

CITY OF CORNELIA
MINUTES OF MEETING
September 6, 2022

The Cornelia City Commission met in a Workshop Session on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at 5 PM in the Cornelia Municipal Building Conference Room, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following Commissioners were present: Tony Cook, Janice Griggs, Mark Reed, and Don Bagwell. Also, present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Mayor Borrow opened the meeting and City Manager, Donald Anderson, went over the items on the agenda. The Commissioners discussed the Public Hearing to request rezoning 381 Irvin Street from R-1B to R-2. Commissioner Reed was concerned on how you put 15 townhomes on 1 ½ acres of land. Commissioner Griggs as well as the other commissioners were concerned about how close it was to the road as well as the traffic. Commissioner Bagwell said that in most cities you are now seeing more dense areas due to demand for housing, and he thinks that it will continue to become for dense with growth. Mayor Borrow ask the commissioners if they could think of anything they would like to see done different on the plans. All the Commissioners would like to see a traffic study done and the plans revised for fewer units and better parking. Mayor and Commissioners discussed amending the zoning ordinance to allow for fiber cement material to be used as part of the façade. The Planning Board recommended approval. They discussed the project in front of Attorney Campbell & Campbell's building, and it was discovered that the bid was for just concrete. To keep the historical look of the building it will cost an additional \$30,00 to use brick. City Manager Anderson requested that we approve the bid and then do a change order Chase West, Carter, and Sloope Engineering firm spoke about the stormwater utility fees, he said they had conducted a study and with the increase of materials now he thinks the fee needs to be increased to continue with the services we have now. He proposed going from \$4.50 to \$5.96 per month. City Manager Anderson said he thinks the increase is too high and proposed \$5.25 per month. Mr. Anderson said that he has received several requests to widen Stonecypher St., He said with Carter & Sloope's estimate of \$2,473,700 not including to purchase the right of way from the RR it would be better to make it a one-way street. Residents from South Hoyt Street have requested a speed bump complaining that the road is used as a cut through. Mr. Anderson suggested that we close the Hoyt Street Bridge temporarily and see if that resolves the issue. They discussed the other items on the agenda.

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor

CITY OF CORNELIA
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September 6, 2022

The Cornelia City Commission met in Regular Session on Tuesday, September 6, 2022, at 6 pm in the Cornelia Municipal Building Courtroom, 181 Larkin Street, Cornelia, GA. Mayor, John Borrow, called the meeting to order and the following members were present: Commissioners Don Bagwell, Tony Cook, Mark Reed, and Janice Griggs. Also present: City Attorney, Steve Campbell, City Manager, Donald Anderson, IT Director, Jeremy Dundore, and City Clerk, Debbie Turner.

Commissioner Reed gave the invocation and Commissioner Griggs led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to Approve the Agenda, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 -0

Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to approve the August 2nd minutes as submitted, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 – 0

City Manager's Monthly Report- City Manager, Dee Anderson reported that we are almost fully staffed in every department except for 2 open positions in public works and 1 in the Fire Dept. Mr. Anderson said that we have working with FCS to transition to privatizing sanitation. FCS will officially begin trash pickup on October 3rd and that our staff will ride along with them to learn the route. All backdoor residents have been notified that with written proof from their doctor that they are unable to push the can to the road they will still have backdoor pick up. City Manager Anderson stated that the permanent radar sign has been installed on Elrod Street and that we also have two temporary signs that can be moved if there is another issue in town. Mr. Anderson also reported that he has spoken with a representative from Norfolk Southern about our railroad crossing on Main Street. He said that the crossing has received some much attention for Congressman Clyde and Senator Warnock's office that they would like to use their own employees to complete the project, they hope to have it finished in the next 60 days. The Census Bureau has received our request to investigate our population numbers. We have challenged the numbers since our records indicate that we have 1,905 residences in April 2020, and they counted 1,800 residents. It should take 3 months to complete the investigation. His report is made an integral part of the minutes.

