

*"Preserving Our Heritage,
Shaping Our Future"*

Historic Home of Gravel Hill
Est. 1815

Timothy Byler, MAYOR



City Hall

156 Old Sunbury Rd.
Flemington, GA 31313

912.877.3223
cityhall@cityofflemington.org

COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 26TH, 2026 AT 10:00 A.M.
FLEMINGTON CITY HALL - 156 OLD SUNBURY RD

Present at City Hall: Mayor Byler
Mayor Pro Tempore ('MPT') Rene' Harwell
Councilman Paul Martin
Councilman Manish Patel
Councilman Larry Logan
Councilman Hasit Patel
Councilwoman Leigh Smiley
LT Gallob
Shameka Hawkes, City Clerk

Present via Phone: None

Absent:

1. The regularly scheduled meeting of the Council of the City of Flemington was called to order by Mayor Byler on Monday, January 26th, 2026 at 10:17 a.m. in the Council Room at Flemington City Hall. A quorum necessary to conduct business was visibly present.
2. Mayor Byler welcomed all attendees.
3. **Ordinance Updates.**
 - **Gun-** City currently has no ordinance prohibiting firearm discharge within city limits
Proposed Solution: Adopt Liberty County's ordinance with modifications remove, "unincorporated" language to apply to city. Key provisions: 1,000 feet from inhabited structures, 2-acre minimum for shooting, hunting exemptions. Add language for self-defense situations (vicious animals)
LT Gallob to find language for self-defense provisions, Draft ordinance for next council meeting.
Submit to city attorney for review.
 - **Urban Camping-** Need regulations for homeless camping in public areas. Proposed Solution: Wait for Hinesville's revised ordinance, then mirror it. Addresses public areas (parks, plazas, parking lots)
Warning-first approach before citations. Private property handled via squatting notices (3-day removal process) Reach out to Hinesville for their draft ordinance. Adapt for Flemington once received. Can start with current framework and amend as needed.
 - **Parking-** Narrow streets with cars parked on both sides, emergency vehicle access concerns, short driveways (some only 10-15 feet) HOA enforcement challenges (24-hour parking rule difficult to monitor) Proposed Solutions: No on-street parking ordinance for certain width streets Require additional parking areas in new developments, Guest parking spaces near mailbox clusters. Cap on

number of vehicles per household (similar to Hinesville's 4-vehicle limit) No more variances for driveway setbacks. Research Hinesville, Bryan County, Richmond Hill ordinances, Meet with Judge McGirt about enforcement, Draft city ordinance (not just HOA enforcement) Design standards for future developments: guest parking, longer driveways, parking areas. Post signs in affected neighborhoods, Communicate with HOAs to align policies.

4. **New Downtown Corridor & Overlay District**

Current overlay district can regulate building appearance but NOT types of businesses. Cannot prevent unwanted businesses (auto parts stores, gas stations, etc.) without proper legal framework. Two auto parts stores already wanting to locate across from each other. Council discussed a 90-day moratorium on new development to fix ordinances. Limit certain business types by population. Define what businesses are allowed/prohibited in overlay district. Architectural standards for Highway 84 corridor (high school to health department) Protect existing businesses from over-saturation. Contact attorney Craig (not Jeff/LCPC) for legal framework. Define: business types allowed, limitations by industry, proximity restrictions, population-based caps. Implement moratorium at next meeting. Ensure Downtown Development Authority (DDA) has proper authority.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Need to reappoint members (should have happened in January meeting) **Membership Requirements:** Mix of residents, business owners, and one council member. Contact existing members for reappointment. Council member volunteer: One member volunteered to serve. Schedule reappointments for February meeting

Verify business representation requirements

FDDA Board Nominations, the following individuals were nominated to serve on the Flemington Downtown Development Authority ("FDDA"): Mayor Pro Tem & Councilwoman Smiley to Contact:

- Manish Patel
- Mr. Demetrio Mendez
- Patricia Davis
- Ms. Jessica Victoria
- Mr. Jim (or Alicia) Floyd
- Mr. Jay Patel

