vice Mayor H 371-1716  
w 292-9925  
Tim Douglas H 221-4323  
w 385-7000

**City Attorney**

Matthew Foster w 256-0500

**City Engineer**

Brad Bivens w 383-8420

**Planning Commission**

E. Warner Bass, Chair w 742-6210  
Winston Evans, Vice Chair w 259-4685  
James C. Gardner III H 665-0936  
Em Ghianni H 373-1359  
Carroll Kimball 665-8998  
Sandy Moore H 373-0239  
w 850-2723  
George David Waller III H 373-2360  
The Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioner  
also sit on this commission.

**Board of Zoning Appeals**

Janie Rowland, Chair H 665-0642  
Lanson J. Hyde III H 370-5896  
w 550-2600  
Jim Littlejohn H 371-0008  
w 385-4144

Emergency and  
Information Line  
**298-5389**

# City codifies ordinances

Recently, the City has worked toward a codification of the City’s Charter and ordinances. To codify is to arrange and systematize material, and a codification of ordinances is a collection and organization of the City’s Charter and all ordinances created by the Board of Commissioners.

The City of Forest Hills was incorporated in 1957, and the Board of Commissioners has continually created legislation (ordinances) since that time. The legislation affects zoning, development, and the general operations of the City.

Ordinances were created one at a time and addressed various issues, and each was an independent document. Until now, the Charter and Ordinances had never been combined. In order to come to a full understanding of the entire legislative history, a reader would have to accumulate and read each individual ordinance, in addition to the Charter.

Why codify? The City wants to maintain its laws in a comprehensive, up-to-date form and in a location that the average citizen can access. Consolidation of the 52-year history into a single document provides a more efficient, accurate way to search for and provide information.

The City staff gathered and researched the minutes, ordinances, and applicable state law. Then, the files were reviewed and verified, and the City submitted them to the Univer-



**ON DECK**  
with Al Deck  
City Manager

sity of Tennessee’s municipal legal consultants, who organized, indexed, and published a draft. This draft was returned to the City of Forest Hills for review and corrections.

The reviewed and corrected draft was submitted to the Board of Commissioners for consideration, and they approved it on first reading. It was then returned to the university for corrections. When it is returned to the City, the Board of Commissioners will approve and adopt the Municipal Code on second and final reading.

Each year the city will submit all newly created ordinances to the university, and the Code will be updated to reflect these changes. In order to make the Code readily available, it will be posted on the City’s website, and a hard copy placed on reserve at the local branch of the Nashville Davidson County Metropolitan Library.

**Register for email messages**

If you are not registered to receive informational messages from the website, please register NOW. Visit cityofforesthills.com and, at the bottom-left corner of the page, enter your email address in the block where it says, “Receive City e-News – Join Email List.”

# Officials study extending bikeway to Radnor

The City of Forest Hills recently requested a traffic analysis study by Metro Nashville as the City makes plans to extend the bikeway to Granny White Pike.

Pending the results of the traffic study, City officials were considering the option of cooperating with the City of Oak Hill to have the bikeway extend across Granny White Pike and into Radnor Lake State Natural Area, which lies within the City of Oak Hill. However, Metro Department of Public Works determined that pedestrian and traffic volume at the intersection did not warrant installing an a four-way stop, blinking light, or traffic control signal, Mayor William Coke said.

Instead, a crossroad sign with no advisory speed will be installed on Granny White Pike in advance of the Otter Creek Road intersection, and pedestrian advance warning signs will be posted on Granny White Pike on both approaches to the intersection.

“The bikeway extension is now on the front burner,” Vice Mayor John Lovell said. City Engineer Brad Bivens is finalizing plans using existing right-of-ways.

The bikeway currently runs from Percy Priest School to Robert E. Lee Drive.



# Citizens, church reach compromise *Continued from page 1*

landscaping, lighting, noise control, and traffic control in an effort to satisfy the concerns of the immediate neighbors and of the Board of Commissioners.

Excerpts from the Staff Report stating the conditions to be met before the construction can begin are reprinted below.

## May 2006

The approval process for the expansion began on May 1, 2006, when representatives of the Hillsboro Church of Christ met with Forest Hills City officials to determine every step that they must take to satisfy Forest Hills city codes, specifically as they related to the allowable building footprint. On July 21, 2006, church representatives met with the Board of Zoning Appeals to find out if the other buildings on the property—the Tyne House, the Log House, and the Bus Garage—counted against the footprint.

On October 16, 2008, Church officials formally submitted the official site plan to the Planning Commission. After much discussion by the members of the

Planning Commission, the Church chose to defer the request for action.

