

**City of Locust Grove
 Council Workshop Meeting Minutes
 Public Safety Building – 3640 Highway 42 S.
 Locust Grove, GA 30248
 Monday, June 15, 2020
 6:00 PM**

Members Present:	Staff Present:
Robert Price – Mayor	Tim Young – City Manager
Randy Gardner – Councilman	Bert Foster – Assistant City Manager
Willie Taylor – Councilman	Misty Spurling – City Clerk
Keith Boone – Councilman	Jennifer Adkins – Assistant City Clerk
Rod Shearouse – Councilman	Jack Rose – Public Works Director
Rudy Breedlove - Councilman	Anna W. Ogg – Main Street Manager
Carlos Greer – Councilman	Daunté Gibbs – Community Development Director
	Matthew Long – Police Captain
	Andy Welch - Attorney
	Staff Not Present:
	Jesse Patton – Police Chief

Mayor Price called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Invocation given by Mayor Price

Councilman Shearouse led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Boone made the motion to approve the June 15, 2020 meeting agenda.

RESULT	APPROVED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

PUBLIC COMMENTS – NONE

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS –

1. Hearing to approve a modification to zoning conditions request for 381 and 343 Davis Lake Road, LL 217 of the 2nd district, Henry County, Georgia –

Councilman Gardner read a letter of recusal recusing himself from all such discussion, debate, deliberation, or vote, or otherwise take part in the decision-making process for public hearing item one. Councilman Gardner exited the meeting.

Community Development Director Daunte' Gibbs stepped forward and led discussion this is a request from GBLG Development, LLC to modify zoning conditions placed on the subject properties in 2007. The applicant is requesting that zoning conditions number six (6) and seven (7) from ordinance number 07-09-082 be removed altogether as conditions of zoning for the subject properties. Mr. Gibbs read aloud the following zoning conditions:

6. The historic home on the site shall be incorporated into the overall site development.

7. That a buffer of no less than seventy-five feet (75') be preserved or enhanced on the southern property line, including preservation of the pond shared on this property and the neighboring southern property(ies). Prevailing tree cover and topography shall be preserved where practical and shall be reviewed and approved by the City Council prior to the release of the development plans for construction.

Mr. Gibbs said the removal of these zoning conditions will eliminate the potential creation of a legal non-conforming use with the M-1 zoning district as well as conforming to all structures within the 70-foot front setback of the proposed industrial development. Removing said zoning conditions will also prevent unnecessary infrastructural relocation expenses. Mr. Gibbs said this is a public hearing if any questions and no action will be taken tonight. Nothing further.

Mayor Price said this is a public hearing and opened for public comments.

Mrs. Lindsay Brackett, resident at 55 Bowden Street stepped forward to comment. Mrs. Brackett said she weighs the pros and cons of any situation and feels that is necessary with this request. She said she recognizes the pros of this request; however, she questioned what are the cons? Mrs. Brackett asked if this removal of conditions is assuming the land is zoned M-1? The land was zoned M-1 in 2007; however, she thought the property was rezoned another time and asked if the property is zoned M-1. Mr. Young replied the property remains zoned M-1 because a property cannot be reverted automatically and must be rezoned by an act of the council. Attorney Andy Welch said City Council can recommend an amendment for rezoning of property; however, there would be record if Council voted for an amendment and there is no record.

Mrs. Brackett said three smaller industrial warehouses are being proposed with additional space for potential expansion. Mrs. Brackett asked if a traffic study accounted for a future expansion. Mr. Young replied yes, that is included as part of the DRI as originally proposed.

Mrs. Brackett said according to the paperwork the subject property was not included into the National Historic District and asked if there are intentions of protecting the historic character of the homes in that area. Mrs. Ogg asked Mrs. Brackett if she is referring to the protected district and Mrs. Brackett replied she is referring to where she lives. Mrs. Ogg said there are no plans to expand our regulated district into residential area. Discussion took place. Mr. Young said that [her] property lies within the Mixed Historic Area, and that any new development should keep with existing conditions of maintaining the historic character of the homes. Mrs. Brackett asked if one of the three buildings would be a tire plant and Mr. Young replied one is proposed to be a distribution facility that will have tires reconditioned and distributed. Discussion took place on concern of potential odors or smells that might deter the purchasing of homes nearby. Mr. Gibbs replied he is not sure of an odor because the business is not established, and discussion took place.

