

ITEM	DEPT.	SOURCE	AMOUNT	FUNDING
L. Annual renewal of lease agreement for 20 license plate readers	Police	Flock Safety, Inc. Atlanta, GA www.flocksafety.com	\$60,000	SSD – Police
M. Professional engineering services contracts for completion of the Regional Stormwater Studies	Engineering	•Thomas & Hutton Engineering Company Savannah, GA www.thomasandhutton.com •Dewberry Engineers, Inc. Atlanta, GA www.dewberry.com •Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. Savannah, GA www.kimley-horn.com	\$1,702,995	ARPA – Drainage (Pending Board Approval of Budget Transfer)
N. Construction contract to provide the modernization of passenger elevators 1 and 2 at the J. Tom Coleman Courthouse	Engineering	Elevated Facility Services Savannah, GA www.elevatedfacilityservices.com	\$860,180	•CIP – Coleman Courthouse Elevators •CIP – Maintenance Reserve
O. Annual contract with renewal options for four (4) additional one (1) year terms to provide janitorial services for Chatham County Animal Services	Facilities Maintenance and Operations	Tweety B, LLC (MBE) Savannah, GA No Website	\$13,104	General Fund/M&O – Facilities Maintenance and Operations
P. Professional services contract for engineering design services for the new subdivision development in Port Wentworth	Engineering	Thomas & Hutton Engineering Company Savannah, GA www.thomasandhutton.com	\$247,700	ARPA – Housing Development
Q. Recognize an administrative change to the construction contract for L. Scott Stell Park Improvements project (airmasium), to revise funding source allocations	Engineering	United Grounds Maintenance Services, Inc. (WBE) Glennville, GA No Website	\$5,151,724	ARPA – L. Scott Stell Park Renovations & Improvements (Pending Board Approval of Budget Transfer)

=====

11. FIRST READINGS

Proposed changes to ordinances must be read or presented in written form at two meetings held not less than one week apart. A vote on the following listed matters will occur at the next regularly scheduled meeting. On first reading, presentation by MPC staff and discussion only by Commissioners will be heard. Comments, discussion and debate from members of the public will be received only at the meeting at which a vote is to be taken on one of the following listed items.

- 1. AMENDMENT TO CHAPTER 21, ARTICLE XII, SECTION 21-1203(1) OF THE COUNTY CODE TO LEVY OF FIRE TAX IN THE FIRE SERVICE TAX ORDINANCE FOR FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES.**

Chairman Ellis said, all right. We go to First Readers. Amendment to Chapter 21, Article XII, Section 21-1203(1) of the County Code to levy of Fire Tax in the Fire Service Tax Ordinance for fire protection services. This is the First Reader. Next time – next time up – next meeting up, we’ll take it up in its entirety, all right?

=====

12. SECOND READINGS

- 1. THE PETITIONER, ONE GATEWAY BLVD., LLC, IS PROPOSING TO REZONE/MAP AMENDMENT TO CONVERT AN EXISTING HOTEL DEVELOPMENT INTO A MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL USE, LOCATED AT 1 EAST GATEWAY BLVD. MPC**

FILE NUMBER: Z-0824-000494, PIN: 11028 01017. THE MPC RECOMMENDS APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS. [DISTRICT 6.]

We going on now to the Second Reader, and I understand before I – while I'm reading, we need to pull up somebody on the – isn't there – isn't there someone who wants to come in on Zoom? All right. So we'll be ready for that, all right. The petitioner, One Gateway Boulevard, LLC, is proposing to rezone slash map amendments to convert an existing hotel development into a multifamily residential use, located at 1 East Gateway Boulevard. MPC File Number Z dash 0824 dash 000494 comma PIN 11028 01017. The MPC recommends approval with conditions. All right. Yes, sir.

Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission Development Services Director Brad Clement said, good morning. Good morning, Mr. Chairman –

Chairman Ellis said, good morning.

Mr. Clement said, – Commissioners. My name is Brad Clement. I'm from Development services at the Metropolitan Planning Commission. I will be brief. as I was schooled by Commissioner Kicklighter to cut it to the quick. You – you read the – the request. It is a rezoning. This represents redevelopment opportunity in something that has previously been Planned Community Business. The area, and we brought maps. There was some spacial confusion earlier, not on the MPC's dime. We – we put you right where it is. So, this is near the intersection of 95 and 204 before it becomes Fort Argyle. The – the hotel/restaurant/commercial side; Ruby Tuesday's, that area, all right?

