

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE VALDOSTA CITY COUNCIL
5:30 P.M., THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

OPENING CEREMONIES

Mayor Matheson called the regular meeting of the Valdosta City Council to order at 5:30 p.m. Council members present were: Thomas McIntyre, Andy Gibbs, Sandra Tooley, Eric Howard, Tim Carroll, and Vivian Miller-Cody. Councilman Ben Norton was absent. The invocation was given by Councilman Tim Carroll, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag which was led by Trinity Presbyterian Church Boy Scout Troops 2020 and 454.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS

Consideration of the April, 2023 Employee of the Month Award (Doug Stevenson, Engineering Department).

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Engineering Department currently has two Construction Inspectors on Staff. The Construction Inspectors are responsible for threshold and quality of work inspections for public and private construction projects within the City. They inspect utility installations, stormwater pipe installations, asphalt paving, curb and gutter, concrete sidewalk, general site grading, driveways, and franchise utility installations for conformance with the City's Standard Specifications, International Building Codes, and City Land Development Regulations. The Inspectors are tasked with quickly developing and maintaining rapport with local and out-of-area contractors to facilitate local growth and development while still preserving and protecting the City's public interests. Construction Inspectors must navigate complex and challenging interactions daily while still dealing respectfully with their clientele. On December 14, 2022, one of the Construction Inspectors was required to take an extensive leave of absence for personal reasons. During this time, Doug Stevenson took on significant additional duties and responsibilities. Ordinarily, at any given time, each of our Inspectors is personally responsible for ten public and private construction projects within the City. Over the past several months, Doug has managed to monitor and be available to inspect 20+ active public and private projects within the City. He has hustled so hard (literally) and has tactfully handled many emergent project scenarios. He has been a liaison in support of development, helped answer questions presented by Contractors, coordinated between Departments to assist property developers in advancing private projects, and so much more. Doug has gone above and beyond his duties, and we are very thankful that he is on the team. It is for these reasons and many more that Doug Stevenson deserves recognition for the Employee of the Month Award.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the Regular Meetings of March 9, 2023 and March 23, 2023 were approved by unanimous consent (6-0) of the Council.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-8, AN ORDINANCE FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) FOR A MOVING & STORAGE SERVICES BUSINESS IN A HIGHWAY-COMMERCIAL (C-H) ZONING DISTRICT

Consideration of an Ordinance for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Moving & Storage Services Business in a Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning District as requested by Robert Griner (File No. CU-2023-01). The property is located at 434 Connell Road. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting and recommended approval with four conditions (8-0 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Robert Griner, on behalf of Griner Real Estate Services, LLC (dba Griner Moving Services), is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Moving & Storage Services Business in a Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning District. The property consists of 1.56 acres located at 434 Connell Road, which is along the north side of the road about 300 feet west of Bemiss Road. The property

currently contains a commercial building (3,465 square feet) with a covered rear canopy area (1,123 square feet) [total = 4,588 square feet]. The applicant acquired the property a few months ago and their City business license application is still pending. The applicant is proposing no expansions to the existing building and will utilize most of it for temporary storage of household items in association with their independent Moving & Storage Business. Instead of large moving vans, they will utilize a small fleet of two-axle box trucks that will park behind the existing building. The property is located within a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is grandfathered-in with a non-compliant C-H Zoning that predates the City's adoption of Character Area designations. This property, along with all of its surrounding neighbors with C-H Zoning, have a long history of shifting boundary lines in the form of both property lines and zoning lines. The common denominator in all of this is the prevalence of fairly intensive commercial uses that are often found in C-H Zoning, and in this case, the historical pattern has been that of an automotive theme. Moving & Storage Businesses can vary greatly in their intensity, primarily based on the size of their trucks and the overall volume of their warehousing operations. The small operations can be viewed as heavy commercial, while the larger ones can approach the intensity of an industrial use. Staff's primary concern about this kind of use in this location is that its only means of access is Connell Road (which is not designed nor intended for heavy truck traffic) and also the existing single-family neighborhood to the north. In this particular case, the site already has an existing heavy commercial type building which offers a generous amount of warehousing space. Also, the applicant is proposing to utilize only a small fleet of box trucks in lieu of the larger tractor-trailer moving vans and is keeping their proposed site plan oriented away from the existing adjacent neighborhood. In this case with these particulars, Staff is supportive of this CUP request with an appropriate set of conditions that place an upward limit (at least for now) on potential future expansions of the site volume or intensity. Staff found the request consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the following conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted in the name of the applicant only, for a Moving & Storage Services Business in C-H Zoning with total building area (under roof) not to exceed 7,000 square feet. All buildings shall be one-story and not exceed a height of 20 feet. There shall be no outdoor storage of any kind that is not under roof. (2) There shall be no large trucks with more than two axles allowed, and all trucks shall be parked on paved surfaces as required by the City Engineer. (3) A minimum 20' wide buffer yard consisting of at least 6 small trees and 2 canopy trees per 100 linear feet, shall be planted along the north property line abutting the PRD-6 Zoning, and as approved by the City Arborist. Existing trees may count toward the buffer yard calculations and shrubs shall be considered optional in this buffer yard area. (4) Conditional Use approval shall expire one year from the date of approval if no City business license has been obtained by that date. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Conditional Use Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the same four conditions as recommended by Staff (8-0 vote).

