

The Commissioner's Corner

New City Hall underway

Before the end of December, site preparation will begin for the construction of the new Forest Hills City Hall at the corner of Old Hickory Blvd. and Hillsboro Pike.

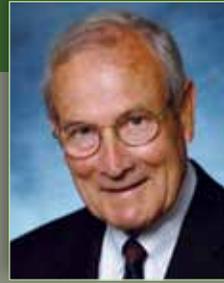
The building, which has been designed by Allard Ward Architects, will be constructed by R.C. Mathews Contractors. The architects have designed a building that not only will meet the business needs of the City but also be an aesthetically pleasing addition to the City of Forest Hills.

The building will have a dramatic siting far enough up the hill to be visible and eye-catching from both Hillsboro Pike and Old Hickory Blvd. One of the imposing features of the hill is the abundant growth of tall cedars that will serve as a background for the building during all seasons of the year. Other naturally growing trees will provide variations of color as the seasons change.

In 2008, handsome limestone gateways were built at Hillsboro and Old Hickory Blvd. to provide a distinctive entrance to the City. These gateways are reminiscent of the stone walls built all along Hillsboro Pike

during the 19th century. Similar stonework to match these stone gateways will be incorporated into the construction of the City Hall. Not only does this pay tribute to the City's history, it also gives a look of strength to the building. Natural materials such as wood and brick also will be used on the exterior. Large windows will face south toward Williamson County. These windows surrounded by stone will give the feeling of openness for the public when viewed from outside and will provide a striking panorama of the Harpeth River Valley when viewed from inside the building.

Materials used in the building will be green or sustainable to the extent that they have a reasonable financial payback. The building will be heated and cooled using



Bill Coke
Mayor

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The new City Hall features stonework and other natural materials plus large windows to create a feeling of strength and openness.



Commissioners re-elected

Incumbent Commissioners Bill Coke and John Lovell were re-elected with no opposition in the November 2 election.

According to the Davidson County Election Commission, Coke received 1,957 votes and Lovell 1,932 votes. They will serve until 2014.

This is Coke's third four-year term. He was appointed in 1999 to fill an un-expired term. Lovell was re-elected for the fifth time.

As specified in City regulations, the Board of Commissioners elect among themselves a mayor and vice mayor. The commissioners unanimously voted to retain Coke as Mayor and Lovell as Vice Mayor.



Commissioner Tim Douglas swears in commissioners Bill Coke and John Lovell.



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615/383-8447
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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

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



Happy Holidays from the commissioners and staff of the City of Forest Hills.

Forest Hills operates as contract city

The City of Forest Hills was chartered by the State of Tennessee in 1957 under a city manager/commission form of government. The Founding Fathers of Forest Hills established an operating system ahead of its time and is now imitated by larger cities.

Forest Hills decided not to hire a full complement of employees nor invest City funds in trucks and equipment. For 43 years the City operated with a single employee ... the City Manager. Then 10 years ago a City Assistant was hired. Forest Hills operates as a contract city, which means it contracts for all services, on an as-needed basis. Three of the longest-standing contracts are with Harwell Howard Hyne Gabbert & Manner for legal services, Neel-Schaffer for engineering services, and The Parke Company for chipping, mowing, and landscape services.

The Parke Company was the first contractor on the streets during the flood. Its crews responded to your calls to the after-hours emergency line (298-5389) and they immediately began clearing fallen trees from the rights-of-way and opening the streets to both emergency and normal traffic. This action also allowed NES to begin restoring power.

Three contracts awarded

Recently the City issued three contracts for services. After advertising, receiving bids, and vetting each respondent, the City issues contracts to various companies for city work. The first two contracts went to BAC Paving and Jackaroo LLC for routine maintenance and repair of streets and the drainage system.