Some neighbors were present at this meeting and asked church officials about the possibility that a school might be built and about traffic and building usage. The neighbors requested that the expansion not be allowed.

At this time, the Planning Commission advised the church to move ahead with combining the plats of the property that the church owned. On December 16, 2008, the Planning Commission approved on first reading the plat consolidation, on condition that the log house be torn down to give the allowable footprint.

On January 18, 2009, the Planning Commission approved the final plat consolidation. Neighbors were present and again asked that the expansion be denied.

## March 2009

On March 10, 2009, the Church hosted a public meeting at the Church. Fourteen households were represented and all three Forest Hills City Com-

missioners attended. Representing the Church were Joseph Binkley who addressed the building design; Sid Smith who addressed technical aspects; and Stan Lowery who addressed questions concerning the usage of the building. Based on the concerns of the neighbors, the Church subsequently revised the plans decreasing the overall size of the proposed expansion. The proposed basketball courts were made smaller and the proposed track was eliminated.

On May 8, 2009, the final site plan was presented by the Church for review by the City Manager, the City Attorney, the City Engineer, and the City Planner. With this plan as presented, the Church was in full legal compliance with all of the applicable Forest Hills zoning ordinances.

## June 2009

On June 16, this plan was presented to the Planning Commission for approval at a public hearing attended by over 150 Forest Hills residents. All residents were given an opportunity to ask questions

## Excerpts from staff report, recommendation

Hillsboro Church of Christ located at 5800 Hillsboro Road proposes to alter, change, and expand the existing church facility and use of the facility.

The proposed development plan is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed development plan meets all size, set back, and other Zoning Ordinance and tree ordinance requirements. The proposed development plan, modified as set out below, complies with the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

City staff recommends approval of the development plan allowing the construction of an addition to the existing structure, said addition comprising approximately 48,669 square feet, and said addition to be used for religious, fellowship, additional classroom and office space.

### Noise

In order to receive approval, an applicant must show that the proposed use will not have detrimental effects upon the adjoining lot or lots in the vicinity with regard to noise.

A study conducted by Bowlby & Associates, Inc. acknowledges that noise generated by the cooling system utilized at the Property generates noise mate-

rially in excess of the Zoning Ordinance restriction. The study recommends that a new solid noise barrier wall with a height of 14-15 feet be constructed to dampen the noise. Such a barrier would be 5-6 feet higher than the current lattice wall. The study also recommends that sound-absorbing panels be attached as necessary to minimize sound reverberation.

Staff Recommendations: The current noise ordinance violation must be cured prior to issuance of any building permits.

With regard to the proposed construction, an additional cooling system will be required. The Church has not yet selected the equipment it desires to install. City staff recommends that no building permit shall be issued unless and until the Church delivers to city staff for review plans and specifications identifying the type of system to be installed, and the noise mitigating technologies to be employed.

### Traffic

In order to receive approval, an applicant must show that the proposed use will not have detrimental effects upon the adjoining lot or lots in the vicinity with regard to the flow of traffic.

Staff Recommendations: City staff recommends that a southbound left turn lane on Hillsboro Pike shall be constructed. Final plans, specifications, and designs

must be approved by TDOT, the City Engineer, and to the extent necessary, Metro.

The city staff recommends that the West Access and the North Access shall each be widened to include one entering lane and two exiting lanes. The exiting lanes shall be designed to accommodate a left turn lane and a right turn lane with at least 50 feet of storage. Such widening will better facilitate the flow of traffic in and out of the Property. City staff recommends that the existing pull-in parking along the North Access be removed to provide improved traffic flow into and out of that access. The parking spaces that will be removed shall be relocated internally within the existing parking area.

### Landscaping

The development plan, as originally contemplated, complied in all respects with the Tree Ordinance. 490.2 tree units are required by that ordinance. The Property currently contains 552 tree units. The original development plan contemplated a net increase of 23.6 tree units for a total of 575.6 tree units. The Church and RSA have delivered a revised landscaping plan.

Staff Recommendations: City staff recommends that landscaping be constructed substantially in accordance with the Revised Landscaping Plan.



City staff acknowledges that in order to accommodate additional landscaping and widening of the North Access, the Church must revise its parking plan in such a way that includes encroachment on the applicable parking setback. City staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners allow the parking lot encroachment, but only as shown on the Revised Landscaping Plan.

**Lighting**

In order to receive approval, an applicant must show that the proposed use will not have detrimental effects upon the adjoining lot or lots in the vicinity with regard to lighting.

RSA has submitted a revised lighting plan that softens the impact on Tyne Boulevard and generally minimizes site lighting visible from off-site. A copy of the revised lighting plan is available for review in the city offices.