Mrs. Brackett said when the property was rezoned in 2007, Mr. Young said a natural buffer could be used on the property. Mrs. Brackett also mentioned concerns of detention ponds and discussion took place on the potential for impact on the nearby city spring site. Mrs. Brackett asked if there has been any outreach to the residents this would affect.

Mrs. Jennifer Rivera, resident at 273 Davis Lake Road, stepped forward to make a comment. Mrs. Rivera said no one has contacted them. Mrs. Rivera said she and her family moved in their home six years ago and just recently installed a pool and have concerns of detention pond and possible smell. Nothing further.

Mrs. Brackett asked Council if they have any comments that would change residents' minds from being opposed to this request.

Attorney Andy Welch made a comment to Mrs. Brackett this is not a dialogue back and forth. This is a public hearing for you or anyone to have the opportunity to make comments before Council. Council is not obligated to respond to questions being asked, they are only here to listen and if they so choose, they can answer questions after the public hearing is closed and opened to them for comments.

Mrs. Brackett replied she misunderstood the procedures and now has a better understanding.

Mrs. Brackett discussed concerns including the future of the property north of Colvin Drive and the increase in overall traffic and construction traffic. Mrs. Brackett asked if there is a plan if the project becomes uncomfortable for her family and others. Nothing further.

Mr. Michael Brackett stepped forward to comment. Mr. Brackett referenced condition #7 related to the 75' buffer. Mr. Brackett suggested staff and Council visit Action Tire in Forest Park to give an idea of this development in terms of noise, smell, and atmosphere. Mr. Brackett said maybe the developer could be encouraged to reconsider the buffer versus removing the buffer. Nothing further.

Mr. Johnny Rivera, resident at 273 Davis Lake Road, stepped forward to comment. Mr. Rivera asked if this will be a 24-hour operation. Mr. Gibbs replied he does not have that information at this time. Mr. Rivera asked if a buffer will and Mr. Gibbs replied the code requires a buffer between industrial and residential property and discussion took place. Nothing further.

Mr. Barry Harkness, resident at 1101 Abundance Dr., stepped forward to comment. Mr. Harkness asked what end of Davis Lake the warehouses will be located. Mr. Young replied Davis Lake and Colvin Drive. Mr. Harkness said he is not opposed to the request because the job opportunities will increase. Mr. Harkness asked when this request was received by staff. Mr. Gibbs replied staff received the request in March; however, because of the COVID-19 regulations, the process was delayed. Discussion took place and nothing further.

No further comments and Mayor Price closed the public hearing.

Mayor Price asked for comments from Council.

Councilman Greer asked if GBLG Development already owns the property and Mr. Gibbs replied they plan to acquire the property. Mr. Zachary Zweifler, agent representing GBLG Development stepped forward to answer questions. Mr. Zweifler replied GBLG does not own the property; however, are currently under contract to purchase subject property. Councilman Greer asked if GBLG is under contract to purchase the Brown property as well and Mr. Zweifler replied yes. Councilman Greer asked

Mr. Zweifler to confirm what “GBLG” stands for. Mr. Zweifler replied, “Great Buildings Locust Grove”. Councilman Greer commented he is confused because GBLG’s initial intention was developing the Brown property which has been confirmed is not final, and now currently under contract to purchase the subject property. Councilman Greer said he feels like this property is being acquired to avoid some conditions in place. Mr. Zweifler replied the master plan is for both properties [Brown property and subject property] to become one development. Discussion took place. Councilman Greer asked Mr. Zweifler if he is aware a buffer is required. Mr. Zweifler replied yes, and discussion took place. Nothing further.

Councilman Breedlove asked if the purchase of the property is contingent upon this meeting and Mr. Zweifler replied yes.