Chairman Ellis said, we got you.

Mr. Clement said, this – this was the former Best Western/Ramada Inn with a Denny's. It has – it has gone through a couple of different ownerships. This – this rezoning request changes it from that commercial hotel use to a residential use, a single room, efficiency apartment, residential use. The conditions are the important part of this staff report. The – the county doesn't actually have a single room occupancy use in their zoning ordinance; the City of Savannah does. The MPC applied very similar conditions to mirror the City of Savannah use and development conditions so that there would not be jurisdictional competition for – for this use going forward.

Mr. Clement said, this – this is a new phase of development or redevelopment, if you will. The developer is not from Savannah but has had several successful projects in other urban areas. So, we're willing to give this a chance without doing a text amendment. We applied conditions, and if we're meeting these conditions, we'll see how it goes.

Mr. Clement said, and for the record, if – if Mr. Chairman doesn't mind, I'd like to read those conditions. The maximum number of residential units shall not exceed one hundred and twenty. That's in line with the structure as it exists. We do not have a general or specific development plan in terms of construction or reconfiguration of the hotel structure itself, but it's not a knock down, build over again type development project. On-site management shall be present on a twenty-four-hour basis. It's not a send your check to Atlanta and done project. There will be somebody responsible for that property on the property twenty-four hours a day.

Mr. Clement said, number three, the minimum rental period shall be thirty days. Thirty days is the magic number. If it's – were a long-term hotel, long – long-term stay hotel, at the end of thirty days, you got to get out, go somewhere else for a day and come back. So, this makes it residential in character, thus the ask for rezoning and not keeping it commercial, tied to a long-term stay. This is not that. These are intended to be long-term residential units.

Mr. Clement said, four, a minimum of twelve hundred square feet of indoor common area shall be provided for the use. This is a – a – a one for one from the Savannah Code of Ordinances. Can't go to the County because they don't have that requirement; can't go to the City because you want an atrium. It's same/same. On-site laundry facilities shall be provided. That's a little self-explanatory. That's a requirement for dwelling units across all jurisdictions.

Mr. Clement said, the petitioner shall partner with Chatham Area Transit in the construction of a bus shelter at the bus stop existing along that Gateway Boulevard corridor. Because of the residential use, and potential traffic generated in that – in that commercial corridor, there is an existing bus route, it only makes sense to provide that extension of – of further service with a bus stop. And, number seven, and this is something I'm going to defer to the Attorney on. A management plan shall be submitted to Chatham County Commission at the time of consideration consisting of the following: number A, a detailed description of the applicant's screening processes, criteria and residency requirements; number B, standard rental procedures; and number C, a detailed description of supportive services that will be provided, including a list of service providers.

Mr. Clement said, pending your questions, that's all I have.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Any questions for him? Yes, sir.

Commissioner Whitely said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for that, Mr. Clement. So, just so I'm clear, this, should it be changed to residential, if someone – if the management wanted to remove somebody, they would have to go through the regular dispossessionary process?

Mr. Clement said, that's correct.

Commissioner Whitely said, okay.

Chairman Ellis said, is you good? I got everybody? Anybody else? All right. Let me do this, now, before you go. I – I got you. I know – I saw you looking at me, so hold – hold – hold what you got. Now, in any rezoning, all right, we have to have a public hearing, okay? Right?

County Manager Kaigler said, mm-hmm.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Now, so what I want to do now, is get a motion and a second to do – or do you need to speak to what he said before I go there?

County Attorney Hart said, you – you can –

Chairman Ellis said, I an go ahead and –

County Manager Kaigler said, yeah.

County Attorney Hart said, yes.

Chairman Ellis said, okay. Give me a motion and a let's go to a public hearing.

Commissioner Whitely said, motion to open a public hearing, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Lockett said, I second.

Chairman Ellis said, properly motioned and second that we go to the public hearing. Are you ready for the question? Please cast your votes. We all in. Good.

[NOTE: The public hearing was opened at 10:54 a.m., whereupon the following transpired:]

Chairman Ellis said, now, you want to go or you want me to bring in –

County Attorney Hart said, it – the – the main thing we want to do is make sure – we've got a definition section in our zoning code about efficiency apartments --

County Manager Kaigler said, mm-hmm.

County Attorney Hart said, – or one-room boarding, okay? We have no zoning classification for that.

Chairman Ellis said, all right.

