

Canton, Georgia

*110 Academy Street
Canton, Georgia 30114*



Minutes - Final - Final

Friday, March 12, 2021

9:00 AM

Community Development Process Committee

Virtual Meeting

Public Call In: 1-617-675-4444 PIN: 745 972 825 2372#

City Council

1. Call to Order

Present:

*Mayor Bill Grant
Mayor Pro Tempore JoEllen Wilson
Councilmember Sandy McGrew
Councilmember Shawn Tolan
Councilmember Will Carlan
Mr. Billy Peppers, City Manager
Mr. Nathan Ingram, Assistant City Manager
Mr. Bobby Dyer, City Attorney
Mr. Ken Patton, Community Development Director
Ms. Annie Fortner, City Clerk*

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Grant.

2. Discuss the Community Development Project Review Process for City Council

Mayor Grant stated there are currently two main issues with the review process. One issue is lack of time for discussion between the public hearing that is held before Council and the time for voting on the project. The second issue is the current process eliminates a public hearing that was held with the Planning Commission before it is presented to Council. Both issues leave citizens with little time to submit public comments. Mayor Grant stated Council could look to adopt a new process that rectifies these concerns or reconsider eliminating the Planning Commission and selecting new appointments. City Manager Billy Peppers outlined an updated three-month review process which includes applications being listed on Council agendas five times. Council may meet with the applicant after staff presents the case file during a Council meeting which will occur prior to the public hearing. During these meetings with the applicant, staff will be present to take notes for the case file. Following the public hearing, staff will work with the applicant to address any concerns or questions. Approved projects will be added to the City's website for public information. Community Development Director Ken Patton discussed the state required timeline for notification of the public hearing. Mr. Peppers stated the notifications will go out sometime after the second meeting of the first month. Mayor Grant asked if placing the notification of the application on the Council agenda ahead of the state required notification is allowed. City Attorney Bobby Dyer stated yes. The only state required notification is the sign to be placed on the subject property. All other notifications are done by local ordinance. Mr. Dyer stated some thought needs to be given to how many changes are allowed on a project before requiring the applicant to start the public hearing process over. Some of these changes are occurring after the public hearing has been held and the public is not aware of them. Mayor Grant stated there are also times that Council has placed conditions on projects between the public hearing meeting and the voting meeting that is not known to the public. Mayor Grant asked if the public may speak about the application during public comment following the notification at the second meeting held in the first month. Mr. Dyer stated the City should encourage comments through email so they may be included in the record. Anyone who comments about an application during the public input portion of the Council meeting should be directed to the public hearing. Mr. Peppers stated any application that is received by staff will be listed on the Council

agenda during the second meeting of the first month and have the date of the public hearing. The full application will be provided to Council on the first meeting of the second month. During the second meeting of the first month, the item will be moved to New Business where staff will present all case details. The public hearing will be conducted during the first meeting of the third month. During the last meeting of the third month, the case will be listed under Old Business for action. Councilmember McGrew stated citizens learn a great deal about the project during the public hearing and then do not have time to get their comments to Council. Mr. Dyer discussed the possibility of requiring the applicant to conduct a public participation meeting on the front end. This meeting allows the applicant to directly interact with the citizens and hear any concerns they may have. Mr. Peppers stated a list of the applications submitted can be added to the City's email blast. Mayor Pro Tempore Wilson asked if it is acceptable to delay making a motion on an application. Mr. Dyer stated yes. Mayor Grant stated the vote can be delayed but another public hearing would not be held. Mr. Patton stated an item can be tabled one time. Mayor Grant discussed comments that have come in from citizens after public hearings in the past. Mayor Grant noted there may be several large projects coming up in the next few months and stated delaying large projects each time they are heard puts them behind. Mayor Grant encouraged Council to reach out to citizens about projects to receive feedback. Councilmember Tolan stated there are many benefits to having applicants hold a public participation meeting and discussed the importance of media coverage at Council meetings. Mayor Grant asked if public participation meetings would be required for all projects and how those are scheduled. Mr. Dyer stated they are town hall type meetings and Council can decide when they are required. Mr. Peppers stated these meetings are generally held on private property. Mr. Dyer suggested the public participation meetings be required for everyone. The applicant can come before Council requesting the requirement for the meeting be waived if it is a smaller project. Mr. Patton discussed public participation meeting requirements from other jurisdictions including an attendance log and meeting notes. Mr. Patton suggested looking at distance requirements as to the notification of the participation meeting. Mr. Patton stated he will work on an ordinance amendment to require this participation meeting. Mr. Peppers asked if the meeting is generally held before or after the project application is submitted. Mr. Patton stated after submitting the application but there is nothing that states they cannot have the meeting before submitting. Mr. Peppers asked at what point would be the applicant be required to submit the information from the meeting so it can be added to the record. Mr. Patton stated within 45 days of submitting the application. Mayor Grant requested the public participation meeting be added to the proposed timeline created by Mr. Peppers and submitted to Council for review. Mayor Grant asked that the applicant discuss how they adhere to the City's roadmap during the public participation meeting. Mr. Patton stated the public hearing application has been amended to include a sheet that must be signed by the applicant acknowledging they have read and understand the City's housing study and roadmap. The applicant's letter of intent is also to reflect how they adhere to the roadmap and housing study.

3. Adjourn

Mayor Pro Tempore Wilson made a motion to adjourn. Councilmember McGrew seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.