5. **Annexation**

Plan strategic growth for the city (current footprint is very small) **Considerations:** Infrastructure costs vs. revenue generation. Which direction to expand. School board as stakeholder. Strategic annexation (not just random parcels) Meet with county to discuss their plans. Develop annexation strategy. Assess infrastructure requirements

Committee Formed:

- Chair: Councilman Logan
- Members: Marcus Sacks, Councilman Martin, Councilwoman Smiley

6. **Business License**

• ***Transient/Peddler***

Current ordinance unclear on duration and fees, Jelly Man currently paying \$200/month (grandfathered)

Need different classifications for seasonal vs. occasional vendors. Graduated fee structure based on frequency Seasonal permits for regular vendors. Daily/weekly/monthly options. Farmer's market vendor classification. Food truck regulations. Revise fee schedule, Research farmer's market vendor requirements, Contact Jelly Man: continue current payment until new ordinance passed. Prevent permanent operations without brick-and-mortar location.

- **Alcohol**

Nail salon wants to offer complimentary wine to clients. Falls under Class 4 (on-premises consumption) - \$750 + \$500 for Sunday sales. Even "free" alcohol requires licensing (state requirement) Must purchase from distributors, not retail. Marketing expense for business owner. Applicant to complete state paperwork

Present to council at next meeting for approval. Consider rewording Class 4 to include "spas" or use "on-premises consumption business"

- **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)**

Many processes lack documented procedures. Faster decision-making. Continuity when staff is absent
Consistency in operations. Kim will assist to develop SOPs. Work with Mayor to document procedures
Use county procedures as templates where applicable. Bring to future workshop for review.

7. **Mobile Home & Nuisance Abatement**

Deferred until attorney Jeff arrives in afternoon session. Jeff (LCPC) was supposed to draft amendments to ordinance.

8. **Infrastructure-Water & Sewer Infrastructure Analysis (Presented by Marcus & Oscar, M.E. Sacks Engineering)**

Two sewer basins: West Basin (red) and East Basin (gray) with multiple sub-basins. Critical bottleneck: Highway 84 gravity main at 80% capacity (only 88 gallons/min remaining). Problem: Nearly all Eastern basin sewer flows through this single line. Future demand: ~2,000 ERUs (Equivalent Residential Units) over 15-year timeline.

Alternative	Description	Cost	Status
Alt 1	Upsize Highway 84 gravity line to 18"	\$3.4M	Moves problem downstream
Alt 2	Upsize to 15" + replace manholes	\$2.7M	Moves problem downstream
Alt 3 ★	Convert Old Sunbury Rd pump to regional station, pump directly to Fort Stewart treatment plant	\$3.7M	RECOMMENDED
Alt 4	Reroute Old Sunbury Rd to Flemington 1 lift station	Lower cost	Temporary fix only
Alt 5	Add gravity sewer + pump to treatment plant	\$4.4M	Higher cost than Alt 3
Alt 6	System optimization (telemetry upgrades)	Lower cost	Insufficient capacity gain

Recommended Solution: Alternative 3. Creates regional pump station at Old Sunbury Road. Pumps Eastern basin sewer directly to Fort Stewart treatment plant. Avoids moving problem to Hinesville pump station. Estimated cost: \$3.7 million (mid-range option) Timeline: 3-5 years to implement (costs will likely increase) Key Considerations: Domino effect: Improving Highway 84 line requires upgrading Flemington 1 pump station, which then overloads Hinesville pump station. Hinesville dependency: Must coordinate with City of Hinesville (water/sewer provider) Hatch Pasture complication: New development will also impact Hinesville pump station on same timeline. Fort Stewart capacity: Treatment plant has limited capacity; Hinesville working on projects to free up space. Impact fees: Potential \$1,500 per ERU cost recovery fee (less than Hinesville currently charges)

Action Items: Marcus & Mayor Byler: Schedule meeting with City of Hinesville to discuss: Whose project this will be (Flemington vs. Hinesville) Funding mechanisms and partnerships. Impact fee structure, Fort Stewart treatment plant capacity, Council to review detailed report at home and provide feedback via email Explore grant opportunities (competitive process, may require low-to-moderate income criteria)

