

CITY OF THOMSON
PUBLIC HEARING AND CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 10, 2022

6:00PM

Thomson-McDuffie Government Center

Present:

Kenneth Usry, Mayor
Alton Belton, Councilmember
Keryl Corley, Councilmember
Elaine Johnson, Councilmember
John Smalley, Councilmember
Scott Whittle, Councilmember
John Waller, City Administrator
Lucretia Ferguson, City Clerk
Jimmy Plunkett, City Attorney

Also Present:

Chase Beggs, Planning & Zoning Dir.
Erin Burditt, McDuffie Progress
8 Interested Citizens

PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:00pm, Mayor Usry welcomed all to the Public Hearing concerning the Planning and Zoning Board's recommendations on three separate requests. He apologized for having the Council Meeting in the second floor Training Room, as the Elections Department still had various equipment in the Council Chambers from the November 8th General Election.

Planning and Zoning Director Chase Beggs presented the three requests and recommendations.

607 Jackson Street: Parcel OT250077 The Presbyterian Church has asked, in an R-1 zone, for a variance in the Sign Ordinance to replace their existing monument sign with a new monument sign which will have an LED message portion. The P&Z Board unanimously recommended that the variance request be approved.

2208 Harrison Road: Parcel 00410005 A request has been made to rezone 4.12 acres of an 8 acre tract in order to operate a storage building sales lot across from Wal-Mart; this would change the zoning from R-1A to B-1. The P&Z Board unanimously recommended that the change in zoning be approved with the provision that the blighted building be rehabilitated or demolished.

648 Ellington Avenue: Parcel OT210001 A Conditional Use request has been submitted to open a barber shop in an existing commercial building in an R-1B zone. The P&Z Board recommended that the Conditional Use request be approved.

CALL FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

There being no questions, comments, or other concerns, Mayor Usry closed the public meeting at 6:03pm.

COUNCIL MEETING

At 6:03pm, Mayor Usry called the regularly scheduled City Council meeting to order. Mayor Usry gave the invocation, followed by the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag.

CITIZEN COMMENT:

Julie Klare and Ayla Gardler both spoke on receiving notice that chickens are not allowed in the City Limits. They were assured that the City would respond. Cora Jackson spoke on her unsatisfactory interaction with the Thomson Police Department and children playing in the street in front of her residence in Rollingwood Apartments on Mendel Avenue.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Usry asked that the Thomson-McDuffie Chamber of Commerce request for various street closings and “snow” in December be added. The motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson to add the requested street closings as Item d under Business and to approve the agenda. A vote of 5-0 in favor was taken.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. City Council Meeting, October 10, 2022—A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to approve the minutes. A vote of 5-0 was taken to approve them.

BUSINESS:

- a. Recommendation of Planning & Zoning, re: Three Requests:
 - I. A motion was made by Councilmember Belton and seconded by Councilmember Whittle that the Council accept the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board to approve a variance for a new sign at 607 Jackson Street that was presented in the Public Hearing. By a vote of 5-0, the motion was approved.
 - II. A motion was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to accept the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board to approve the re-zoning of 4.12 acres from R1-A to B-1, with the specified conditions as presented in the Public Hearing, for 2208 Harrison Road. The motion passed with a 5-0 vote.
 - III. A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to accept the recommendation of the Planning & Zoning Board’s approval for a change from R-1B to Conditional Use as a barber shop for 648 Ellington Avenue. A vote of 5-0 passed the motion.
- b. Purchasing Policy:

The City Purchasing Policy has been studied by the Council for over a month. A motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Whittle to adopt the Purchasing Policy. A vote of 5-0 passed the motion.
- c. Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG) Policy:

The Council has also had this policy to study for over a month. Councilmember Belton made the motion to adopt the FOG Policy as written, and seconded by Councilmember Corley. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0.

d. Thomson-McDuffie Chamber of Commerce Snow request:

The request consists of closing Railroad Street from Main Street to the crosswalk at Hogie Joe's on December 1st and on December 22nd, the Knox Shopping Center Main Street entrance on December 8th, and Journal Street from Central Avenue to Greenway Street on December 15th. For each event, the Chamber asks that the closures be from 4:30pm until 7:30pm. A motion to approve the requests was made by Councilmember Whittle and seconded by Councilmember Johnson. A vote of 5-0 passed the motion.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Council Report:

Councilmember Belton reported that the efforts to slow speeding cars on Old Washington Road had made an impact. CA Waller noted that the data from the Police Department's speed detector showed that there were several 50s and 60s recorded with a high of 77 mph, all in a 35 mph zone. Mayor Usry spoke on the installation of speed humps that would be a more permanent solution.

City Administrator Report:

CA Waller told the Council that Terrie Bly of the Thomson Police Department was awarded the District 7 Administrative Assistant of the Year at a recent conference of the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police. There will be a FY2023 Budget Hearing on November 17th. The Land Bank has voted to acquire and demolish three more blighted properties.

Mayor Report:

The Mayor reported that the registration paperwork for GMA's Cities United conference in Atlanta has been handed out and class choices must be handed in by Monday, November 14th. There are many activities coming up in December, and asked all to check the calendar.

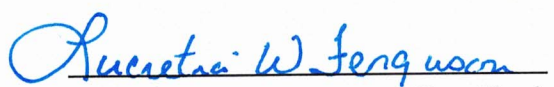
EXECUTIVE SESSION:

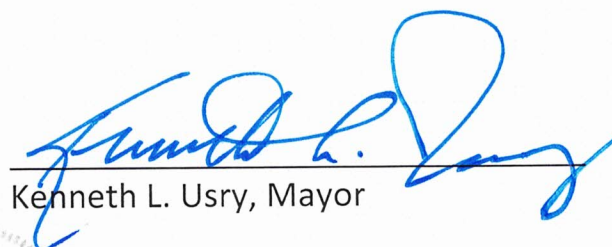
At 6:26pm, Councilmember Smalley made the motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Personnel and was seconded by Councilmember Whittle. A vote of 5-0 opened the Executive Session.

At 6:55pm, a motion was made by Councilmember Johnson and seconded by Councilmember Corley to return to regular session. Executive Session was ended by a 5-0 vote.

There being no other business before the Council, a motion for adjournment was made by Councilmember Smalley and seconded by Councilmember Johnson. A vote was taken and the meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm. (5-0)

Respectfully submitted,


Lucretia W. Ferguson, City Clerk


Kenneth L. Usry, Mayor