ON DECK
with Al Deck
City Manager

Normally it is difficult to expect a company to drop its regular, scheduled work and respond to our needs. By contracting with two companies we improved the odds of having one company available when we needed them. Contracting also is beneficial because it establishes a price for each line item within the contract and guarantees the price for the term of the contract. Issuing a work order becomes simply a matter of multiplying the required volume of material or man hours by the fixed cost of each line item required.

The second contract was issued the week of October 25 to Sessions Paving for the annual street paving contract. Seven companies bid for this business and the contract was issued to the lowest bidder, which was a company the City has used in the past. The contract is nonexclusive, provides a fixed price for a year, and allows the City to use this contractor for the work awarded this month and, at our option, additional work within the next 12 months.

The Board of Commissioners strives to make the best use of City funds and get the best finished product.

The flood of May 2010: Six months later

Six months after the flood of May 2010, most damage to city property has been repaired. Yet as late as November 16, a small landslide was removed from a ditch in order to promote an unobstructed flow of storm water. There are still minor repairs remaining, but with a few exceptions, the major items are complete.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency classifies projects as small and large, with large projects having a threshold of \$63,200. Damages are further classified into three areas for the City of Forest Hills:

Category A: Removal of debris, including clearance of trees, woody debris, and building wreckage; sand, mud, silt, and gravel; and other disaster-related material on public property.

Category B: Measures taken before, during, and after a disaster to save lives and protect public health and safety.

Category C: Roads, bridges, and associated features, such as shoulders, ditches, culverts, lighting and signs.

Category A includes the City's immedi-

ate response of clearing debris and opening streets to traffic. Category B includes the "immediate" portion of the City's action. This action allows access to all City streets for emergency services (fire, police, and ambulance) to ensure the safety and welfare of the general public. Category C covers the long-term work of repairing damages to the City's infrastructure. (Please see the article on page 2 about annual services contracts and how the City of Forest Hills provides these emergency services.)

So far the City has submitted seven small and three large projects for review and approval of FEMA and Tennessee Emergency Management Agency. These projects represent approximately \$315,826 in expenditures by the City. To date we have received partial payments of approximately \$40,000. The City hopes to receive an average reimbursement of 60% of the damages submitted to date. The City will also submit additional small projects for consideration. However, with these latter projects, it may become increasingly difficult to establish a direct link to the May flood.

Saxon Drive re-opens to resident traffic

Saxon Drive in Forest Hills was one of the hardest-hit areas of the City during the May flooding. The area suffered extensive mudslides, and blockage of portions of the road kept some homeowners from driving to their homes.

Eight families affected by damage to the private driveway serving the Saxon Ridge Homeowners Association arranged for a rock buttress on the damaged hillside, in order to

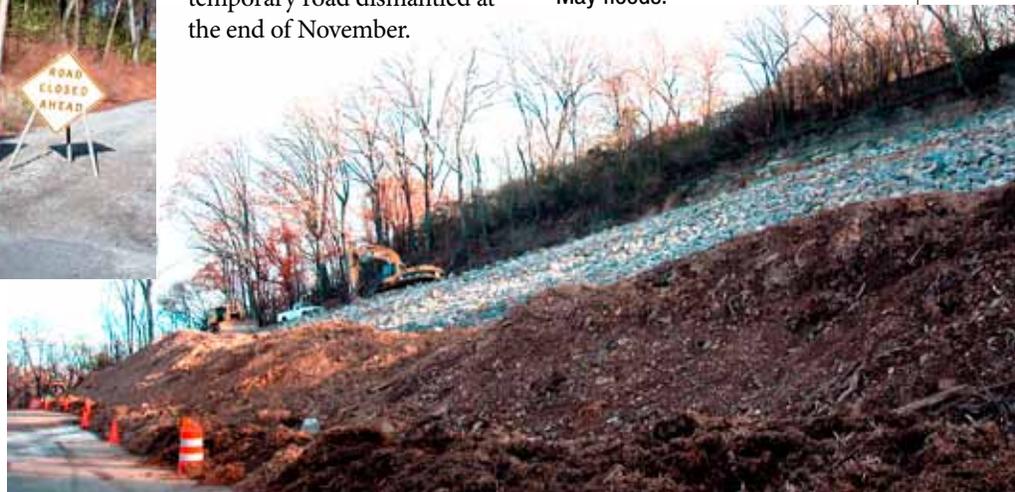
support a new driveway. The balance of the hillside will be cleaned, graded, planted with grass and trees, and returned to a natural state.