Consider bringing in financial consultant to assess affordability and financing options
Add development timelines to revenue stream projections

9. Downtown Development & NSJ Property (*Discussion with Paul Bland, Realtor*)

Lot size restrictions: Downtown overlay requires very small lots (under 1 acre maximum) NSJ property is 5.9 acres (4 acres usable after Georgia Power easement) Cannot practically subdivide into overlay-compliant parcels. Limits potential buyers to those wanting entire 4-acre site. Infrastructure barriers: No sewer capacity currently available. Road access requires connection at traffic light (significant cost) Straight road alignment needed for future southern expansion Buyer interest: Current interest from auto parts stores, gas stations, fast food restaurants. Does NOT align with downtown vision (destination dining, boutique retail, etc.) Property Ownership Map: City-owned 4 acres (for park/city hall) NSJ property (5.9 acres, for sale) Floyd/Martin property (for sale) Stacy property (for sale, hurricane-damaged) GA property (not for sale) Hispanic church (not for sale) Old auto parts center (occupied, problematic) Proposed Solutions: Redesign City's Park Entrance. Move park entrance/gateway to traffic light intersection (instead of side road) Rotate design 30-40 degrees to face Highway 84, Allow NSJ property to develop with 2-acre parcels (variance from overlay), Require architectural standards that match downtown vision, Potential buyers: National restaurant chains willing to adapt design (Carrabba's, Bahama Breeze, etc.) Option B: Find Single Large User, Market entire 4-acre NSJ parcel to one buyer, Requires national chain with resources for infrastructure investment, Paul indicates only gas station chains currently have that level of capital Option C: Land Swap, City swaps small corner parcel with NSJ to straighten road alignment, Creates boulevard entrance, Allows better development of both properties. Insights from Paul: National chains (gas stations, convenience stores) have capital for infrastructure but don't fit vision. Upscale restaurants can adapt architecture (examples: Bluffton, Fort Lauderdale, Palm Coast) Without sewer, nothing can happen, 2-acre parcels would significantly broaden buyer pool, Road connection at traffic light is essential and expensive. Call moratorium on downtown development until issues resolved
Convene comprehensive meeting with all stakeholders: Downtown Development Authority (DDA), Planning Commission, Legal counsel (Craig), Property owners, Engineering consultants, DDA to research what authority they have to permit/prohibit specific business types, Explore variance on lot sizes (allow 2-acre parcels instead of sub-1-acre) Determine if developers would contribute to infrastructure costs, Balance citizen vision with economic viability.

10. Parking Ordinance Development

Tranquil South & Hazy neighborhoods: Streets too narrow for on-street parking. Emergency vehicles cannot pass. Trash trucks lost contract due to access issues. Deputy had to slow to near-stop to navigate. Excessive variances granted during development. 15-foot driveways (some requested 10 feet!) Narrow roads, Insufficient setbacks. For Existing High-Density Neighborhoods: No on-street parking ordinance for narrow streets, Post signs at neighborhood entrances, City enforcement (not HOA) - citations to magistrate court
No parking on sidewalks (prevents damage to city infrastructure) Warning first, then citations for Future Developments: No More Variance for: Driveway setbacks (minimum 20 feet to fit 4 cars) Road widths Property line setbacks. Required design elements: Guest parking areas every 8-10 houses, Overflow parking near mailbox clusters, Traffic calming features (speed humps, mini-islands with trees), Wider streets for emergency access Enforcement: LT Gallob and Wilson only (not regular patrol). Comparison Research Needed: Hinesville ordinance (12 inches from curb, no perpendicular parking in cul-de-sacs), Bryan County, Richmond Hill, Cherokee Road area (had similar issues, implemented solution). Jeff to draft parking ordinance for high-density areas. Research other municipalities' parking regulations. Mayor to meet with Judge McGirt about Enforcement cooperation Order "No Street Parking" signs for affected neighborhoods. Communicate with HOAs to align policies. Post on Facebook to notify citizens before enforcement begins. Planning Commission to establish design standards preventing future parking issues.