Public Forum (Comments Limited to 3 Minutes)

Peter Madruga came forward to explain about a Documentary called Cornelia a Train Town. He said that he has been working on it for a year now and that it about two train rails connecting. Common Ground will show the documentary twice on September 17th and October the 15th. He invited everyone to come out and see these free events. Mayor Borrow thanked Mr. Madgura for all his hard work on the documentary.

Carolyn Quist from 367 Irvin Street came to speak in opposition to the rezoning of 381 Irvin Street. Ms. Quist read a letter that came from 20 of the residents from Irvin and Hoyt Street. Stating issues that they felt would affect them and their daily life she said that this is a family neighborhood with a lot of elderly residents, some that have lived there for over 40 years. Ms. Quist said that they ask for a traffic study in June and the residents ask the project to be denied for the safety and wellbeing of the residents.

Audrey Davenport, President of Habersham County Historical Society said she would like to thank the city for putting the announcement of the back of utility bills about the National Hispanic event. She said that was awesome and invited the mayor to come out and speak during the event. This event is held in conjunction with Historical Society event on the day of the BRAF.

Mayor Borrow closed the Public Forum

Old Business

None

Public Hearings

Request to re-zone 381 Irvin Street from R-1-B to R-2- Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing, James Irvin, Foothills Land Design came forward representing the applicant ZKS Properties. Mr. Irvin showed the renderings of what the townhomes would look like. He said there could be 18 units, but they are proposing 15, he said that after hearing some of the residents' complaints they looked at parking being in the back. Mr. Irvin explained that would not work due to the property line and stormwater retention pond needed. Mr. Irvin said that that created a map located of downtown from where the property is at. The businesses located on Hodges that are in the entertainment district are excited about the proposed townhomes. He said that they have stated the need for affordable housing in Cornelia.

Commissioner Reed ask if the rent would be affordable for someone that works in downtown. Mr. Irvin said that in the planning board meeting Mr. Stewart stated that the rent would be \$1500.00 to \$1800.00 per month. Commissioner Griggs is concerned about the traffic and ask if he could be moved further back from the street. She said she just doesn't think it is a good fit for the area. Commissioner Bagwell said that he does not either, but he thinks that cities are going to become much denser due to the continued growth. David Oppenheimer from 352 S. Hoyt St. said we is not against the development but is opposed to it just because of the density in the area. Carol Shedd from 149 S. Hoyt Street said she thinks that it would be too much for Hoyt & Irvin and how would the traffic back into the street stating there is already too much traffic. Mayor Borrow closed the Public Hearing. The Commissioners said they are not opposed to the townhomes but would like to see a different configuration from Mr. Stewart. Commissioner Cook made the motion to table the request, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Request to Amend Section 42-172.2 of the Zoning Ordinance- Mayor Borrow opened the Public Hearing. City Manager Anderson explained that our current ordinance requires all building facades that face the street have brick, stone, textured masonry block, stucco, or wood siding. Staff is recommending that we amend the ordinance to include Nichiha (Fiber Cement material). The Planning Board has recommended approval of the amendment. Mayor Borrow closed the Public Hearing after no comments were heard. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to post for public comment, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

New Business

Carl Vinson Summer Fellowship Presentation- Clark Stancil from Carl Vinson explained that the Presentation presented is just ideas on what can be improved. He said the City has already started some great things and the renderings is what can be built upon. Mr. Stancil introduced Garrison Taylor. Ms. Taylor explained the areas that she focused on was Infill Development, Streetscape, and potential event space. Ms. Garrison showed renderings of Wyly Street sidewalk extension, Hwy 441 Trail. Hodges Street and Multiple locations around Cornelia. She then showed renderings of Infill Development of the old Habersham Hardware Warehouses, Wells & Irvin Street, and some very impressive renderings of the old Cornelia Motors Façade Redesign and what a potential Amphitheater could look like in this area. Mayor Borrow thanked her and said he could tell she had put a lot of thought into the potential projects.