The City's right-of-way did not fail during the slide and needed only cosmetic work.

The City did, however, construct a temporary gravel roadway connecting the end of Saxon Drive with Dresden Circle to allow residents to bypass the closed portion of Saxon Drive. Matt Weir of Jackaroo, the City's outdoor services contractor, reports that Saxon Drive has been re-opened to traffic, and the temporary road dismantled at the end of November.



Workers from Jackaroo begin clearing away the temporary road connecting the end of Saxon Drive with Dresden Circle.



FROM THE MINUTES

Paving for Hillsboro Pike underway

Paving is underway for the bike lane on Hillsboro Pike from Harding Place to Bridleway Trail, part of the resurfacing project found in the Metro Nashville Strategic Plan for Sidewalks and Bikeways.

New signs will be installed upon completion of the Tennessee Department of Transportation project, which also includes a turn lane for Kingsbury Drive.

Roofing permits process changed

The Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to remove requirements to obtain a permit to re-roof a house. A building permit is still required to replace decking since it is considered structural.

School master plan

The Commissioners have approved funding of \$5,000 for Hodgson & Douglas to create a master landscaping plan for Percy Priest School.

The Saxon Ridge Homeowners Association had to reconstruct the hillside supporting the driveway to the homes atop the ridge. Debris blocked Saxon Drive following the May floods.

Financial forecast for Forest Hills

The Commissioners of Forest Hills take seriously their obligation to manage the finances of the City in a responsible manner. The City has plans for several projects, and there is some uncertainty about future revenues, so the Commissioners recently engaged a consultant to assist in forecasting cash flow and future cash balances.

The City's reserve funds have grown dramatically over the past six to eight years because of the increase in Hall Income tax receipts while holding expenses in line. Our fund balance has grown to in excess of \$10 million. We have no debt, and our residents do not pay any taxes, real estate or otherwise, to the City of Forest Hills. It is a tribute to the City's governance that Forest Hills has been able to build such a healthy reserve fund balance.

Ensuring prudent management

Because of several projects envisioned and underway and because of other substantial expenses forecast for this year, the consultant prepared a financial forecast to ensure that prudent management of the City's finances will continue. The City hired an independent certified public accountant consultant with experience in forecasting and in generating financial models.

The consultant met with several City representatives in order to build accurate assumptions into the financial model. He created a financial forecast for our current fiscal year ending June 30, 2011, and for the following nine years, so we now have a ten-year financial forecast. This forecast will get updated from time to time as circumstances dictate, but in no event will the forecast be updated less than once a year. And, it will be extended each year for one year; so it is intended that the City will continue to have a ten-year financial forecast always and in the future.

Several capital projects

In addition to incurring substantial non-recurring expenses this year due to the May flooding and landslides, the City

has embarked on several projects that will require capital. For example, there have been a few years of only patchwork paving. But, the City recently determined that certain roads need to be repaved, so paving projects will begin soon. The City has developed a schedule and long-term plan for paving all roads in the City. In addition to the paving plan, there will be requirements for repairing deteriorating culverts every year. This ongoing road maintenance will be expensive.

New City Hall benefits citizens

Also, construction of a new City Hall will begin this year, and we expect to move and occupy the completed building sometime in the latter half of next year. The Commissioners believe this expensive project will be of great benefit to the citizens and will be a tremendous asset and resource over the next 50 years. The financial forecast must also factor in the fact that the new building will have ongoing maintenance needs.