Councilman Howard stated that at the Work Session there was discussion about the vehicles not being parked on the grass; however, it was stated now that they may be parked behind the building which is not concrete. Matt Martin stated that there is a little bit of concrete back there; however, there is a grassy area they will have to go through and make ready for truck parking. It is currently open storage but they have not gone through the plan review process for that yet. They are currently waiting on use approval and the business license approval.

Robert Griner, 503 Teresa Drive, Lake Park, spoke in favor of the address. Mr. Griner stated that they have a successful business in Tallahassee and he is hoping that it will be just as successful here in Valdosta. He has been in the flooring business since he was 12 years old and he is wanting to get something that is a little easier on him. He asked Council's consideration in approving the Conditional Use Permit.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION was made by Councilman Howard to approve the request for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Moving & Storage Services Business in a Highway-Commercial (C-H) Zoning District for property located at 434 Connell Road with the following four conditions: (1) Approval shall be granted in the name of the applicant only, for a Moving & Storage Services business in C-H Zoning with total building area (under roof) not to exceed 7,000 square feet. All buildings shall be one-story and not exceed a height of 20 feet. There shall be no outdoor storage of any kind that is not under roof. (2) There shall be no large trucks with more than two axles allowed, and all trucks shall be parked on paved surfaces as required by the City Engineer. (3) A minimum 20' wide buffer yard consisting of at least 6 small trees and 2 canopy trees per 100 linear feet, shall be planted along the north property

line abutting the PRD-6 Zoning, and as approved by the City Arborist. Existing trees may count toward the buffer yard calculations and shrubs shall be considered optional in this buffer yard area. (4) Conditional Use approval shall expire one year from the date of approval if no City business license has been obtained by that date. Councilman Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2023-8, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-9, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE 0.33 ACRES FROM RESIDENTIAL-PROFESSIONAL (R-P) TO OFFICE-PROFESSIONAL (O-P)

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone 0.33 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) to Office-Professional (O-P) as requested by Anthony Tong (File No. VA-2023-03). The property is located at 307 East Jane Street. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (5-3 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Anthony Tong is requesting to rezone 0.33 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) to Office-Professional (O-P). The property is located at 307 East Jane Street, which is along the south side of the street about 300 feet east of Williams Street and about 500 feet west of North Ashley Street. The property contains a small vacant office building (2,034 square feet) with a small rear yard parking area. The applicant is proposing to relocate his existing Urban Ink tattoo studio from its current location at 1507 North Ashley Street to become a tenant in this new location in order to be closer to Valdosta State University (VSU). The applicant is not proposing any exterior changes to the building nor to the site. The property is located within a Transitional Neighborhood (TN) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of O-P Zoning. This proposed use requires a CUP in O-P Zoning and would otherwise require C-C or C-H Zoning as a Permitted Use. The property's Transitional Neighborhood Character Area designation does not allow these Commercial Zoning Districts, and therefore, the applicant is requesting the O-P Zoning in order to make the property eligible for a subsequent CUP application for his proposed use. The surrounding zoning pattern is clearly dominated by R-P, with C-H Zoning on the properties which face North Ashley Street (500' to the east) and either R-6/R-10 Zoning in the residential areas along Williams Street and Iola Drive to the north. Although not completely out of character with R-P, the applicant's request for O-P would be the introduction of a new Zoning District not found anywhere nearby and could be considered a form of "Spot Zoning." As one might expect from an area that is solidly zoned R-P, the surrounding land use pattern is dominated by a mixture of both residential and professional office type uses; however, in terms of overall character, this area has a strong residential feel to it in terms of older homes that have been converted to offices but keeping their residential style, the urban tree canopy, and narrow streets with light traffic. Despite O-P being a compliant zoning in the TN Character Area, some of the more intensive uses allowed by O-P (such as a bank, drug rehab center, certain personal services, etc.) could be considered too intensive for this area along East Jane Street, and it just seems unnecessary. The property and all of its surrounding properties have been zoned R-P for many years and have successfully hosted a variety of professional office type uses, or residential uses during this time. Building occupancy in this surrounding area remains high and there are no apparent changing conditions that warrant this Zoning change and introduction of a new Zoning designation to this neighborhood. Rather than intrude into this established neighborhood with a more intensive zoning, Staff recommends that the applicant instead stay in a more commercial area such as where they are currently operating or other similar such area. Staff found the request inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP) and recommended denial. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (5-3 Vote).