Resolution to Amend the Stormwater Utility Fee - Chase West from Carter & Sloope explained that since the Stormwater fee was implemented the cost of materials has increased significantly. A study was conducted and to maintain the quality of service that we need the ERU fee should be increased to \$5.96 per month. City Manager said that the increase is considerably more and would recommend \$5.25 per month. Commissioner Cook made the motion to increase the stormwater fee to \$5.25 per month, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Appointments to the Comp Plan Stakeholder Committee – City Manager Anderson we have 5 applicants Kim Kaminski, Cliff Baird, David Alston Prater, Jason Smith, and Suzanne Dow. Commissioner Bagwell made the motion to appoint the applicants, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved 4 - 0

Amendment to the City Financial Policy – City Manager Anderson explained that with the cost of materials and supplies going up in the last 2 years the departments heads spending limit needs to be increased. The Public Safety Director and Utilities Director would need to increase to \$5000. While the departments heads would increase to \$2000. Commissioner Cook made the motion to increase the spending limits, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Request to Make Stonecypher Street One Way - City Manager Anderson stated that we have had several residents request to widen Stonecypher St. or make it a one way. The estimated cost to widen the street would be \$2,473,700 and that does not include purchasing the right of way from the Railroad. City Manager Anderson suggested that we make it one way from between Lee Street and Camp Creek Rd. Commissioner Cook made the motion to make the street one way between Lee and Camp Creek Rd., seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Recommendation to Close the Hoyt Street Bridge – Residents on South Hoyt Street have requested a speed bump due to the amount of traffic. The road is used as a cut through from Baldwin. City Manager Anderson said he thinks a better option than a speed bump would be to temporarily close the Hoyt Street Bridge, in hopes of resolving the issue. Commissioner Reed made the motion to temporarily close the Hoyt Street Bridge and evaluate if it is a solution to the traffic problem, seconded by Commissioner Bagwell. Approved 4 - 0

Recommendation for Stop Signs at Summit and Maple Street – City Manager Anderson, said we have received a complaint from a resident at 192 Summit St., she would like a speed bump

installed. Mr. Anderson said that he explained our policy to her, he said he looked at the area and noticed there were no stop signs at the intersection of Summit and Maple St. Mr. Anderson, suggest installing stop signs to make it a 4-way stop and see if it will resolve the issue. Commissioner Cook made the motion to make the intersection a 4-way stop, seconded by Commissioner Reed. Approved – 4 - 0

Bids for Front Street & Main Street Sidewalk Project - City Manager Anderson reported that we received 2 bids for Front St. and Main St. sidewalk project. Low bidder was Bridge Capital Investments in the amount of \$174,820. The budget for the project is \$180,000. He said that with the ornamental lights the project will be approximately \$7,820. over budget. Mr. Anderson said that the bid came in for just concrete, not brick which is what in front of Campbell & Campbell's office. This is a historical building and to keep the architectural look of it he would like to see brick used there. After reaching out to Bridge Capital the cost would be \$30,000 extra. Mr. Anderson suggest that go ahead with the project and then once it is approved, we can do a change order. Commissioner Bagwell made to motion to award the bid to Bridge Capital Investments and then do a change order for the \$30,000, seconded by Commissioner Cook. Approved 4 - 0

Agreement with Georgia Power for Ornamental Lights of Main Street – City Manager Anderson stated that this agreement is with Georgia Power and is part of the Main & Front Street Project. Mr. Anderson said he ask for 2 lights, but GDOT will only allow 1 because they will not allow it to go on the sidewalk. The Cost will be \$6,500 and then \$30.00 per month after that. Commissioner Cook made the motion to approve the agreement with Georgia Power, seconded by Commissioner Griggs. Approved 4 - 0

Adjourn

Debbie Turner, City Clerk

John Borrow, Mayor