There are plans to increase plantings along Hillsboro Pike, extending last year's cherry tree project; it is likely that there will be future plantings in various rights-of-way along walking paths and at other points around the City. And along those lines, the Commissioners wish to extend bikeways and walkways and to improve green open spaces around Forest Hills. All of these things require capital, and the City must plan accordingly.

More entryways

The Commissioners believe that the construction of our stone gateway entrances has enhanced the look of our city, and the Cultural and Natural Resources Committee may recommend adding more stone pillar markers at strategic entryways to the City. The repaving of Hillsboro Pike will allow for various enhancements to the beauty of that major corridor through the City. One example of this is that the City will install brown-powder-coated guardrails on Hillsboro Pike, at some not insignificant cost. The Commissioners intend to

replace other guard rails around the City, over time, and in a manner consistent

with what will be installed on Hillsboro Pike. You may have noticed the change in signage on Kingsbury. The Commissioners would like to remove excess signage on all City streets, at the same time upgrading them to new signage standards. The Commissioners may decide soon to extend this effort initially to Hillsboro and then to other heavily traveled streets.

Finally, additional personnel may be needed as the City grows and construction picks up again. The financial consultant has assumed that the City will do all these things—a fairly aggressive plan that will consume capital.

For modeling purposes, the financial consultant made very conservative revenue assumptions, basing Hall Income Tax revenue projections off last year's very low receipts. He also forecast expenses to include all the items referenced above. The Commissioners and City Manager believe that he was conservative about future expense levels, so all parties are comfortable with the long-range financial forecast, the finished product. And again, this will be a living document that gets updated annually, at a minimum. So, what does all this mean?

The financial forecast, when it was completed last month, showed that our fund balances touch but do not drop below \$8 million. Therefore, the Commissioners believe they are being good stewards of the City's finances. The exciting plans for the City, some of which are detailed above, can be financed using existing cash fund balances. And, there is no reason for residents to fear any governmental imposition of taxes. The City's fund balances will provide security to all of us for the future even though the financial forecast will surely not be 100% accurate. We welcome your questions and comments.



Tim Douglas
Commissioner



City Hall underway (continued from page 1)

a geothermal system. This system should provide a financial payback in seven to 10 years and will greatly reduce our needs for electricity. The windows are ample and designed to provide an abundance of natural light thereby reducing lighting costs. The entrance drive and parking area to the north of the building will be designed to preserve as many trees as possible as well as preserving the remnants of an old roadbed and stonewall that existed before Old Hickory Blvd. was built.

The entrance from the parking area will lead into an attractive lobby area. Offices for the City Manager and the staff will be to the left of the entrance. In addition there will be ample space for the storage of documents and planning materials that are so important to the proper functioning of the city government. A large meeting room will be situated in the front of the building facing Old

Hickory Blvd. It will have the latest in electronic equipment needed by developers and homebuilders when they make presentations



to the Planning Commission or the Board of Zoning Appeals.

The new City Hall has been designed to be a welcoming and comfortable space for the residents of Forest Hills when they visit. It is also designed to meet the future needs of the City. We anticipate moving into the building in the fall of 2011. We hope that every Forest Hills resident will watch with interest as their new City Hall becomes a reality.

Commissioners reviewing zoning recommendations

The Local Planning Committee has completed its revisions and recommendations on zoning ordinances, as the next step to having updated and uniform zoning standards.

The committee submitted its feedback to Commissioners on November 30. The Commissioners will make revisions and pass the draft to the Planning Commission to determine the appropriate language and provision for the ordinances.

Radnor plate raises funds, awareness

Residents can support our neighboring natural area by purchasing a Radnor Lake license plate at renewal time.

“This raises about \$50,000 a year to preserve the park and acquire more land,” said Charley Hankla, president of Friends of Radnor Lake.

It’s an easy contribution and shows every driver in Nashville Forest Hills residents support our park.