Staff Recommendations: City staff recommends that lighting shall be constructed substantially in accordance with the Revised Lighting Plan.

**Plans Review**

In order to ensure that the project is completed as approved by the Board of Commissioners, and to ensure that the project does not move forward unless all aspects of these recommended modifications are completed, the city should provide oversight.

and make comments during a meeting that lasted for three hours. The Planning Commission then voted to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the expansion plan be approved, subject to the City staff entering into negotiations with representatives of the church and of the neighbors to review the landscaping, lighting, and traffic plans. Their assignment was to try to work out a solution acceptable to all parties, prior to the next Board of Commissioners meeting.

Matt Foster, the Forest Hills City Attorney, along with City Manager Al Deck, arranged several meetings with the representatives of the church and the neighbors. Their hard work and honest discussions led to the Staff Report that formed the basis of the compromises that were a part of the recommendations presented to the Board of Commissioners at their July 16 meeting. It was from these recommendations that the Board of Commissioners approved the plan for the Hillsboro Church of Christ.

To fully understand the obligations that the Church must meet before any actual construction can begin, it is important to read and understand the

conditions set forth in the Staff Report.

It was obvious from the citizen participation at the June 16 and July 16 meetings that Forest Hills residents care very much how the City develops and how it continues to maintain its unique character. On page 3 is an article by Commissioner Tim Douglas detailing the progress made to date on implementing the Green Community Framework report that was presented to the residents at a public hearing in August 2008. From this report a new Comprehensive Plan for the City is being written.

Ordinances will be proposed to further protect the hills, forests, and other natural resources in the City as well as long range plans for protecting open space and greenways within the City. These proposals will be presented to the Forest Hills residents in public meetings.

Your Board of Commissioners will encourage all citizens to participate in these meetings just as they did in the meetings dealing with the expansion of the Hillsboro Church of Christ. Broad citizen participation will ensure that Forest Hills maintains its position as a premier place to live.

# JOIN THE Clean Team

**Help keep Forest Hills litter-free!**  
Mark your calendar for our monthly  
Clean Up Saturdays this fall.

Contact [sally.huston@gmail.com](mailto:sally.huston@gmail.com) for more information

**Saturday,  
September 26**

**Saturday,  
October 24**

**Saturday,  
November 21**

Percy Priest School  
1700 Otter Creek Road



## The Commissioner's Corner

### Green Community Framework is midway through implementation

In the winter of 2007, Forest Hills officials began discussing ways to preserve and enhance the open space and suburban estates character of our City. An outside consulting firm was hired, and the "Green Community Framework Report" was drafted and presented to the City in April 2008. It was adopted last August, and we are now midway through the implementation process. This article is meant to update our citizens.

In addition to the people listed at right, the City has partnered with the Land Trust for Tennessee, and Jeannie Nelson and Audra Ladd have been very helpful and involved in all aspects of the process.

The Comprehensive Plan is the governing document for the City, providing direction and serving, in a sense, as a generalized City master plan. The specifics—what is allowed in terms of development and all related requirements of development—are contained in the Zoning Ordinance.

Winston Evans is leading the effort to revise the City's Comprehensive Plan. Winston and his task force committee will likely present a revised Comprehensive Plan in October 2009. So, the Commissioners should be in a position to submit the proposed plan for public comment before Thanksgiving.

Clay Jackson's task force committee is reviewing the Ordinance and will recommend changes to allow large parcel owners flexibility in the event of future development. These recommendations will enable development and encourage preservation of open space. All residents benefit from the open space and green vistas that exist on large undeveloped property, and we would like for large parcel owners to have incentives to preserve these suburban estate characteristics of the City in the event of future development of large parcels.

Jim Littlejohn's task force committee will recommend changes to the Ordinance that will ensure size-appropriate homes for zoned property as well as adherence to setbacks, land coverage ratios and other protections.

My task force committee will recommend measures that will preserve and protect natural resources—hilltops, waterways, steep slopes, stone walls, cemeteries (there are 15 in Forest Hills), trees and landscaping, et cetera.

John Lovell's task force committee will make specific recommendations for additional bikeways and walkways, and recommend the City take specific measures to promote the greenway connections from Radnor Lake to the Warner Parks and beyond.

We anticipate all task force committee recommendations to be made in the next couple of months. Once all of these recommendations have been made, a revised Ordinance will be drafted and presented to the residents for their review. We will have plenty of time for public review and comments.

I should point out that each task force committee is composed of several residents. These people are generally not involved in City Government. They are interested citizens, just like you, and they have provided ongoing and valuable input during the whole process. There has been a concerted effort to include as many people as practical. We intend to recognize all these people when the revised Ordinance is put forth.