County Attorney Hart said, so, what you're doing is your taking that definition and saying we're going to insert it into this zoning classification, and it fits in the general scheme of things, but it's not a zoning classification designed specifically for this. But at the same time, this gives us the opportunity to see how well –

County Manager Kaigler said, mm-hmm.

County Attorney Hart said, – this works without going in and doing a text amendment in which we have this classification county-wide, okay? Now, one of the requirements that we're going to have in here is that Building Safety and Regulatory Services will need to see their plans and approve them, and they will monitor construction throughout. This is a hotel – motel, excuse me, built in the '70s, and you're going to have two – at least two people living in those rooms, okay? You got to have a bathroom; you got to have closets; you got to have a kitchen with a sink; and you got to be able to cook in it; and you got to be able to vent that; and you got to be able to have a wiring system that's up to code. So, all of that must be achieved before this – this – this happens. Now, we'll work with them in the process, but they're going to have to –

County Manager Kaigler said, mm-hmm.

County Attorney Hart said, – show us what they're going to do and get it approved before we do it. The condition number seven is the conditions that they're going to tell us how they're going to operate it and what they're going to operate it for and how they're going to – what – what they're going to do, what services they will or will not provide. For example, they list they're going to have the in-house laundry system for – it's connected to a – what was formerly a restaurant, about ten thousand square feet. Some of that's going to be converted into a common area. We want to see what that's like. And we're going to be monitoring this very closely.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, question.

Commissioner Whitely said, yeah.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Go ahead. Question.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yeah. My question would be, when it comes to – and I know this is not technically public housing. I like the concept of it's a tiny house in a sense, so a little bit more affordable housing, but when it comes to public housing, do – does the federal government not require something now with certain types of felonies that they must be kicked out of the public housing?

County Attorney Hart said, I – I don't know whether there's federal regs on that. I doubt that seriously, but a lot of the public housing projects have requirements that persons with felonies, we will not rent to, and we do not want them around kids. So, the – yeah, they – they evict people – if – if you rent to a mother and two children and she – and he or she decides they're going to have somebody move in with them that they're not married to or part of the family, then – then they'll act.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay. So, my question would be, can we look at possible rules and actually ordinances because we're not talking government housing, but in a sense, we're talking very reduced, lower income housing.

County Attorney Hart said, no. This is – this is going to be at market rate, whatever market rate is for a one room efficiency. This is not going to be government subsidized. So, there will be a hundred and twenty of these in the hotel.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right.

County Attorney Hart said, and they're going to enter into separate little – separate leases.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yeah.

County Attorney Hart said, and – and the leases have to be longer than thirty days, or else it would be a short-term rental, and we're not going down that – that road, okay?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, and I'm not even saying all felony. I mean, I'm saying, should we look at certain violent felonies – certain, you know, not necessarily everything –

County Attorney Hart said, well –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, – because people do deserve a chance –

County Attorney Hart said, the main thing –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, – but –

County Attorney Hart said, the one of the –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, – I wouldn't want a killer living next door to me that got out. I mean –

County Attorney Hart said, one of the concerns you have anytime you do this, is you got a one room, and, you know, these were hotel rooms that had two double beds in them. Put two double beds in them, you got no room to put a kitchen in or anything – or have any living space.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yeah.

Commissioner Hodge said, so, I think there needs to be a limit on the number of people that can occupy a unit.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay.

County Attorney Hart said, it's – it's probably not ideal for a family of four, let's put it that way.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, so, we should – we should – is it in your legal opinion what we should – you're not prepared to throw a number out there for us, are you, at this point? I mean, something we should look into before we approve it or not?

County Attorney Hart said, well, you're talking between two hundred and eighty and three hundred square feet. That's – that's a tiny house, and, you know, you put two people as – as – as big as myself, there isn't a lot of room to live in, when you put the two bodies in there.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right.

County Attorney Hart said, so, you just – you just need to be aware of that.

Chairman Ellis said, all right? You finished?

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yes.

Chairman Ellis said, all right.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you.

Chairman Ellis said, Commissioner Whitely.

Commissioner Whitely said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, one thing when you speak about – our colleague, Commissioner Kicklighter, spoke about a vetting process, I'm eager to hear what their vetting process would be, and I – I assume that as part of condition number seven, they would give us some insight into that. But, I do also want to make sure that we are cautioned and not overstepping our bounds as it comes to property rights, because what I don't want to do – just because these are efficiency homes, let's not assume that a killer or a rapist or who – whomever – an undesirable neighbor quote end quote will stay there, 'cause they live in our home subdivisions now. So, just because it's an efficiency unit, I don't want us to almost stereotype this space to assume that this is now going to become, you know, the Carter off of New Jack City – Google it, if you don't know what I'm talking about.