Councilman Boone asked if the property will be fenced and Mr. Zweifler replied not around the entire property and discussion took place. Councilman Boone said he would not want to experience bad odors near his property and said he is not opposed to growth; however, does not want to approve bad growth. Mr. Young replied M-1 zoning allows for the type of development that is being presented and discussion took place. Councilman Boone asked what the delay is on the purchase of the Brown property. Mr. Zweifler replied this will be one business park and for the entire project to work effectively it makes sense to have one zoning. This establishment will be 80 percent warehouse and office space; not a manufacturing facility.

Councilman Breedlove asked what type of process this will be, and Mr. Zweifler said this is a repair process in that the old groove is removed and replaced with new groove. Discussion took place on visiting the property and operation.

Councilman Greer said there will be a need for road reconstruction and repairs as part of this project and asked Mr. Zweifler if GBLG will incur some of the costs. Mr. Zweifler replied yes, the plans are to rebuild Colvin Drive from SR 42 to Davis Lake Road and contribute to any future work at Bill Gardner Parkway and Highway 42 as well. Nothing further.

Attorney Andy Welch asked Mr. Gibbs to clarify this is only for modification of the two specified conditions to zoning. Mr. Gibbs replied yes, this request is for modification of zoning conditions, this is not a request to rezone the property and it is within Councils authority to modify if deemed appropriate. Attorney Andy Welch clarified the applicant has to comply with the DRI and the traffic study has to be updated accordingly. Discussion took place. Nothing further.

No further comments and Councilman Gardner returned to meeting.

Mr. Gibbs made a comment related to concerns mentioned on odors that may occur related to the development of the subject property. Mr. Gibbs said any zoning district is likely to produce bad odors and sometimes can be unavoidable. Our regulations have parameters and guidelines that if not met would not be approved. Councilman Breedlove asked what the stipulations are if they do not comply. Attorney Andy Welch replied there are Code Enforcement provisions to enforce and other procedures that could lead to legal action.

Councilman Greer made a comment if we are continuing the discussion Councilman Gardner needs to exit the meeting.

Councilman Gardner exited the meeting.

Mr. Gibbs said the applicant is requesting two conditions be removed and discussion took place. Mr. Young replied the conditions were added 13 years ago and were deemed appropriate for the zoning of the subject property at that time due to the lack of confirmed historic district information and surrounding zoning at the time. Nothing further.

Councilman Gardner returned to the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS/ACTION ITEMS –

2. Resolution to approve the plat/right-of-way map for the Peeksville Road Extension –

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Greer made the motion to approve the request by approving resolution #**20-06-032**

RESULT	APPROVED RESOLUTION #20-06-032
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN GREER
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

3. Special Event Request for a peaceful protest march –

Ariana Gomez, resident at 172 Lantana Drive, and Maggie Clark, resident at 202 Coyote Trail, stepped forward to discuss the reason for their request.

Ms. Gomez led discussion they would like to start the route at the train platform and end at City Hall from 2pm – 4pm and do not expect no more than 60 people. Ms. Gomez said their goal is to talk about ways to educate the community on what we are facing around the world and show more solidarity in Locust Grove. Mayor Price asked if he could have a guest preacher come speak and Ms. Gomez replied yes.

Councilman Greer asked what is being protested. Ms. Gomez replied they are protesting Black Lives Matter, but more importantly how and what we can change to make a difference. Discussion took place about where staging will take place and Ms. Gomez said she would like to meet at the City Hall lawn.

Councilman Shearouse asked if they have done a protest march before and Ms. Gomez replied, “yes in Clayton County and Fayetteville”. Councilman Shearouse asked how they are advertising and if they are a part of the #blacklivesmatter organization. Ms. Gomez replied they are advertising on their personal Facebook pages and word of mouth and said they are not associated with the BLM organization. Ms. Gomez said they are in favor that all lives matter; however, are emphasizing on the current events.

Councilman Greer made a comment to clarify that the #blacklivesmattermovement and #blacklivesmatter are two different organizations. Councilman Greer said the original #blacklivesmatter purpose was to bring awareness and discussion took place on the disruptive acts that have risen from the movement which now has gained a bad reputation. We need to be conscious of the difference between both organizations because the news [media] will misconstrue things and unless a person educates themselves first it is easy to make the wrong assumptions. Discussion took place and Councilman Greer spoke about concerns he has with the events that are related to racism and the unfortunate actions that are taking place as a result.