Please know that we wish to keep all residents informed, and please feel free to contact the City if you have any questions about this process. We will be sending out notification to all residents about the proposed changes to the Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan. We look forward to your comments, and we look forward to taking steps to protect and preserve the character of our city.



**Tim Douglas**  
Commissioner

### Task forces and committee heads

Last year, the Commissioners appointed seven people to oversee different aspects of the Green Community Framework Plan. These task forces and their committee heads are:

- **Winston Evans**, revising the City's Comprehensive Plan
- **Clay Jackson**, large parcel recommendations
- **Jim Littlejohn**, small parcel protection standards
- **Janie Rowland**, identifying lands for public acquisition
- **Sally Huston**, identifying funding sources for acquiring public lands
- **Tim Douglas**, natural resource protection standards
- **John Lovell**, enhancing greenways and bikeways

## Precinct commander meets with City

Forest Hills commissioners and City Manager Al Deck recently met with Michelle Richter, commander of the Metro Police West Precinct, to establish lines of communication and see how the City can help officers do their job.

The West Precinct, located at 6730 Charlotte Pike, provides police protection to Forest Hills residents. As the second-largest of six Davidson County precincts, the West Precinct covers 138 square miles, with Forest Hills representing about 9.2 square miles.

Commander Richter is responsible for seeing that her staff of 118 is deployed throughout this large area as effectively as possible. She emphasizes that prevention plays a crucial role in keeping neighborhoods safe.

"We continue to stress to residents to lock their doors, remove valuables from their vehicles, and report suspicious persons and activities," she said. "Persons continue to leave wallets, purses, laptops, GPS systems and phones in plain view in their vehicles."

Often, neighborhood crimes are committed in situations that are easy for the perpetrator. "We have cases where persons/juveniles will walk into a driveway just to see if your car doors have been unlocked. They will then enter and search for valuables in the car," she said. "It is a crime of opportunity."

The commander encourages residents to be alert to suspicious individuals or unusual activity, which can be reported to the West Precinct at 862-7747. You can see a map of criminal activities during the past 28 days at [www.police.nashville.org](http://www.police.nashville.org). On the main page in the left column near the bottom, go to ONLINE Services and select interactive crime maps. Click on Submit for Police sectors, then select West.

## The Commissioner's Corner

### Police protection update

In the previous newsletter I wrote a brief article explaining that the Board of Commissioners had begun exploring options to improve police protection in the City.

We have considered the following:

- Forming our own Forest Hills police force
- Contracting management of a Forest Hills police force with another satellite city
- Contracting with Metro off-duty police officers to provide additional patrols
- Maintaining the status quo

Metro's legal department recently delivered an opinion, supported by Mayor Dean, that the Metro charter prohibits Forest Hills from forming its own police force. This opinion also stated that Forest Hills is not able to contract management with another satellite city. Our attorneys strongly disagree with this interpretation, but it could be quite expensive to challenge Metro through the courts. We have had several discussions with Metro's legal department and Mayor Dean in an effort to find some common ground; to date these communications have proved fruitless.

We believe that contracting with off-duty Metro police officers is simply not-cost effective, and we do not feel that we should pay again for service that should already be provided. The cost to provide around-the-

clock coverage by two officers would be over \$1.2 million per year, nearly double the cost of our own similar police force.

Maintaining the status quo with general lack of responsiveness is not acceptable. We are attempting to improve communications directly with Metro police particularly in the West Nashville sector, which is responsible for Forest Hills. A new commander has been installed, and Mayor Coke and City Manager Al Deck plan an introductory visit.

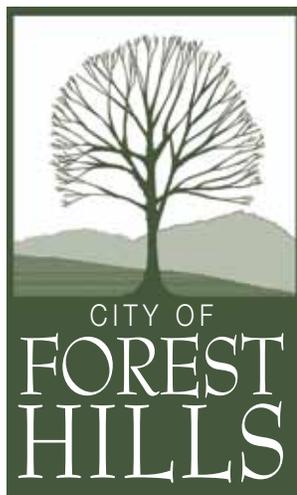
In the meantime, if you have any experience (either positive or negative) with Metro's response to a call, we encourage you to email the City at the address in the box below so that we can begin to build a body of evidence, good or bad.



**John Lovell**  
Vice Mayor

### What's your opinion?

Email comments on the police proposal or your anecdotes and feedback on Metro services in Forest Hills to [policecomments@cityofforesthills.com](mailto:policecomments@cityofforesthills.com)



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Nashville TN 37215

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