Commissioner Whitely said, the last thing I will say is, I do agree with some sort of occupancy limits as a means of safety, and I want to make sure that – and I'm – I'm eager to hear from the developer to kind of see what their thoughts are behind this, but I also wants folks to understand that we have people currently, families of four, living in hotels now. So, I don't want us to go and – and – and try to over enforce something that's currently happening now. We – part of this is hopefully a chip off of the issue of affordable housing that we have – or at least helping us chip –

County Manager Kaigler said, mm-hmm.

Commissioner Whitely said, – in – chip away at that issue. And, so, I think we have to be mindful and sensitive to the realities that our citizens are facing in the county. So, I want to be sure that we state that piece. The last piece I want to say is, I was – I was very impressed to hear that they're going to help update that bus stop over there on the Gateway, 'cause it's a mess there. And, again, the last piece, I'm hopeful that this type of a development fosters a – a spirit of ownership or local buy in. Currently in this area, we are experiencing a lot of vagrancy and homelessness, but I don't want to say homelessness as much as I'll say vagrancy. Homelessness is someone who doesn't have a place to live. But when you're walking through hotel parking lots checking doors; when you're pulling out weapons; when you're panhandling in certain areas or going in and stealing breakfast, that's vagrancy, and I want us to draw a strict line against that. I know that there are some folks in the audience who are here for something that's not on the agenda today, but I want to be clear that there is a stark contrast between homelessness and vagrancy, and vagrancy is what we're trying to get rid of in this area. So, I'm excited to see what happens at this location.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Any? Commissioner Kicklighter.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, thank you. Thank you.

Chairman Ellis said, yeah, for – for some reason your mike kind of whistling.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I see it keeps going off automatically –

Chairman Ellis said, yeah.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, – here, so somebody – who's – who's silencing me back – back there?

Chairman Ellis said, that's them gremlins.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I just want to state that I absolutely understand where you're coming from about stereotypes, but the sad fact of reality is – is that it is nice to – to think great things about everything in life, but it's not a stereotype. Sad fact is the higher crime rates come in lower socioeconomic areas. I mean, a fact, you can check it. I mean it's – it's – it's sad. And – and some of the higher areas you're going to have – higher income areas you – you may have like a condo situation that has a H-O-A that enforces stricter rules. Usually, the stricter rules, for whatever reason, and I don't understand why, never seem to be implemented in the lower economic situations. Where, if there was like an H-O-A overseeing a – a – something – a lower income housing area like that, it would keep it nicer. Enforce it to stay nicer, because let's face it, I mean, that's the difference in all the neighborhoods now is – is the ones – you know, you – sadly, the ones with the H-O-As, they – they are not always – it's not the rule, but they're usually maintained a little better than the ones without an H-O-A, and that's – that's all I'm saying, is, if we can look at whatever

area – because I – I was the one, actually, that I think first – or maybe not first, but I spoke about putting tiny homes, and, you know, allowing it to rezone areas where things, such as this could go in, and I was actually thinking more of building little tiny homes, letting them buy their small plot of land, and I – in my mind, had an H-O-A, and everybody's governed like they would be in some fancy, expensive place, and it stays nice and neat and everyone has their own nice homes that they – they take care of like that. And – but this does the same thing, as far as giving someone a home at a smaller size and a smaller rate, but I just want to make sure we implement or put whatever in place to make sure that it don't backfire and turn into just some type of slums.

Commissioner Whitely said, okay.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, and – and – that's – that's all. Thank you.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Now, we do have someone who's coming in by – by Zoom. Hmm?

Commissioner Farrell said, don't we have to open it to the public?

Chairman Ellis said, hmm?

Commissioner Farrell said, shouldn't we have a public meeting for the –

Chairman Ellis said, it is opened. We did – didn't we – we did that already.

Commissioner Farrell said, okay.

Chairman Ellis said, yeah. That's why – do – do we have that?

Clerk said, yes, sir.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Who is it and – okay.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, Jarrett Wilbanks.

County Manager Kaigler said, Jarrett Wilbanks, yes.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Mr. Wilbank[s], you have the floor. Can – can we – can he hear us?

Mr. Jarrett Wilbanks said, yes, I can hear you. Is the Commission able to hear me?

