



CITY OF STATESBORO
WORK SESSION MINUTES
AUGUST 20, 2024

Mayor & Council Work Session

50 East Main Street

4:00 PM

A Work Session of the Statesboro City Council was held on August 20, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 50 East Main Street. Present was Mayor Jonathan McCollar and Council Members: Paulette Chavers, John Riggs (Via Zoom) and Shari Barr. Also present was City Clerk Leah Harden, City Manager Charles Penny, Assistant City Manager Jason Boyles City Attorney Cain Smith and Public Affairs Manager Layne Phillips. Absent was Councilmember Ginny Hendley.

Mayor Jonathan McCollar called the meeting to order.

1. Development Process

Director of Planning, Kathy Fields presented the development process. The purpose is to ensure clarity of the development process to residents and councilmembers, the following is a step by step explanation of the process. First the right start meeting is required per Sec – 2-7-6 of the UDC. Next the zoning map amendment, a request for variance or zoning map amendment will generally take no more than 30 days. Per state law, if an annexation takes place, the Board of Commissioners for the County and the Board of Education must be notified at least 45 days prior to any action. The zoning map amendment uses a Non-Binding sketch plan the final development may be drastically different based on the limits of the approved zoning. Development of Regional Impact (DRI), in the event a large scale residential development (400+ units) a development of regional impact must be conducted. The process can take up to 45 days from the initial submittal, and is conducted by the local regional commission. Comments from the DRI are provided from all regionally impacted partners. Preliminary subdivision plat (if required), upon general approval of the plans for a project the applicant will return a preliminary subdivision plat showing all easements, lot lines, and road infrastructure for approval by City Council. If no mayor subdivision (5 or more parcels) is required, then the applicant will proceed to their next step. Legal counsel has confirmed that there is no requirement to have a public hearing for this approval stage. City Manager Charles Penny stated in our current practice we have been having public hearings to give the public an opportunity to speak. After the zoning is in place this is where the lot lines and setbacks are put in. Having a public hearing is not something the state law requires it has just been a practice for the City of Statesboro. We recommend removing the public hearings because if for some reason council doesn't approve the preliminary plat it could turn into a legal matter. Next step is the plan submission and review, plan submission is achieved through direct input into the community core permitting software. During initial submission, applicants are required to send all planes to appropriate state agencies for their review. Next is the Land Disturbance Activity Permit, upon all approvals from both local and state reviewers, the applicant must install their initial erosion control measures to the site before picking up the permit. Initial controls include a sediment basin, and silt fencing. The BMP will then do their inspection and then the applicant can pick up their LDAP. Residential development will have a pre-construction meeting at this time. A final plat will be submitted to staff after completion of site work for signature by the Mayor. This does not go back to council. In addition to the plat, the engineer of record shall submit a copy of as-built plans to the Department of Public Works & Engineering. Building Permit, the applicant should submit a copy of architectural and structural plans through Community Core as a separate permit. The plans will be reviewed for consistency

with local ordinance by all departments and when approved, a permit will be issued by the Chief Building Official. Certificate of Occupancy (CO), general inspection will be conducted by the Chief Building Official/Building Inspector throughout the project. All departments are required to provide a final approval on a project before issuance of the CO. And then you have the site closeout, upon project completion, the Department of Engineering will verify that all state requirements have been met. Upon verification, the Land Disturbance Activity permit will be closed.

4:22 pm Councilmember Paulette Chavers joined the meeting

2. Building Permit Fee

Director of Planning, Kathy Field presented to Mayor and Council the building permit fee schedule amendment. House bill 461 requires all cities/counties to revise how their building permit fees are calculated, it took effect on July 1, 2024. Regulatory Impact requires that regulatory fees be used to fund such regulatory activity. Permitting language, regulatory fees may be assessed by two means. One for construction projects classified as new construction or for extensive renovation projects, the number of square feet of construction or the number of square feet of construction to be installed, in conjunction with and limited by the hourly rate described in paragraph (3) or (4) of this subsection. Second is a flat fee for each type of permit or inspection. Mrs. Fields went over the current and proposed building permit fee schedule. City Manager Mr. Penny stated the proposed fee schedule amendment will be brought back in front of council at the first meeting in September. Until then we will continue to charge our current fees.