Councilman Boone made a comment in support of Councilman Greer’s thoughts; however, he said the hashtag #blacklivesmatter could somewhat make a white person feel as if their lives do not matter because the emphasis is being focused on black lives. Councilman Boone said he feels that all lives matter and discussion took place.

Councilman Greer followed up to Councilman Boone’s thoughts and said he agrees all lives matter and said he also understands the message protestors are trying to make is for black people to be treated equally. Nothing further.

Mayor Price asked for a motion. Councilman Shearouse made the motion to approve the request.

RESULT	APPROVED SPECIAL EVENT
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN TAYLOR
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN FAVOR

CITY OPERATION REPORTS / WORKSHOP DISCUSSION ITEMS

*Captain Long and Community Development Director Daunte’ Gibbs requested to meet with the applicants to finalize details for the special event outside of the meeting; therefore, Mayor Price rearranged the order of the report updates to allow Captain Long and Mr. Gibbs their updates first.

PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATIONS–CAPTAIN MATTHEW LONG FOR CHIEF JESSE PATTON

Captain Long gave an update and reviewed the monthly report. Total collections for May 2020 were \$22,489.00. Officer Shumate is still out from complications with his leg and not sure when he will be returning. We extended an offer to a candidate for employment pending his prescreen results. We are hoping he will start this Friday. There was an incident on Jackson Street last week and a suspect was taken into custody by the Henry County Sheriffs office for a warrant for aggravated assault on law enforcement. The suspect had overdosed upon entering, but not deceased and transported to the hospital. Nothing further

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPERATIONS – DAUNTÉ GIBBS

Community Development Director Daunté Gibbs gave an update his department has issued 645 permits including 78 new house permits for 2020. We have issued 165 COs [134 residential and 31 commercial permits] and 271 Business Licenses issued for 2020. Mr. Gibbs said building and land disturbance activity is ongoing in various locations and new house construction continues in various subdivisions. Starbucks is approaching their final CO. Nothing further.

- **“Project Red” industrial project landscape/tree replacement plan located at 381 and 343 Davis Lake Road –**

Mr. Gibbs continued with discussion the City Municipal code requires applicants to submit a stand-alone landscape plan for review by City Council. This is for discussion only and will be revisited at the July 6, 2020 Council meeting for action. Mr. Gibbs said staff recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. *All landscaping shall be maintained along the frontage of Colvin Drive and Davis Lake Road*

2. *The required buffers shall be undisturbed; however, if the buffer is inadequate, additional planting shall be required to screen the development from residential uses*
3. *A detailed landscaping plan shall be submitted. The Community Development Director shall have final approval of the plan prior to the issuance of any permits.*
4. *Landscaping shall exceed the minimum requirements of the ordinance by including heavy landscaping throughout the entire site.*

Councilman Boone asked if the ordinance requires a certain type of tree; specifically, Leland Cypress, and Mr. Gibbs replied yes, it can be specific to require that type.

Councilman Shearouse asked if this plan benefits the neighbors who will be close to this development and Mr. Gibbs replied this is specific to “Project Red”; however, does address buffer requirements between the commercial and residential boundaries which will provide barriers. Nothing further.

City Manager Tim Young said there were previous concerns that the Rivera’s mentioned and suggested Daunte’ arrange to meet with them to answer those questions. Mr. Gibbs said he will coordinate with the Rivera’s to schedule a meeting. Nothing further.

MAIN STREET OPERATIONS –ANNA W. OGG

Mrs. Ogg gave an update the downtown has new banner frames purchased by Main Street, Inc. and the HPC granted a COA to Bart Hammock. The Catfish Rodeo is scheduled for July 18, 2020 from 8am – Noon with a cookout to follow. There will be a limit of five “take home” fish and the age limit are ages up to 13 years old. Mr. Ross McQueen has started playing bluegrass music in downtown and all the downtown businesses are open. Further, the City purchased three additional billboard spaces located at Hudson Bridge Road, Jodeco Road, and Jonesboro Road to assist with increasing hotel occupancy and support of our local businesses. Nothing further.