Chairman Ellis said, yes. Yes. We can hear you. Go forward.

Mr. Wilbanks said, hey, good morning. I appreciate everyone's time today. So, I represent the buyer of this property who will be developing it as outlined to the Commission earlier. I – I heard quite a few questions that were brought up by some of the Commission, and I'm happy to answer those, if they want to kind of ask those directly. I'll try to hit on a few that I recall off the top of my head. Most recently we had some questions around H-O-A, how the property would be managed, and then the – the market rate and the affordability.

Mr. Wilbanks said, so I'd like to state that the product will be affordable by nature, but as mentioned, it is not going to be subsidized. The smaller square footage of these studio apartments, does make them affordable and provides a nice options for folks who are on a budget, and these properties often work out well for folks who are on fixed income. Our rental rates include utilities, water, power, high speed internet. So, it's a very predictable monthly expense to cover just about everything you're going to need except for – for food, and then laundry. There will be an on-site laundry facility. That is part of the requirements that we are willing to meet that was laid out by the Commission.

Mr. Wilbanks said, we will operate this facility as studio apartments, as an apartment complex. We utilize a professional management company. The company is already present in the area with other properties that they manage for the property owners. They are who will employ the property manager. We'll have a leasing agent; we'll have a maintenance staff, and they will ensure that there will be a twenty-four-hour presence. Often times we have members of the management company live on site – on property, just to help make sure that we have the presence that's required.

Mr. Wilbanks said, so, we – we will operate this as you would see a brand new, class A apartment complex, it's just going to be smaller and more affordable by the nature of the product. And by reusing the structure that exists, we are able to essentially pass on the savings to the residents in the form of lower rent, because we won't have the – as high of a construction cost as you would a new build. I did believe there was some questions around or some statements, rather, around the requirements of code. We do recognize this is a change of use, so we have a – an architect and a professional MEP engineering team that we utilize to put together all of our drawings that are submitted to the county for construction permit, that they will be reviewed against applicable codes, so we do recognize the process there for

construction, and that we would need to bring the building up to applicable codes on the change of use. So, fully aware of that and understand that and look forward to working hand in hand with the county to get that done.

Mr. Wilbanks said, that's all the – the kind of comments or questions that I – I am just remembering off hand. I would – would love to answer any other questions of the Commission or the team onsite might have if I – if I haven't touched on everything that was kind of brought up.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Any ques – all right. Go ahead, Commissioner Whitely.

Commissioner Whitely said, thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Wilbanks, thank you for joining us today. I'm Commissioner Whitely, Commissioner of the District in which you're location will – you're hoping to locate your facility in. One question, what would be the average rate – rental rate, if you could tell me at this point?

Mr. Wilbanks said, so, we – we work with our management company to understand what market rates are. I'll say we have similar products in metro Atlanta and in Rome, Georgia, and the rental rates that we see for – for those range between eight hundred and twelve hundred dollars a month. So, I – I don't want to commit to a hard number –

Commissioner Whitely said, right.

Mr. Wilbanks said, – until we get a little bit further in, but I'll offer eight hundred to twelve hundred as a good target. That will, of course, change based on our energy costs, and – and other costs that we see with the property, but to give you something that's a ballpark, if you will, I would be comfortable with those numbers.

Commissioner Whitely said, I got you. Now, from your experience or your clients experience, who are the typical residents? Do you – do you rent to killers?

Mr. Wilbanks said, so, we – we have a wide range of clientele across our properties, and one thing I will point out, is that we use a professional management company, and part of their responsibility is to manage our applicants, collect rents, maintain the building, and as part of the application process, all prospective residents undergo a background and credit check. Now, we have non-profits that we work with; we have other entities that we can help folks out if they have a limited credit history or a questionable credit history, we – we do try to work with folks. We recognize the sector that we lease in sometimes folks need a chance, and, you know, we – we do everything we can to work with folks. But, as far as the criminal background goes, we do not allow residents who have violent crimes, or crimes against people, and the only way we allow folks who have any drug history is if they are actively in a recovery program with a sponsor or a counselor that they can provide documentation for.

Commissioner Whitely said, got it. Thank you for that. Now, the – what is your estimated time of construction?