11. Mobile Home Ordinance

Planning Commission reviewed this month, Coming to council vote at next meeting, Prohibit mobile homes in AG-1 and AR-1 zones, Only in MHP (Mobile Home Park) or SF-MH zones, Currently only one

MHP zone exists (between Flemington and Hinesville) State law allows 1-for-1 replacement only (no expansion without approval) No SF-MH zones currently exist (would require conscious rezoning) No mobile homes "by surprise" in agricultural/residential zones. Existing mobile home park protected but cannot expand.

12. Nuisance Abatement & Property Maintenance

Dilapidated properties (burned houses, 15+ cars in yards, falling-down structures), Stacy property (hurricane-damaged, partially cleaned), Commercial properties in disrepair, No clear enforcement process. Contract with Bryan County for property maintenance code enforcement, County already does this for unincorporated areas

They have staff and magistrate court process in place, County has become more proactive in recent years, Existing agreement: County already inspects new construction for city, Separate process needed: Door-to-door enforcement for existing properties, Lee to contact Bryan County about property maintenance enforcement contract, Research hurricane relief funding (Governor's office announcement last week), Specifically explore funding for Stacy property cleanup, Determine costs and process for county partnership.

13. Urban Camping/Homelessness Ordinance

Homeless individuals spotted in wooded areas (Wallace Martin Road area, behind old buildings), Shopping carts, bicycles, pillows against trees observed, Committee working on recommendations, Proposed Approach:

Wait for Hinesville's revised ordinance (reportedly 10 minutes from completion), Mirror their framework for consistency, Not a land use/planning issue - will go to attorney, Warning-first approach before citations. Action Items: Mayor to reach out to Hinesville for their draft ordinance, Monitor situation in wooded areas, Prepare ordinance once Hinesville version available.

14. Park Development & City Hall Project

Community gathering space, Park and recreation areas, Walkability City hall in center with DDA-owned rental spaces on sides, Current Design Concept: 4-acre city property, Park in front, city hall offset in middle, Available space on both sides for DDA to rent to businesses, Entrance via horseshoe road from Highway 84, Revised Concept Under Discussion: Move entrance to traffic light intersection (instead of side road), Rotate design 30-40 degrees to face Highway 84 directly, Gateway/archway at intersection as focal point, Still achieves same goals but with better visibility and access, Consideration: Georgia Power easement runs through property, Action Items: Marcus to complete park design work, Form park planning committee (volunteers needed)

Coordinate with infrastructure planning, Explore partnerships with developers willing to contribute financially

15. City Branding & Logo Development

Current Logo Issues: Two dates (confusing - founding date + establishment date), Multi-color complexity limits applications (embroidery, signage, marketing materials), Difficult to reproduce consistently, New Design Direction Target demographic: Young professionals (20s-30s) who want to live/stay in Flemington, Design principles: Minimalist, clean, modern, Simple enough for embroidery and various applications, Timeless (won't look dated in 5-10 years), Versatile (can be used in color or black/white). Design Elements Under Consideration, Oak tree: Unique to area, ties to history, already in current logo, Simple typography: Block letters that can stand alone or incorporate artwork. Council Preferences: Simpler is better, Keep oak tree (with and without versions), Avoid church imagery (separation concerns), Consider historic building silhouettes if used, Want to see color and black/white versions. Council to review and provide direction before further investment of volunteer time.

16. Performance Indicators & Project Tracking

No current system to measure progress on city projects, Multiple initiatives underway with no timeline tracking, Need accountability and visibility, Proposed Solution: Implement Excel-based checklist system (similar to Councilwoman Smiley office), Track projects with: Task lists, Completion timelines, Responsible parties, Deadlines, Use Microsoft meeting tools for automatic AI summaries and action item tracking, Action Items: Councilman Manish to create project tracking template, Implement for all ongoing initiatives, Review progress at each council meeting, Set specific deadlines.

The meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.