

CITY OF LAGRANGE, GEORGIA  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL

December 22, 2020

Present: Mayor Jim Thornton; Council Members Mark Mitchell, Tom Gore, Nathan Gaskin, Jim Arrington and Willie Edmondson

Absent: Council Member LeGree McCamey

Also Present: City Manager Meg Kelsey; City Clerk Sue Olson; City Attorney Jeff Todd; Communications Manager Katie Van Schoor; Community Development Director Alton West; Strategic Initiatives Manager Mark Kostial; Police Chief Lou Dekmar

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Thornton, the invocation was given by Council Member Dr. W. T. Edmondson, and Mayor Thornton led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

On a motion by Mr. Gaskin seconded by Mr. Edmondson, Council unanimously approved the minutes of the regular Council meeting held on December 8, 2020.

A public hearing was held to receive comments on a request to exempt restaurants and special event centers within the C-2 and C-3 districts from durational restrictions for portable concession stands and to modify durational restrictions for all portable concession stands. No comments were received and Council heard the first reading of the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGRANGE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY; TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE OF THE CITY SO AS TO EXEMPT RESTAURANTS AND SPECIAL EVENT CENTERS WITHIN THE C-2 AND C-3 ZONING DISTRICTS FROM THE DURATIONAL RESTRICTIONS FOR PORTABLE CONCESSION STANDS; TO MODIFY DURATIONAL RESTRICTIONS AS TO ALL PORTABLE CONCESSION STANDS; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO FIX AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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A public hearing was held to receive comments on a request to remove window area restrictions for vacant buildings within the C-2 district. No comments were received and Council heard the first reading of the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGRANGE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY; TO AMEND THE SIGN ORDINANCE SO AS TO REMOVE WINDOW AREA RESTRICTIONS FOR GROUND FLOOR WINDOWS OF VACANT BUILDINGS WITHIN THE C-2 DISTRICT; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO FIX AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

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Ms. Van Schoor introduced Haylee Ward, who served as an intern for the City for 6 weeks earlier this year. Ms. Ward, a Troup High School Senior, shadowed Department Heads to learn more about their duties and functions of the City. Ms. Ward was very appreciative of her opportunity with the City.

Chief Dekmar presented a plaque of appreciation to retiring State Court Judge Jeanette Little. Chief Dekmar recognized her commitment to the City and expressed that she was always a great source of guidance. Judge Little thanked Chief Dekmar and the Council for honoring her.

Kwesi Dowell came before the Council with concerns about houses being declared unsafe and being demolished when the city has homeless women and children that need shelter. Mr. Dowell asked why the City could not repair the homes to be used for much needed shelter. Mayor Thornton explained to Mr. Dowell that public funds cannot be used on private property. He also explained that this is a judicial process and that the next level for appeal would be to the Superior Court, not to the City Council.

Mr. Kostial presented information to the Council regarding a Board of Planning and Zoning Appeals recommendation to annex/zone property located at 71 Busch Drive. On a motion by Mr. Gaskin seconded by Mr. Edmondson, Council voted unanimously to call for a public hearing to be held on January 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Edmondson acknowledged guests in the audience regarding a second reading on tonight's agenda to rezone property located on Jordans Way and Aaron Drive.

Ms. Kelsey reported to the Council that the LaGrange Police Department is requesting to purchase 50 cameras that will be placed at 15 intersections within the city. Ms. Kelsey reported that this would require a budget amendment of \$185,000. On a motion by Mr. Edmondson seconded by Mr. Arrington, Council voted unanimously to approve the budget amendment and for staff to move forward with the purchase of the cameras.

A public hearing was held on December 8, 2020, to receive comments on rezoning property located on Jordans Way and Aaron Drive. At that time, there were no comments and Council proceeded with the first reading of the ordinance. However, neighbors appeared at the December 22, 2020 meeting, and stated they had no knowledge of the public hearing and wished to speak out about the rezoning request. Mayor Thornton agreed to allow brief comments before the second reading and vote for this ordinance. Patricia Stargell, a resident of Tucker Cottages, Charles Frye and Sam Cameron, also area residents, all spoke in opposition to the rezoning. Earnest Pickett, Construction Superintendent for the LaGrange Housing Authority, stated that residents in the area were notified about the public hearing by distribution of a letter. LHA Board Member Earnest Ward expressed his concern for the neighbors, and stated he wants to be sure that everything possible was done to notify them of the rezoning process. Mr. Edmondson stated that he would like for Ms. Heard, Director of the LaGrange Housing Authority, to be sensitive to the surrounding community, regarding the placing of residents in the newly constructed area. On a motion by Mr. Gore seconded by Mr. Arrington, Messrs. Gore, Arrington, Mitchell and Gaskin voted in favor of the rezoning, and Mr. Edmondson abstained. Therefore, the rezoning passed with a vote of 4-0.

### **AN ORDINANCE**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGRANGE TO AMEND THE CODE OF THE CITY; TO AMEND THE ZONING MAP AND ORDINANCES OF THE CITY SO AS TO RECLASSIFY THE USE ZONE OF REAL ESTATE LOCATED ON JORDANS WAY AND AARON DRIVE AND OWNED BY WEST GEORGIA STAR, INC.; TO REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES; TO FIX AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAGRANGE, GEORGIA HEREBY ORDAIN AS FOLLOWS:

#### **SECTION 1:**

That the zoning map and ordinances of the City of LaGrange be amended so as to reclassify from use zone R-5, A1200 (residential district) to R-2 (residential district) the following described real estate, to wit:

All those tracts or parcels of land lying and being in Land Lots 138 of the 6<sup>th</sup> Land District, Troup County, Georgia, and more specifically described as Tax Map Numbers: 051-1B-003-042; 051-1B-003-043; 051-1B-003-044; 051-1B-003-045; 051-1B-003-046; 051-1B-003-047; 051-1B-003-052; 051-1B-003-053; and 051-1B-003-054.

**SECTION 2:**

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict with this ordinance are hereby repealed.

**SECTION 3:**

This ordinance, after adoption by the Council and upon approval by the Mayor, shall become effective immediately.

INTRODUCED AND FIRST READING \_\_\_\_\_ December 8, 2020

SUBMITTED TO MAYOR AND ADOPTED \_\_\_\_\_ December 22, 2020

SUBMITTED TO MAYOR AND APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ December 22, 2020

BY: /s/ James C. Thornton, Mayor

ATTEST: /s/ Sue Olson, City Clerk

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In good news, closing comments, Ms. Van Schoor reported that the City offices recently held a holiday decorating contest and it was a great hit that fostered team building and holiday spirit. She then showed a video of the festivities.

There was no other business and the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 p.m. by Mayor Thornton.

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Mayor

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City Clerk