Councilman Gibbs inquired about parking in the back yard and what they could do to prevent the applicant from taking out the trees and allowing 40 cars to park back there. Matt Martin stated that it becomes non-residential property so there are tree permit removal requirements. Once you add too much to the parking lot itself then stormwater requirements are triggered. There is no stormwater pond on this property because it pre-dates all of those so they would run the risk of triggering that. Any changing of the pavement would have to go through full plan review for site work. They have more than enough room to meet the minimum parking requirements for the use and from that perspective, there is really no need for it. They also have an open space requirement in the Zoning Regulations that is a little more restrictive in O-P than in Commercial so that is a percentage of the site that they would have to monitor and leave open. In O-P, 70% is the cap so 30% is open. One thing working against

them is the back parking lot is almost all pavement so what little open space they have, most of it is in the front yard. Based on the numbers, they might be able to add a little bit but not much. Councilman Gibbs inquired as to whether parking on the street was allowed. Matt Martin stated that there is yellow paint on the curb there. The only way on-street parking would be allowed is if the City has designated this for on-street parking. He would assume there is yellow paint on the other side of the street but he did not know for sure. Councilwoman Miller-Cody stated that she uses that street every day and if a car is front of the building then you have to go around the car. It is like a one-way street. It is the same thing during football season and you can still get in and out of there. The driveway will not affect anyone going down that area because it is one-way east and one-way west going in the opposite direction.

Anthony Tong, Applicant, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Tong stated that he would be glad to answer any questions Council might have. When he opened this business shortly after he graduated from VSU, it was a hybrid business where he actually sold jewelry as well. He has had so much success that it is impossible for him to scale both businesses while keeping them in the same building. He started looking for a place to put the service based aspect of the business. He wanted to be somewhere that was in close proximity to his initial business so he could monitor it and also stay close to VSU. This is an ideal location and he did not know until he tried to get the business license that it had to be zoned properly and that is why he is here.

Councilman Carroll inquired as to whether his business was appointment-based. Mr. Tong stated that it was and the only thing they really have walk-ins for is piercings. They would have 5-10 piercing customers on a heavy day and for tattoos, most of those are appointment-based and they would have 10-15 customers during the day.

Councilman Howard inquired as to how long he has had the building rented. Mr. Tong stated that he has had it rented since November, 2022. They were scheduling a soft grand opening in February but then he got the notice that it was a matter of Zoning when he went to get his business license. He did not understand why because he did not really have retail products and then when he realized it was more of a State-wide Code, he tried to find an avenue to utilize the building. That was when Mr. Martin let him know about the possibility of getting a Conditional Use Permit.

Mayor Matheson stated that he was impressed that Mr. Tong went door-to-door to talk to the neighbors. Mr. Tong stated that he spoke with every one of his neighbors to make sure they were good with him moving the business there.

No one spoke in opposition to the request.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Tooley, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2023-9, an Ordinance to rezone 0.33 acres from Residential-Professional (R-P) to Office-Professional (O-P) for property located at 307 East Jane Street as requested by Anthony Tong, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-10, AN ORDINANCE TO GRANT PLANNED DEVELOPMENT APPROVAL FOR A SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Consideration of an Ordinance to grant Planned Development Approval for a Single-Family Attached Residential Development as requested by Stoker Utilities, LLC (File No. VA-2023-04). The property is located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension between Knights Academy Road and Branch Point Drive. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting and recommended approval with eight conditions (7-1 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Stoker Utilities, LLC is requesting an amended Planned Development Approval for a proposed single-family attached residential development (townhouses) in an R-6(c) Zoning District. This is the same property and similar proposal (same applicant) as File No. VA-2022-22 which was approved a few months ago by City Council on December 8, 2022. Because the originally-approved Master Plan is undergoing significant changes, the entire Planned Development must be completely re-reviewed under a new public hearing process. The property is located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension between