The new library will combine nearly 3,000 square feet of new space with 1,705 square feet of renovated space.

Percy Priest School requests grant for library/media center expansion

The Parent Teachers Organization at Percy Priest Elementary School has requested financial assistance from the City of Forest Hills to help cover the cost of expanding the school library.

PTO representatives point out that the school was constructed in 1957 to serve 200 to 250 students. Current enrollment is over 500 and expected to continue increasing.

The school has had two major expansions since construction: a science wing built in the 1960s for second- and third-grade students,

and a kindergarten wing and gymnasium in 2000. The library size has remained unchanged at 1,735 square feet, less than half the current standard size of Metro Nashville Public Schools.

In spite of that, the school's capital improvement funding, originally planned for 2012, has now been deferred until 2016–17, and may be delayed further.

“Our commitment to quality education is relying more and more on private funding. Parents are leading the initiative to find monetary support in order to improve public schools,” the PTO's presentation to Forest Hills says. “We are counting on our community and business leaders to support us in this endeavor.”

The expansion plan calls for a 4,583-square-foot library/media center and technology center, with 2,878 square feet of new space and 1,705 square feet of renovated space. Schematic plans have been approved by Metro Nashville Public Schools, and zoning has been approved by Forest Hills.

The project will cost about \$800,000, with more than \$100,000 already committed from lead parent donors and another \$100,000 pledged from the PTO.

The PTO is asking for \$300,000 from family donations, which averages about \$200 per student per year over the next three years. The group is requesting Forest Hills to provide a matching grant of \$300,000 over the next three years.

Holiday bison

Sally Huston, chair of the Cultural and Natural Resources Committee, brings a bit of holiday cheer to the topiary in Bison Meadow. The committee is responsible for projects that beautify and enhance the quality of life in the City.



Neighbors unite to enhance Chickering gateway

“What if . . .” thought Davidson County Master Gardener interns Melinda Perry and Margaret Spickard. To complete their education to receive their official certification they needed to give several hours of gardening experience as community service. They decided they could use their experience to beautify the entrance to their own Chickering Lane.

They partnered with neighbor and Community Watch organizer Cindy Davis, and that simple “What if . . .” idea turned into a full-blown plan that the whole community rallied behind!

Residents united to enhance this important gateway to their neighborhood at Hillsboro Pike and Chickering Lane. These three received City and neighbors’ approval, secured landscape plans (thanks to the generous donation of Julia Baker and Page Duke Landscape Architects), acquired bids from 12 top landscape companies, and then moved forward with a campaign to promote awareness and solicit financial support.

As the project was coming together they realized they could do more than simply beautify the corner. This effort could both build and beautify the neighborhood, and that’s exactly what happened. They created a website (ChickeringGateway.com), designed print material for mailboxes, gathered email addresses, organized meetings, and threw cocktail parties for the purpose of raising awareness and funds. One neighbor donated yard signs given to each household that contributed to the project. These signs (“We Support The Chickering Gateway Project”) dotted many of the homes along the three sections of Chickering Lane and Chickering Court. They asked for \$100 per household, and the majority participated at this level, some more and some less. One street section obtained 100% financial participation, and other streets were well over 80%.

“This plan could not have been completed without the support of so many generous neighbors. One of the most enjoyable aspects of the project has been getting to know more of the wonderful people who live around us,” said Cindy Davis.

When Sequoia Swim and Tennis Club heard of the need, it closed the gap on the remainder of the funds needed to begin planting. “We are deeply grateful for the generous support given by Chris Mitchell and the Sequoia Board on behalf of Sequoia members,” said Melinda Perry.