3. Project Incentives

City Manager Charles Penny stated this is removed from the agenda and will be on the September Work Session.

4. Fire Equipment Assessment

Fire Chief Tim Grams began by introducing Captain Eric Baxter who helped put the numbers and information all together. The Fire Department is facing challenges as it relates to the apparatus fleet, right now there is only one (1) aerial apparatus in service. If this apparatus goes down we have no aerial capabilities in the City of Statesboro. Other challenges is the manufacturers build time is ranging from 24 to 48 months, the prices are expected to increase around 10% in the foreseeable future. The amount of funding currently allocated for the purchase of new fire apparatus may create additional challenges Current apparatus, truck 1 tower truck is currently the only aerial apparatus in-service. This apparatus was purchased in 2013 and is scheduled to be moved to "reserve" status in 2028 and it has had significant maintenance cost over the past two years. Ladder 2 reserve aerial was purchased in 1995 and requires a new motor in order to return to service. Engine 3 was purchased in 2013 and should be reassigned to "reserve" status based on NFPA standards. Some considerations are purchasing "used" and/or "demo" apparatus. Recommendations are purchase a new 100' platform aerial apparatus to replace truck 1 which then truck 1 would be reassigned to reserve and ladder 2 would be surplus. Purchase a new 75' Quint Apparatus which would replace engine 3 and be assigned to station 3. The purchase of a new fire engine, it would cost \$900k-\$1.1 million production time would be between 24-30 months in preparation for station 4. The total cost for all three (3) apparatus would be between \$4.5 and \$5.4 million. Due to the number of issues over the past two years with truck 1, the FD is recommending renting an additional aerial apparatus to ensure those service capabilities are maintained costing between \$6,000 and \$8,000 per month. The total cost over a two year period would be between \$144,000 and \$192,000. Chief Grams presented manufacturer quotes/proposals. Time is of the essence, recommendations would be brought back to council.

Councilmember Chavers asked if they had a trade in trade in program. Chief Grams stated that he was not aware of any trade in program.

5. Urban Redevelopment

Simon Hardt the planning manager for Coastal Regional Commission explained that an urban redevelopment plan is a strategic document aimed at revitalizing underdeveloped or declining city areas by upgrading infrastructure, enhancing public spaces, and fostering economic growth, to improve resident's quality of life and attract investment. Urban redevelopment plans need to be updated every three years. A URP qualifies a community to be able to apply for CDBG grants, gives municipalities the power to redevelop blighted or threatened areas in their communities, provides up to 20 bonus points on CDBG annual competition applications and it permits the use of tax-exempt bonds for redevelopment purposes. The URP for the core area of Statesboro embraces the following areas in Statesboro: Downtown Statesboro, The Blue Mile Corridor, Johnson Street, MLK, Whitesville, and the Mulberry Street community. The underlying study for this URP is primarily focused on housing conditions, identification of blighting influences, socio-economic conditions of residents, and survey of public facilities. Provisions in the Georgia Code for Urban Redevelopment by municipalities requires that certain conditions must exist within an area designated for redevelopment which include one or more slum areas exist in the city; and the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of such area or areas is necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the city. To meet these conditions, the city must also find that a feasible method exists for the relocation of families who will be displaced from the urban redevelopment area(s) in decent safe and sanitary housing within their means. The urban redevelopment plan conforms to the city's comprehensive plan, and the urban redevelopment plan will afford maximum opportunity for private enterprises to participate in the rehabilitation or redevelopment activities contemplated by the plan. The main goals from the 2024 Statesboro Comprehensive Land Use Plan, The revitalization of the city's downtown area, the connecting commercial corridor to the Georgia Southern University Campus "The Blue Mile", revitalization of the neighborhoods surrounding downtown Statesboro and The Blue Mile. These areas are generally referred to as the core area of Statesboro. Simon Hardt went over a summary of what has been accomplished over the 10 year program in the last 6 years and the projects still in progress. Bryant's Landing which is a result of the URP is a conversion of the Julia P. Bryant Elementary School, that will be affordable senior housing.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 pm.

Jonathan McCollar, Mayor

Leah Harden, City Clerk