Knights Academy Road and Branch Pointe Drive. The property consists of 6.34 acres and is depicted as Tract 1 on the accompanying survey plat. Tract 2 is planned to be a future phase of the Biles single-family residential subdivision and is not part of this PD request. The property is currently an undeveloped (farm field). Just as with the previous proposal from a few months ago, the applicant is proposing to develop this property with 42 townhouse-style dwelling units divided among 7 different buildings. Each unit will be two-story and contain a two-car garage and a shared internal access drive' however, the complex will now have clusters of townhouse buildings that all face each other with the front sides of buildings facing a shared internal courtyard and the rear sides facing a shared driveway/alley system. The applicant has also added a shared community center building with a private pool and cabana area. There will still be shared visitor parking, mailboxes, playgrounds, general open space, as well as a 25' landscaped buffer along its east boundary line. It should be noted that the "conditions of approval" with the R-6(c) Zoning are only related to minimum lot sizes for single-family residential development in all of the surrounding developed and undeveloped subdivisions zoned this way. These special conditions are inconsequential to the proposed development and should be ignored for purposes of this Planned Development review. The property is located within a Suburban Area (SA) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. As with most Planned Development proposals, there are a few deviations from the City's standard Land Development Regulations (LDR). All other standard development codes applicable to R-6 Zoning and single-family attached (townhouse) development will be followed as appropriate. Most of the listed deviations are related to the LDR supplemental standards for this kind of development. These are all relatively minor in scope and are mainly due to the existing narrowness of the property and the applicant's proposal to have a non-conventional style of townhouse development. The proposed Master Plan indicates a desire to comply with the intent of these regulations while still exercising creativity in the overall design. The surrounding development pattern is currently dominated by the existing single-family residential subdivisions to the east, as well as the vacant land in between which is still planned for addition single-family development. The undeveloped properties to the west across North Forrest Street Extension are very likely to be developed (long term) with fairly intensive commercial uses due to its frontage along Bemiss Road on the other side. This is reflected in the more intensive Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on that side of the road. North Forrest Street Extension is also likely to be eventually widened to four lanes with a significant increase in traffic. Therefore, under these long-term scenarios, higher density residential development (such as townhouses) along this portion of the road frontage seems to make more sense than additional single-family development along the North Forrest road frontage. Staff found the amended proposal request, as with the previous Planned Development, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Development Review Criteria, and recommended approval subject to the following conditions: (1) Approval shall supersede and replace the approval for File No. VA-2022-22 and shall be granted for a non-conventional townhouse style development with a maximum of 42 dwelling units, in general accordance with the layout of the submitted master plan. The development shall consist of two-story single-family attached residential units each on their own parcel of land and clustered in buildings with adequate fire wall separation for individual dwelling units. All non-building areas of the site shall be a shared Common Area with shared access, parking, and open/recreation space. (2) Architectural design of these buildings shall be consistent with the general form of the submitted building elevation drawings but shall exclude vinyl siding and shall utilize a variety of other exterior wall materials for each dwelling with a minimum of three different material designs being used. (3) Use of the buildings shall be limited to single-family residential purposes only. There shall be no residential Home Businesses, Personal Care Homes, Daycares, or any form of outdoor storage allowed. The overall residential development shall be managed as a single entity with an on-site resident manager. (4) Parking. In addition to the dwelling unit driveways to hold 2 vehicles each, at least 42 guest parking spaces total shall be provided in multiple areas within the complex. Up to half of these additional spaces shall be considered "pavement optional" at the discretion of the City Engineer and intended to be overflow parking during peak times. (5) Pedestrian walkways shall be installed along the interior shared driveway of the development and properly stubbed out at each driveway end of the development to connect to future sidewalks along North Forrest Street Ext. and Branch Point Drive. Decorative pedestrian scale lighting shall be installed along the internal shared driveway with lighting fixtures being no taller than 20'. Development entrance signage shall be consistent with the same requirements for multi-family development in R-M Zoning. (6) Landscaping. A minimum 8' opaque solid fence or wall shall be installed along the entire east property line. There shall also be a transitional vegetative buffer yard installed along the east property line which is at least 20' wide with vegetation requirements consistent with LDR requirements for such buffer yards. As part of the required landscaped street yard, a minimum 3' decorative landscape wall or berm shall be installed along the western and northern property lines, in the areas between the shared driveway and the abutting street right-of-way lines. All perimeter and internal landscaping shall be consistent with LDR requirements for multi-family development. (7) All other applicable LDR development

standards and requirements for the overall development shall be followed. Final site design for the entire complex shall be subject to full commercial plan review in the same manner as a multi-family development, including an overall Landscape Plan being submitted and approved by the City Arborist. (8) From the date of final approval, the development shall commence within three years (begin construction of at least one primary building). Otherwise, Planned Development approval shall automatically expire. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Planned Development review criteria, and recommended approval subject to the same eight conditions as recommended by Staff (7-1 Vote).

Matthew Inman, Advanced Engineering, 4560 Valnorth Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Inman stated that they are the Engineer for the Project. It is the same concept that they previously brought before Council. It is the same number of apartments but the biggest thing is that they added parking, a leasing office, a pool, and other amenities. It will also have interior courtyards and it is a much better layout for the residents living there.

No one spoke in opposition of the request.

A MOTION by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2023-10, an Ordinance to grant Planned Development Approval for a Single-Family Attached Residential Development for property located along the east side of North Forrest Street Extension between Knights Academy Road and Branch Point Drive as requested by Stoker Utilities, LLC, with the eight conditions noted above, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-11, AN ORDINANCE TO REZONE A TOTAL OF 15.94 ACRES FROM SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-15) AND RESIDENTIAL-PROFESSIONAL (R-P) TO ALL MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (R-M)

Consideration of an Ordinance to rezone a total of 15.94 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) and Residential-Professional (R-P) to all Multi-Family Residential (R-M) as requested by Stoker Development, LLC (File No. VA-2023-05). The property is located at 2310 East Park Avenue. The Planning Commission reviewed this at their March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting and recommended approval (7-0-1 Vote).