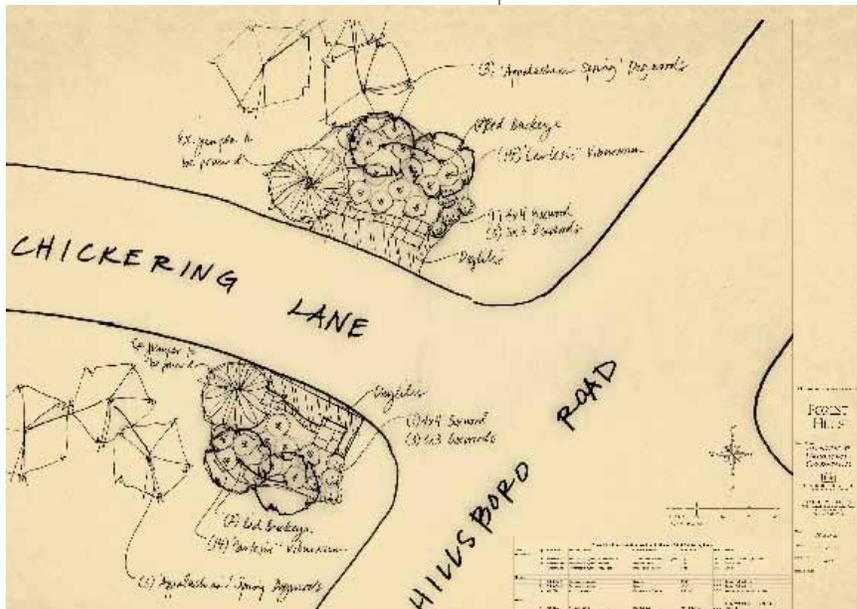


“We are also happy with the support of the City of Forest Hills, as they have been our biggest cheerleaders. We thank Sally Huston of the Cultural and Natural Resources Committee for her tireless support and encouragement throughout this process,” said Margaret Spickard.

Cindy, Margaret, and Melinda are pleased and grateful that this eight-month process has been so positive. They are delighted to report that the installation should take place around Thanksgiving.

That simple “What if . . .” opened many doors, and they’re delighted that they’ve reached their goal of both “building and beautifying the community.”

Melinda Perry, Cindy Davis, and Margaret Spickard show how residents support their efforts.



Keep safe during holiday season

AT HOME

- Avoid displaying gifts where they can be seen from outside a window or door.
- Always lock your doors and windows, even if you leave only for a few minutes.
- Don't let your trash bins announce new acquisitions—cut down boxes or put them inside containers.
- Record the serial and model numbers of your gifts before you give them or as soon as you receive them.
- Arrange to have packages delivered to a neighbor if you are not home.
- Do not leave accumulated mail or newspapers at your house while travelling. Have someone collect them for you.
- While travelling, put lights on a timer.

OUT SHOPPING

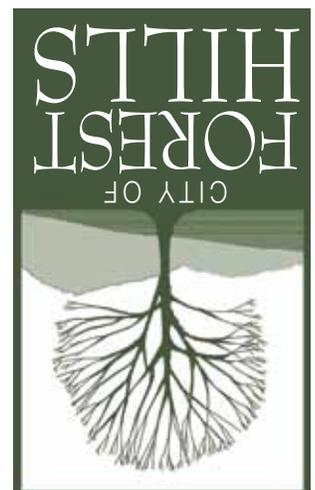
- Always lock your car and close the windows.

- Park in well-lit areas.
- Place items out of sight before you reach your destination.
- Shop with at least one partner.
- Have your keys in your hand as you approach the car to speed entry, set off the alarm if in danger, or to use as a weapon if attacked.
- Stay alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Do not overload yourself with packages.
- Do not approach your car alone if there are suspicious people in the area.
- Look inside your car and around it as you approach.
- Don't leave your purse, wallet, or other identifying papers or keys in your vehicle.
- If you carry a purse, wear the strap so that it crosses in front of your body or hold it in front of you, keeping the flap against your body.



- Men should carry their wallet in the front or inside pockets.
- Do not use key rings with identifying information.
- If you use an ATM, protect your PIN by shielding the ATM keypad from those standing around you.

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