

The special called meeting of the City Council of the City of Newnan, Georgia was held on Thursday, July 25, 2019 at 6:30 p. m. in the Richard A. Bolin Council Chambers of City Hall with Mayor Keith Brady presiding.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Brady called the special meeting to order and delivered the invocation.

PRESENT

Mayor Keith Brady: Councilman members present: Ray DuBose; Cynthia E. Jenkins; Paul Guillaume; Dustin Koritko and George Alexander. Council member absent; Rhodes Shell. Also present: City Manager Cleatus Phillips; Planning Director, Tracy Dunnavant; Assistant City Manager, Hasco Craver; Planning & Zoning Administrative Assistant, Tina Fronebarger; City Attorney, Brad Sears and Police Chief, Douglas "Buster" Meadows.

BOY SCOUT TROOP

He recognized Christopher Slay from Boy Scout Troup 55 for being in attendance for his communication badge.

CONTINUATION PUBLIC HEARING – REZONING REQUEST 6.667± ACRES LOCATED EAST BROAD STREET – KNOWN AS CALDWELL TANKS PROPERTY (TAX PARCEL #s N04 0010 006 AND N04 0012 001): MELISSA GRIFFS ON BEHALF OF THE RESIDENTIAL GROUP (RZ2019-05)

Mayor Brady explained this was a continuation to the public hearing from July 16th from the Residential Group request to rezone 6.667 acres located at East Broad Street, which is known as Caldwell Tank from CBD to Mixed-Use Development. He explained tonight there will be a presentation by staff, input from the community and a chance for the applicant to speak. He explained the public hearing etiquette, how this meeting is informal, and pointed out all exits for the attendees. Mayor Brady explained this meeting is the first of three meetings, as at the last meeting we heard from citizens opposed, the applicant, and those in favor of the project. He explained those in opposition were opposed for several reasons and that we desire to see what the community wants to see. He said last week we heard the following topics: development on the one-acre lot on the east side of the railroad tract, density of the apartments, lack of architectural compatibility between the proposal and historic district in downtown Newnan, lack of adherence to the comprehensive plan and LCI, lack of parking, increase of traffic, and the ratio of the commercial retail space and residential. He said there are other comments we heard but can't rehash them all. He mentioned the Council wants to hear what you would like to see with this property.

Cleatus Phillips stated this was a critical site for the city and the decision could impact us for several years. He thanked the citizens for their input and involvement. Phillips went into a presentation outlining Newnan at a Glance (provided 2000 stats to current day); Housing Characteristics (provided 2000 stats to current day); Planning for the City's Future (Comprehensive Plan 2016-2036); The Plan's Components; Community Involvement Plan; The Comprehensive Plan – Goals and Policies; The Comprehensive Plan – Housing Goals; The Comprehensive Plan – Caldwell Tanks; Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study; LCI Public Engagement Process; Caldwell Tanks in LCI Study – Concept A, B & C; Current Zoning (Central Business District); TRG Proposed Project; and, in conclusion, stated the City values and wants the citizens input. A question was asked, "What change(s) would you like to see made to the proposed project?" He explained they are lifting the 15 minutes tonight to give the public an opportunity to be heard; however, he would like everyone to respect each other's time.

Susan Green voiced her concerns...opposed to the proposal for Caldwell Tanks. She asked if they plan to preserve and protect the integrity of our historic district of neighborhoods and downtown as you pledge, or will you allow for Newnan to become just another city of high density apartments. She said the community overwhelmingly opposes this and asked what the Council would like their legacy to be.

Gary Martin voiced his concerns...discussed density being serious in his opinion, the developer holding the property for 10 years, the difference it makes to him is the sincerity of someone who stands up in front of us and tells us they want to be involved in this community for that length of time when their track records show something totally different, and that he loves this community.

Jack Binion voiced his concerns...not thinking outside the box as one draw is downtown, city has talent. Frost said the city should buy the property, there being other ways to do this as true mixed use, asked why developer wants downtown, and he doesn't feel people will be rushing downtown by foot.

Brant Frost voiced his concerns...the city should buy the brownfield and greenfield, bring an RFP for a high quality to sell to someone we choose, he mentioned Delta and tax allocations, public benefit, high quality, the developer will have a great year even next year (but Newnan won't if they bring the project there), and that we don't need the first proposal as Newnan only needs this if the right project comes along.