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that Stoker Development, LLC is requesting to rezone a total of 15.94 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15)(11.62 acres) and Residential-Professional (R-P)(4.32 acres) to all Multi-Family Residential (R-M). The property is located at 2310 East Park Avenue, which is along the south side of the street, about 900 feet west of the intersection with Inner Perimeter Road. This is also about half-way between Inner Perimeter Road and the rear entrance to the new Valdosta High School. The property is currently vacant and the applicant is proposing to develop it as a high-density single-family residential subdivision consisting of 73 lots. Typical lot sizes will range between 6,000-7,000 square feet. The development will feature a small community park and open area near the entrance. As part of the layout design, the applicant is proposing a single entrance and either a reduced public right-of-way width of 40' or a reduced front yard building setback distance on all lots to accommodate their proposed building footprints. Such reduction(s) would require separate Variance approvals from the LDR. The property is located within a Community Activity Center (CAC) Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan which allows the possibility of R-M Zoning. The property is also located just outside the Inner Perimeter Road Corridor Overlay District. The surrounding Zoning patterns in the area are dominated by mostly C-H Zoning around the intersection of Inner Perimeter Road and East Park Avenue, as well as R-15 Zoning on most of the subject property as well as the abutting large tract of land (185 acres) for Valdosta High School. The surrounding land use patterns in the area are dominated by mostly vacant/undeveloped land, with a few small commercial uses along Inner Perimeter Road, the existing church across the street to the west, and the High School to the south. Given the CAC Character Area in the area and the subject property being part of a yet un-subdivided pocket of land at the corner of East Park Avenue and Inner Perimeter Road (which will grow to a major intersection), development of this property should logically become something between high-density residential, professional, and commercial. The applicant's proposal for R-M Zoning is at the lower end of this spectrum and should be readily approved as a change in the right direction; however, it should be noted that the applicant's proposed subdivision is only conceptual in nature and its design would require some substantial Variances in order to be approved. This is something that gets addressed through official processes other than a Rezoning (i.e., a Rezoning approval does not approve a proposed site plan or subdivision layout). 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 March 27, 2023 Regular Meeting, found it consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the Standards for the Exercise of Zoning Power (SFEZP), and recommended approval (7-0-1 Vote).

Councilman Howard inquired as to whether this would have to come back before Council to address the entrance and exit if they approved it now. Matt Martin stated that would be handled in-house administratively as part of the subdivision review process unless they stipulate a condition. The default by Code is to have two driveways unless they are given the approval not to have two. All things considered though, they will probably be looking at two driveways. They have proposed having one entrance via Boulevard style which helps but is not quite the same thing. Council is looking at a Zoning approval and not a subdivision layout. Councilman Howard stated that he understood that and he was just trying to avoid putting all that traffic on Park Avenue with three schools. Matt Martin stated that Council would be approving R-M Zoning and whatever R-M Zoning would allow which could include a subdivision like this or apartments. Currently, the R-P Zoning would allow apartments and the Commercial Zoning is still there which would be a lot more intensive usage than what is being proposed.

Mayor Matheson inquired about a decel lane. Matt Martin stated that will be part of the review process with subdivisions driven by the number of dwelling units. That is also being discussed and the big factor is the future of that intersection to the northeast which is more than likely to be widened. They are also looking at the future widening of Park Avenue and that would affect entrances and exits.

Matthew Inman, Advanced Engineering, 4560 Valnorth Drive, spoke in favor of the request. Mr. Inman stated that they are going to have two entrances to the subdivision. They do not want just one entrance and exit. If you have a lot of traffic on one lane, then you need a decel lane. They will look at that with the Engineering Staff. This will be a single-family subdivision and they will have a nice play area up front along with a mail kiosk. They have also got 10' shown for the additional right-of-way on the eastern side in anticipation of the widening of Park Avenue and they will also include it on the western side just so they will not have to do right-of-way acquisitions down the road.

No one spoke in opposition of the request.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Ordinance No. 2023-11, an Ordinance to rezone a total of 15.94 acres from Single-Family Residential (R-15) and Residential-Professional (R-P) for property located at 2310 East Park Avenue to all Multi-Family Residential (R-M) as requested by Stoker Development, LLC, the complete text of which will be found in Ordinance Book XIV.

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-3, A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE FILING OF A GRANT APPLICATION WITH THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS, HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION, FOR THE SOUTHSIDE HISTORIC RESOURCES SURVEY

Consideration of a Resolution of Support for the filing of a Grant Application with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Historic Preservation Division, for the Southside Historic Resources Survey.

