

MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 2020
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Scott James Matheson called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Joseph “Sonny” Vickers, Tim Carroll, Ben Norton, Eric Howard, Andy Gibbs, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilwoman Sandra Tooley was absent. The invocation was given by Pastor Curtis Jenkins, New Life Bible Church, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Consideration of the March, 2020 Employee of the Month Award (School Resource Officer Devonta Battle, Valdosta Police Department).

Police Chief Leslie Manahan stated that Officer Devonta Battle began his career with the Valdosta Police Department in June of 2015 and is currently a School Resource Officer. School Resource Officers are responsible for assisting school staff in ensuring their safety and that of the students. They also investigate crimes committed on school grounds and assist in directing school traffic. Officer Battle is an extraordinary Officer and role model. He helps anyone in need while both on and off the clock. His accountability, patience, and unstoppable work ethic is what makes him great. Officer Battle sets a phenomenal example for the students at Valdosta High School. He always goes beyond the job duties of a School Resource Officer. He protects the students, offers them life advice, interacts with them heavily, and motivates them all while maintaining his professionalism. He also does exceptional work in the D.E.F.Y. program. He is educating young adults on how to be outstanding students in and out of school. He teaches and encourages students to dream big but also shows them how attainable those dreams can be. He once rewarded a student with \$10 because she had a good report card. When asked about it, he said, “I can get another \$10, but I can’t get that interaction back.” Officer Battle’s colleague stated, “I have only been working with Officer Battle since August of 2019, but I have already learned so much from him. He has opened my eyes more than I could have imagined and is truly an inspiration.” It is for these reasons and many others that the Employee Relations Committee nominated Officer Devonta Battle as Employee of the Month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 20, 2020 Regular Meeting were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-5, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.56 ACRES FROM A CONDITIONAL MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M)(C) ZONING DISTRICT TO A MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M) ZONING DISTRICT WITH NO CONDITIONS

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 0.56 acres from a Conditional Multi-Family Residential (R-M)(c) Zoning District to a Multi-Family Residential (R-M) Zoning District with no conditions as requested by Jon Nijem (File No. VA-2020-03). The property is located at 406 Baytree Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their February Regular Meeting and recommended approval (11-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that Jon Nijem, on behalf of Baytree Villa, LLC, is requesting to rezone 0.56 acres from conditional Multi-Family Residential (R-M)(c), to Multi-Family (R-M) with no conditions. The property is located at 406 Baytree Road which is along the north side of the street approximately 300 feet west of Azalea Drive. This is also directly across the street from the Valdosta State University (VSU) P.E. Complex. The property was rezoned to R-M(c) last summer, and also received Planned Development approval for a 12-unit apartment complex which is now under construction. The applicant is now seeking to rezone the property in order to remove the “conditions of approval” of the R-M(c) Zoning. The applicant also owns the existing apartment complex to the west at 410 Baytree Road which has its own Planned

Development approval. The applicant is also proposing to merge these two developments together under a single Planned Development approval with its own new set of conditions, and this request is being reviewed concurrently under the next agenda item (File No. VA-2020-04). The property is located within both a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of R-M Zoning. The property is also located within the "University Zone" of the Baytree-University Corridor Overlay District (BUCOD) which has supplemental standards for site design and architectural standards. Last summer, the subject property was part of a larger rezoning request that also included the two parcels to the north, which are also under construction as its own apartment complex (part of Baytree Pointe). The three Zoning conditions of approval from last summer are as follows: (1) From Pine Tree Road, minimum setbacks shall be at least 30' for buildings greater than one story, and 100' for buildings greater than 2-story. (2) Buffer Yard landscaping shall include a minimum of 3 canopy trees, 4 understory trees, and 30 shrubs per 100 linear feet. Buffer yards shall maintain a minimum width of 20'. There shall be an unbroken 6' tall opaque solid fence or wall along the entire western boundary as well as the entire frontage area of Pine Tree Road. There shall be no vehicular or pedestrian access to Pine Tree Road. (3) Structures abutting the Pine Tree side (2 existing parcels area, approximately 0.76 acres) shall be no more than 2 stories tall. After last summer's rezoning, the subject property was re-subdivided into its current configuration. Although part of that approved rezoning request, the subject property does not front Pine Tree Road. It also does not border any Single-Family Residential Zoning which means the enhanced buffer yard requirements listed in condition (2) are not needed here (only the very minimal standard requirements of a 10' buffer along the eastern boundary next to R-P Zoning). Therefore, these existing conditions of Zoning approval are meaningless for this property and should be removed. The only possible need for special conditions of approval should come in the form of Planned Development approval. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended approval. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their February 24, 2020 Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (11-0 vote).

No one spoke in favor of the request.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Norton, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2020-5, an Ordinance to rezone 0.56 acres from a Conditional Multi-Family Residential (R-M)(c) Zoning District to a Multi-Family Residential (R-M) Zoning District with no conditions as requested by Jon Nijem, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2020-6, AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND A PLANNED DEVELOPMENT BY COMBINING TWO EXISTING MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M) PLANNED DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS TOGETHER AS ONE

Consideration of an Ordinance to amend a Planned Development by combining two existing Multi-Family Residential (R-M) Planned Development approvals together as one as requested by Jon Nijem (File No. VA-2020-04). The properties are located at 406 Baytree Road and 410 Baytree Road. The Greater Lowndes Planning Commission reviewed this request at their February Regular Meeting and recommended approval with seven conditions (11-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning and Zoning Administrator, stated that Jon Nijem is requesting a Planned Development Amendment in the form of combining two existing Multi-Family Residential Planned Development approvals together as one. The properties are located at 406 and 410 Baytree Road. The property at 406 Baytree Road received Planned Development approval last summer (File No. VA-2019-03), and the property at 410 received Planned Development approval in 2017 (File No. VA-2017-13). The Land Use Certificates from both of these approvals is included herein. The applicant is also seeking to rezone the property at 406 Baytree Road in order for both to have the same regular R-M Zoning. The rezoning request is being reviewed concurrently with the previous Agenda Item (File No. VA-2020-03). The property is located within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is also located within the "University Zone" of the Baytree-University Corridor Overlay District (BUCOD). Planned