Stan Topal voiced his concerns...this project being the wrong project on the wrong plot, this is Newnan not Atlanta, and we are not Palmetto, we are alive and let's keep it alive.

Jocelyn Palmer voiced her concerns...discussed the developer will be using a tax credit, Congress passing the Job Act in 2017 which is an economic stimulus bill and one of its features was an Opportunity Zone Tax Credit, provided explanation of tax credit which the developer is planning to use, she explained how it will affect Newnan, and concluded that capitalism is a good thing but not in this case.

Matthew Swope voiced his concerns...to start with the draw not the place to live (being from Newnan), mentioned opportunities on the square for open container to draw people in, how to draw in millennials, mentioned Carrollton and LaGrange having fantastic amphitheatres, liked having mixed use, how we intend to fill 348 apartments when we don't have the draw yet, modifying for a smaller apartment complex with mixed use as well as ensuring we have businesses to go there, discussed the Beltline, Ponce City Market, and asked if we give a reason to be here first or a place to live.

Katie Chapman voiced her concerns...stated Newnan is rapidly growing but still has the small town charm, decrease of homeownership in the city, read an excerpt from the comprehensive plan, the proposal is not consistent with the goals of the City, incompatible with the historic district downtown, the current zoning allows for 12 units per acre, millennials also want homeownership, most of our salaries are half of what is proposed, the AJC having an article recently about Fayette County having the largest flight "out of town" by millennials in the United States, she loves Newnan and is against the proposal, and recommended amphitheatres like Tuscaloosa, a parking deck, townhomes, mixed use or park on the one-acre site.

Jason Kanner voiced his concerns...effect on traffic, there is a lot to take into consideration, asked what will happen to downtown during construction and if anyone had an answer to that. Cleatus Phillips

mentioned that the applicants will be addressing that during the August 6th meeting and they are here taking notes.

Hannah Chapman voiced her concerns...discussed what she and fellow graduates talk about regarding plans after college regarding where they want to move, work, play and having a work/life balance. She concluded with stating what we need is not more apartments but something to draw people here and she mentioned a park, baseball stadium, and an amphitheater like Tuscaloosa.

Lynn Chapman voiced her concerns...discussed being at a disadvantage, they having gone through local building, local developers, local architects and the city process to build their home, this project having forced her to be a part of the community, mentioned the apartments are not suited for this location, and concluded with we need a park, boutique hotel, townhomes but not 348 apartments.

Phyllis Graham voiced her concerns...she adores Newnan, having a bargaining chip to make this deal work such as a lovely park across the railroad tracks, connectivity to the LINC where we can connect other parts of the city to downtown, create a greenspace and having maybe 295 apartments. She explained she knows people who choose apartment living and there is a reason people come to Newnan. It is the experience of Newnan that is creating a draw.

Chuck Landrum voiced his concerns...effect of density, seeing it over and over again where the apartments lower the rents, mentioned Camelot on Old National Highway, understanding there is a cost to coming down on density and maybe the city can help alleviate that, make it more commercial, a park on the other side, pay the city back with additional parking to help support the downtown and concluded with wanting something there but this not being it.

Caroline Master voiced her concerns...if rezoned does the developer have to stick to what is proposed or can they deviate, the other concern is looking at other projects having no greenspace. Cleatus Phillips explained that the rezoning has proffered conditions that is a statement of what will be delivered and Council will list those conditions. He concluded with what is proposed will have to be delivered.

Michael Miller voiced his concerns...the council should deny the proposal, the community should pull together to court a developer we need for this site, LCI references Ponce City Market, mentioned other developments like Bottle Works, Newnan Lofts, and Cabbage Town. Miller said he would like to see them keep buildings 1, 5, 3, and 4 and incorporate those with mixed use, that the plans be in accordance with preservation standards, reduce density, have a viable parking solution, and concluded with the historic character of Newnan is at stake here.

Brant Frost V voiced his concerns...urged Council not to retreat from the 20 years of intentional effort the city did to preserve the downtown area, mentioned the work of 50 years can be undone in just a minute or a lifetime reputation can be undone with one bad mistake, representing the constituents, and concluded with these people are the ones who elected you, they were in their right minds then and are in their rights minds now.