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is offering competitive matching Grants for surveys of historic resources through the Georgia Historic Preservation Division to financially assist local governments to survey its historic resource properties. Over the past three years, the City of Valdosta has been the recipient of these Grant Funds and completed both Phase 1 and Phase 2 of a multi-year and multi-phase project to survey all of the historic resource properties in and around the central areas of the City. Phase 1 and Phase 2 were a re-survey of these resources within the Valdosta Local Historic District, which is required of the City every ten years in order for the City to maintain Certified Local Government (CLG) status for historic preservation with the State of Georgia. Future phases pertaining to other areas of the City are not required for CLG purposes, but have been deemed important in order to gain historic survey information for properties in the areas immediately outside the Local Historic District, particularly in those outside areas that are part of the Southside and East End National Register Historic District areas. Phase 3 is proposed to study and

survey the area in and around the Southside National Register Historic District. It is estimated that this survey area will encompass about 1,400 parcels of land. Historic resource information gathered by this survey will update and add to the City's already existing historic resources local database as well as update the Georgia Natural and Historic Resources GIS (GNAHRGIS) database which is Georgia's statewide electronic database of historic resource survey information. This information will also update and refresh the information gathered many years ago as part of the Southside National Register of Historic Places nomination, and coupled with information gathered about surrounding properties, will inform City leaders regarding the historic merits of adding all or part of this area to the City's designated Local Historic District. In accordance with prior years' discussions, City Staff has already submitted the initial Grant Application for Phase 3 for this statewide Grant cycle but needs this Resolution of support to make this particular application complete. The State will review its applications and announce this year's recipients this summer. If awarded, the term of the Grant will begin this Fall and straddle both FY-2024 and FY-2025. As with the previous Phases, a consultant will be hired to individually survey the properties in the Phase 3 area. City Staff is proposing \$40,000 in the FY-2024 Budget to be used as a match for this Grant, with any remaining funding costs to be carried over to FY-2025. A major uncertainty in all of this is the actual amount of grant funding from the State, which is based on federal funding and has varied widely from year to year. A Resolution has been prepared authorizing Mayor Matheson to submit this remaining portion of the Grant Application promising to have matching funds available, and to enter into an acceptable Grant Agreement with Georgia DCA if the City of Valdosta is awarded the aforementioned Grant. Matt Martin, Planning Director, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing Mayor Matheson to submit this remaining portion of the Grant Application promising to have matching funds available, and to enter into an acceptable Grant Agreement with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2023-3, a Resolution of Support for the filing of a Grant Application with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Historic Preservation Division, for the Southside Historic Resources Survey, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-4, A RESOLUTION FROM THE VALDOSTA-LOWNDES COUNTY AIRPORT AUTHORITY AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A CONTRACT WITH THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (GDOT) TO PROCEED WITH A PAVEMENT REJUVENATION, CRACK SEAL, AND REMARKING OF TAXIWAYS AT THE VALDOSTA REGIONAL AIRPORT

Consideration of a request from the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority to approve a Resolution authorizing acceptance of a Contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to proceed with a pavement rejuvenation, crack seal, and remarking of taxiways at the Valdosta Regional Airport.

Richard Hardy, Interim City Manager, stated that the Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority desires to proceed with the with the pavement rejuvenation, crack seal, and remarking of taxiways Project at the Valdosta Regional Airport. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has prepared a Contract to cover 75% of the cost in the amount of \$278,070.68. The Valdosta-Lowndes County Airport Authority committed to funding the Project on February 14, 2023, using Airport funds. There will be no City of Valdosta funds required for this Project. GDOT is preparing a Contract in the amount of \$278,070.68 for the Project. The Contract will be delivered to City Hall electronically. The Contract must be executed and returned to GDOT. A Resolution has been prepared authorizing Mayor Scott James Matheson to accept the Contract in order to process the document. Richard Hardy, Interim City Manager, recommended that Council approve the Resolution authorizing Mayor Scott James Matheson to accept the Contract in order to process the document.

A **MOTION** by Councilman Gibbs, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to enact Resolution No. 2023-3, a Resolution authorizing acceptance of a Contract with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to proceed with a pavement rejuvenation, crack seal, and remarking of taxiways at the Valdosta Regional Airport, the complete text of which will be found in Resolution Book VII.

BIDS, CONTRACTS, AGREEMENTS, AND EXPENDITURES

Consideration of a request to purchase/renew a 10-year TIMMS connectivity and support plan.

Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, stated that the Engineering Department works continuously to improve the traffic flow throughout the City of Valdosta. The Traffic Management Center (TMC) continually monitors and makes timing changes throughout the City on a regular basis. The goal of the TMC is to ensure safe and efficient travel for all the citizens of Valdosta as well as visitors to the area. For the past several years, the Engineering Department has explored new ways to increase the safety of the traveling public and the citizens of Valdosta. Part of this effort was accomplished by the purchase of the Temple Intelligent Monitoring Module (TIMMS) by Applied Information and the new signal conflict monitors. The TIMMS units facilitate connectivity and monitoring of the traffic cabinets at each of our signalized intersections as well as the emergency vehicle signal preemption functionality utilized by the Valdosta Fire Department. The Engineering Department has received an invoice for the purchase of the 10-yr renewal of our TIMMS connectivity and support plan. The 10-year renewal provides the greatest value to the City as compared to shorter duration renewals. The Engineering Department has a FY23 council-approved budget line item for this purchase. The approved budget amount was \$386,358.00. The total purchase amount for the connectivity and support plan is \$378,135.56. This purchase would be \$8,222.44 under the approved budget. Ben O'Dowd, City Engineer, recommended that Council authorize the Engineering Department to purchase the TIMMS connectivity and support plan for \$378,135.56.