PUBLIC WORKS – JACK ROSE

Public Works Director Jack Rose stepped forward and gave an update public works is continuing with normal daily maintenance and upkeep including leak repairs and grass cutting. Mr. Rose reviewed the monthly report and gave an update on the Line F sewer extension. Nothing further.

Mr. Michael Brackett mentioned a light on Jackson Street and suggested it be relocated. Nothing further.

ADMINISTRATION – BERT FOSTER

Assistant City Manager Bert Foster gave an update the Tanger Park project has been released to Magnum Contracting. The extra lane between Bill Gardner and Peeksville Road still in process and scheduled to have a final field plan review in March 2021. Mr. Foster said changes were made to the final design of the Bill Gardner Parkway modification and the signal at Market Place and Highway 42 is in process. Nothing further.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD (ARB) – NONE

CITY MANAGER’S COMMENTS –

Mr. Young said we previously had a discussion on possibly providing aid to qualified businesses that suffered from the Covid-19 closures; however, after further review by the City Attorney, the City will be

redirecting some funds to what they are intended for. Tanger Outlet is operating at one hundred percent and sales have increased. Further, Mr. Young said the County is requesting a meeting on June 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. with the cities to discuss possible projects for inclusion on a referendum for a T-SPLOST (Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) to be held on November 3, 2020. They are asking each municipality to identify potential projects to accompany the referendum. Mr. Young said we are hopefully nearing completion of our annual audit which is now due by September 30 versus June 30 because of the extension offered related to COVID-19. Mr. Young said we will be reopening the City parks this week as well. Nothing further.

Councilman Greer made a comment if the County does not negotiate in the City's favor on SDS [Service Delivery Strategy] he will not be in support of a T-SPLOST. Nothing further.

Mr. Young also gave an update on the mobile Covid-19 testing site and said we are requesting one in the Hampton/Locust Grove area.

Attorney Andy Welch said the cases have declined at Piedmont Henry Hospital and discussed how we as a community can continue with assisting in that decline by maintaining our distance and limiting exposure.

- **Personnel Policy – Smoking in City buildings/vehicles – Discussion Only**

Mr. Young continued with discussion on an amendment proposing more stringent changes to the Smoking/Vaping policy to eliminate activity on city property/time.

Councilman Shearouse referenced Section 602.03.1 and said the language could come across confusing because this is a personnel policy; however, this addresses public use as well. Discussion took place.

Discussion took place with concerns not allowing smoking on city property.

Councilman Breedlove made a comment he feels like an area should be designated for employees to partake. Councilman Greer agreed with not allowing in city vehicles or city property; however, agrees they do need an area designated.

Councilman Shearouse asked if appearance is the concern and Mr. Young replied yes, and to establish a healthier environment.

Councilman Breedlove said he does not agree because smoking is not illegal and said he thinks the City is opening a box that does not need opening.

Councilman Boone asked how new hires will be handled if they use tobacco. Mr. Young replied they would know up front this is a tobacco free workplace and could make their decision to quit or not.

Attorney Andy Welch said banning the use of tobacco is not illegal; however, Council has valid questions and is your final decision. Councilman Greer said why we cannot enforce the current policy and guidelines and follow procedures for disciplinary action if employees neglect instead of creating a new policy. Nothing further.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS-

Attorney Andy Welch thanked the Ms. Gomez and Ms. Clark for their efforts and willingness to reach out to the community and said the discussion that took place is the dialogue we should be having

everywhere. Mr. Welch said thank you to Councilman Greer for his heartfelt statement and thoughts and other comments and questions received from other Council members. Nothing further.

Councilman Greer said he received a letter that addressed the current events happening around us and asked what we are doing at a City. Councilman Greer said he is hopeful that discussions like what took place tonight will continue going forward so that people will know we are concerned. Nothing further.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – NONE

ADJOURNMENT-

Mayor Price asked for a motion to adjourn. Councilman Shearouse made the motion to adjourn.

RESULT	ADOPTED
MADE MOTION	COUNCILMAN SHEAROUSE
2 ND MOTION	COUNCILMAN BOONE
VOTE	MOTION CARRIED - ALL IN-FAVOR MEETING ADJOURNED @ 8:22 PM.

Notes taken by:

Misty Spurling, City Clerk