Barbara Willey voiced her concerns...prefers a community use, open space like Greenville or First Avenue parks, a park for children to play, soccer field, amphitheater, community recreation center with swimming pool, shopping district with small boutiques, restaurants, possibly a boutique grocery store such as Whole Foods or Trader Joes, having shops on the bottom level with loft apartments above (one level only), single family homes with open space, townhomes with open space, lower apartments to 30, open parking spaces, and lastly listen to constituents and if you are not listening, you are not representing us.

John Palmer voiced his concern...not wanting density but homeownership, the city trying to place a square peg in a round hole, and asked when the council will debate Mr. Frost's proposal. Mayor Brady explained they could not until after they made their decision on the current proposal. Phillips explained the applicant is entitled to due process under this rezoning request and what we are doing here tonight is a first, but we have to protect the due process for the applicant. He explained council will vote on the proposal or the amended proposal and that is what they have to do by law. John Palmer mentioned the three concepts and Phillips stated the three concepts were based on public input and the applicant is entitled to his due process under the law.

Scott Frederick voiced his concerns...the comprehensive plan's participation being less than ideal, this project does not conform to this plan, we should have the applicant withdraw the application, there being nothing wrong with apartments per say in the right place with appropriate density, mentioned the LCI study regarding the one-acre lot being excluded from mixed use, mentioned parking, reduce density, the external façade being compatible with surrounding area, and concluded with a suggestion to thank the Residential Group on their interest in our city and send them on the way.

Chris McBride voiced her concerns...explained she has never been to a Council meeting, asked if after they vote will she be able to ask each Council member why they voted for this proposal and are you obligated to give us an answer. Mayor Brady clarified the question on how we vote. McBride asked will we find out why you voted yes or no for this fiasco. Mayor Brady stated they are making an assumption there and should not assume that we have taken a position on this request as we are bringing you forward to get your opinion. Mayor Brady stated he would be happy to answer that question for anyone who would ask him.

Frances Kidd voiced her concerns...having to look ahead and see when Newnan is not going to be desirable. She said she grew up here and left as there was nothing here to do and it is so much better now. She doesn't want to look back to see when they lose control of it.

Katie Noles voiced her concerns...not necessarily opposed to a large development as they welcome new businesses. She mentioned a pattern within the downtown area and its pushing out small businesses like themselves, stated the market in Newnan is crazy right now and its almost unaffordable for small businesses to stay here. She said to keep that in mind, they are at the point of having to look at Grantville, Moreland or Carrollton because the market around here has gotten so insane with the pricing. She thinks something like an amphitheater or Ponce City market is a better use than 350 apartments and feels very strongly that this is not an option for the downtown area, an amphitheater is a great idea.

Phillips thanked everyone for the participation. Gary Martin asked for direction for the next time they come and what they can expect. Mayor Brady mentioned Cleatus Phillips will get something on the website that will be a direct link and it will be titled Caldwell Rezoning. Melissa Griffis, attorney for the applicant, came forward and thanked everyone for coming out tonight and that she has been writing furiously taking notes. She said they welcome this opportunity from Mayor and Council and appreciate you all coming. She said our plan is to look at all of this to hopefully be able to respond the next meeting that is set for Tuesday, August 6th, as tonight was to hear from you all and to look at the drawing board.

Hasco Craver reminded the audience to leave the completed comment cards in the basket in the hall. Mayor Brady stated there are lots of good and positive suggestions that the applicant is listening to regarding what could happen to the property that is different from the proposal. He encouraged everyone to attend the next meeting. Phillips explained the format for the August 6th meeting.

Lynn Chapman asked about time limits of public comments. Mayor Brady said that he is not a fan of time limits and would say no regarding time limits, but indicated that the same topics do not need to be repeated over and over. Instead, they would like to hear any new objections and that he would like to hear comments in the response of their revision. Lynn Chapman mentioned they have not run into anyone who knew about the public input (referring to Comprehensive Plan). Mayor Brady said they will count on her to be a part of that process in the future and they love citizen participation. He said this is unique and could have a multigenerational impact. He said they are trying to be transparent and open. A gentleman in the audience asked when Councilman Shell will be back. Mayor Brady said Councilman Shell's trip was planned months ago, well before this application. Phillips said he expects him to be back for the next meeting. A lady asked about due process. Phillips explained.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilman Alexander, seconded by Council Koritko to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 p.m. to continue the public hearing.

MOTION CARRIED (6 - 0)

Della Hill, City Clerk

Keith Brady, Mayor