A MOTION by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the purchase/renewal of a 10-year TIMMS connectivity and support plan in the amount of \$378,135.56.

Consideration of a request to purchase real estate for a new City of Valdosta Fire Station Facility.

Matt Martin, Planning Director, stated that the City currently maintains an excellent ISO-1 fire service rating which requires a very level of service standard and the ability to efficiently and effectively protect all properties within the City. Over the past 20 years, much of the City's new growth has been in the broad area of the city limits to the north and northeast of Inner Perimeter Road. Fire Station #5 on North Oak Street Extension currently serves this area, which still has an abundance of vacant lands which would allow even more growth and development over time, thus increasing the demands on Station 5. This continued northerly growth and development of the City is prompt the need to construct an additional Fire Station to service this expanding area of the City. Over the past 12+ months, Staff has been examining this area to find an optimal location that is both suitable and available for placement of a fire station. Staff identified this location as the existing building site located at 4434 North Forrest Street Extension, which is currently owned and occupied by First Church of the Nazarene Valdosta. City Council authorized the City Manager to negotiate with the owner for the purchase and acquisition of this property, and those negotiations have now concluded. The property consists of 7.38 acres located along the east side of the road about 700 feet south of the intersection with Knights Academy Road. It contains an existing commercial, steel framed building (19,697 square feet) with a paved parking lot and lots of versatility with regard to options for renovations, possible expansion, and usage going forward beyond that of a fire station if so desired. The negotiated price for the entire property is \$1,525,000 which includes a separate leaseback agreement that allows the Church to remain on the property as the City's tenant for a full year with the possibility of re-negotiated extension. The Church will utilize this leaseback period to find a suitable new location for themselves. The City will utilize this period to complete its renovation design plans for conversion of the facility to a fire station, prepare construction plans, select a contractor, actually perform the construction, and then become ready to occupy the facility. The City also recognizes the benefits of having the facility being occupied during this interim period. Matt Martin, Planning Director, recommended that Council approve the purchase of the property with the proposed leaseback agreement.

A MOTION by Councilman Howard, seconded by Councilman Gibbs, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the request to purchase real estate which is currently owned and occupied by First Church of the Nazarene Valdosta and located at 4434 North Forrest Street Extension in the amount of \$1,525,000 with the proposed leaseback agreement for a new City of Valdosta Fire Station Facility.

Consideration of a request for a Conditional Lien Release and Forbearance Agreement for property located at 818 East Brookwood Place.

Richard Hardy, Interim City Manager, stated that the City brought nuisance enforcement actions against 818 E. Brookwood Place in Valdosta which is owned by Stephen C. Thomas. As a result, the City demolished the

derelict structure on the property. Additionally, pursuant to other enforcement actions, the City has been forced to mow and clean the lot at least twice and recorded liens for those services as well. The aggregate amount of the liens is \$5,737.27 (Lien Book 0472, Book 0235, Lot Cleaning - \$171.00), Book 0468, Page 0361 (Demolition - \$5,395.27), Book 0474, Page 0504 (Lot Cleaning - \$171.00). There is an interested buyer, Cynthia Denise Williams. In previous discussions with the former City Manager Mark Barber, they stated they were prepared to buy the lot and construct a residential home; however, to do so, they are requesting that the City forgive the liens. As you are aware, public gratuities are illegal unless allowed by law, O.C.G.A. §41-2-9(c), which is the State statute that allows governmental entities to abate nuisance properties, authorizes the City to waive and release the Liens upon entering into a contract with the owner of the Property under which the parties agree to a timetable for rehabilitation of the Property, provided that said owner can demonstrate the financial means to accomplish such rehabilitation. To accomplish the goal of O.C.G.A. 41-2-9(c), the purchaser has agreed to enter into a Conditional Lien Release and Forbearance Agreement. Essentially, the City will temporarily forbear the enforcement of the liens upon the following conditions: (1) the Williams purchase the property and remain the owner throughout the term, (2) construct a single-family residence in accordance with applicable zoning, (3) secure a Certificate of Occupancy within one year, and (4) pay for all improvements. Subject to the more specific terms in the Agreement, if the purchaser satisfies those conditions, then the City will release or mark the liens satisfied. If they do not, then the liens are unaffected. Richard Hardy, Interim City Manager, recommended that Council approve the request to enter into a Conditional Lien Release and Forbearance Agreement with Ms. Williams.

A **MOTION** by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, seconded by Councilman Carroll, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to approve the request to enter into a Conditional Lien Release and Forbearance Agreement for property located at 818 East Brookwood Place.

CITIZENS TO BE HEARD

Steve Freeman, 612 Second Avenue, stated that he wanted to thank his City Councilman Thomas McIntyre for responding to a problem he had. He has another issue about a lot that is located at 808 First Avenue. The City owns the lot but he has been mowing it and keeping it clean. The City was supposed to get back in touch with him to let him know whether they would like to sell the property to him or not. It has been approximately three months now. Also, the alley that is on First Avenue needs to be cleaned out. He is working with one of the guys to assist him on how to close the alley off. He will have to get in touch with the property owners. The alley is a mess and he is just trying to figure out whether the City needs to clean it out first before they close it. Between First Avenue and West Street, the alley is full of trash and needs to be cleaned out if they are going to give it to the citizens.

Anthony Tong, 16 University Place, stated that he wanted to speak about the Conditional Use Permit. He has been in a lease since around November at the tune of \$1,350 per month. Although he has been fortunate enough to have a successful business, he is not that successful where that type of money does not provide a strain on his business. To his knowledge, there are still two sessions that have to take place in which the requirements of the Conditional Use Permit are designated and then it has to come back before Council again. It seems to him that there are a lot of extra steps and for a small business like his that is trying to thrive in Valdosta, that is another \$2,600 in expenses that he has to pay. Even if nothing can be done for him in this particular situation, he thinks it would be nice that at the initial Zoning Meeting, it is discussed about the need for a Conditional Use Permit. In the case that they do vote for approval, they should go ahead and come up with the requirements of the Conditional Use Permit and that way, when it gets to Council it is already done.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

Richard Hardy, Interim City Manager, thanked all of the City employees who played any part in the Bluesberry Festival last weekend. He appreciated all of the hard work that the employees did in making it a success.

The Georgia Cities Week begins on April 23-29, 2023 and on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, there will be a Neighborhood Development tour and luncheon. The tour will include new projects that have been completed through the CDBG Program. On Wednesday, April 26, 2023, Coffee with the Chiefs will be held at GUD Coffee from 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. On Thursday, April 27, 2023, there will be Painting in the Park hosted by Neighborhood Development. This event is free but will require registration. It will take place at Unity Park at 5:30

p.m. to 7:30 p.m. On Friday, April 28, 2023, there will be a Downtown Pup Crawl which begins at 5:00 p.m. at the Georgia Beer Company.

On Saturday, April 22, 2023, there will be an Earth Day Cleanup from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the end of Baytree Road to Ellis Drive and Springhill Place and Springhill Drive.

The Brown Bag Concert Event will be held May 1-5, 2023 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Unity Park Amphitheater. This year's lineup for bands will be the Page Brothers, Khemistry, Jen Anders & Friends, Main Stream, and 41 South.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mayor Matheson stated that he did a joint Proclamation with Lowndes County for the Breaking Barriers Resource Fair at Mathis Auditorium. It was very well attended. The same group is at Unity Park this evening with a band playing and it is open to the public. The Valdosta Early College Academy (VECA) had a mock trial at the Municipal Court today and they did really well. It was an amazing group of students. On May 1, 2023, the CRJ 900 jet will make its debut at the Valdosta Regional Airport. It is a larger jet and the capacity will go from 55 seats to 75 seats. The Bluesberry Festival was a great success and their goal when they started the event was to unify the City. They look to grow and make it an annual event. Valdosta State University (VSU) has their Spring Game coming up on this Friday. They have had three weeks of practice and the Black and Red Game will start at 6:00 p.m. at Bazemore-Hyder Stadium. The Lowndes Co. Viking Baseball Team will begin the State Championship tournament at Noel George Field tomorrow. The Valdosta Wildcats begin the first round but they have to go all the way up to Carrollton to play.

Councilwoman Miller-Cody thanked Fire Chief Brian Boutwell and his Staff for helping with the Bluesberry Festival. There was a little child who got in an ant bed and his Staff put alcohol on her leg. They also had another child who was lost and Chief Boutwell and Chief Manahan helped to find the child's parents.

Councilman Howard stated that some of our citizens are not tech savy and he would like to have a designated phone line for citizens to call and leave messages instead of using SeeClickFix.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion to adjourn the Regular Session and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilman Howard, was unanimously adopted (6-0) to adjourn the Regular Session at 6:29 p.m. and enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing real estate.

Mayor Matheson reconvened the Regular Meeting at 6:41 p.m. and stated that there was no action taken on the discussion of real estate in the Executive Session.

Mayor Matheson entertained a motion for adjournment.

A MOTION by Councilman Carroll, seconded by Councilwoman Miller-Cody, was unanimously adopted (7-0) to adjourn the April 20, 2023 Regular Meeting of the Valdosta City Council at 6:41 p.m. to meet again in Regular Session on Thursday, May 11, 2023.

City Clerk, City of Valdosta

Mayor, City of Valdosta