Mr. Wilbanks said, the – the timeline should – should zoning move forward appropriately, we would then work with our architect to start pulling together models and drawings, and that would have to go to the MEP team. Drawings take anywhere from six weeks to three months. And then from there, once we have the drawing package, we begin the permitting process. That is varied across jurisdictions. So, it really just depends on – on how well our architect is able to convey everything that the county would need, and then how quickly the county is able to review. So, I don't know off hand what your county's typical review time period is, but let's assume that we can plug that in, and then from there we would start construction. On a hundred and twenty units, we would hope to be able to finish the renovation in the six- to nine- month time frame after receipt of permit. All of this, though, is contingent on – on the final sale going through as well.

Mr. Wilbanks said, so, with the zoning, we have fully intent to – to purchase, I just don't want to discount the fact that there are mac – macro economic forces that at any point could change the – the way a potential investment would pencil or the way it would seem. So, I don't want to offer a hundred percent guarantee that we'd be able to meet that timeline due to unforeseen items, but typically we're able to get the renovation done within a year of close.

Commissioner Whitely said, got you. Thank you. That's – that's all I have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Commissioner Lockett.

Commissioner Lockett said, Mr. Wilbanks, for my sake, would you tell us how many units you will have there, and do you have on-ground security?

Mr. Wilbanks said, so, the – the property, we are limited by the items that were provided to us from the county to a hundred and twenty units. That will match the – or mirror the footprint typically of the property itself. So, we typically aim to go one for one on a hotel conversion for rooms converting into studio apartments. We do employ on-site security, depending on – on the way property's performing, and how we're seeing, kind of what goes on at the property. Now, a lot of our properties don't necessarily have twenty-four-hour staff all the time. We do have a lot of folks – a lot of the members of the management team that will live on the property, but they're not necessarily on duty. Now, the residents do know where they're at, and in an emergency, they can – they can contact them.

Mr. Wilbanks said, if the Commission is requiring security, that is certainly something we can entertain, and it's something that we do, but that's usually done more of a as-needed basis. So, if we see that at night we're having issues, we'll bring in a security officer at night, and we usually vary their hours, just to keep folks from under – or trying to predict what the schedule might be, and then, if need be, we will hang onto them throughout the night.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. That's it?

Commissioner Lockett said, yes. That's – good answer.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Anymore questions from a Commissioner? All right. Anything else, Jon [Hart], you need to do? All right, let me have a motion to close the – oh, there's some – yes, ma'am.

Ms. Miranda Brawner said, hi. I wanted to comment that I –

Chairman Ellis said, no, you need to – you need to –

Ms. Brawner said, do I need to come up?

Chairman Ellis said, yeah, plus, the first thing you do is sign up with the Manager.

Ms. Brawner said, okay.

Chairman Ellis said, all right? This is a public hearing, so you can sign up with the Manager there, and then – all right. State your name and address.

Ms. Brawner said, hi. My name is Miranda Brawner. I am a resident in Chatham County, 11 Barnett Drive, 31406. I am glad that the – that the County Commission is concerned about the lack of affordable housing. I'm glad that you're taking steps to address this; however, I think that the – the eight hundred to twelve hundred a month range that he mentioned, that is affordable. I think that with – with the minimum wage being what it is in Georgia, people – if they're just barely able to make that rent, they're going to have nothing to spend on food or childcare. They're going to have – they're going to have no money left over. It's not livable. That eight hundred to twelve hundred number, that seems more like middle class housing, that's going to be inaccessible to a large number of people in Chatham County.

Ms. Brawner said, I think that – I – I think that, like, working with private companies who are interested in, you know, making a profit, is not going to be the solution to housing. I think that we need to invest in public housing that – we – we need to start with the premise that housing is a right for all people, and that it should not – we should not have the goal of helping developers make a profit as our main priority. So, yeah, I want y'all to – to consider that. Thank you.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Thank you. Mr. Manager, you have someone else?

County Manager Kaigler said, yes, sir. Mr. Joseph Kimker.

Mr. Joseph Kimker said, yes, sir. Joseph Kimker, 306 Oak Street, Bloomingdale, Georgia. I think this is innovative and proactive – use that word again. I think that that part of town would be best served with something of that nature. You have some shopping centers around there that, you know, they could use the clientele coming in. I know that, you know, the more residents we have, as opposed to short-term rentals, that means potentially more federal grant money, you know, as an increased population in that District. I just think it's all around a good idea. I'd love to see some more development like that, you know, 516 and Highway 17, that intersection right there, there's some older hotels, could potentially boost the economy out that way as well. I don't know – I think it's a good idea.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Thank you, sir. All right. Do we have anybody else?

County Manager Kaigler said, no, sir.

Chairman Ellis said, all the Commissioners have in –

Commissioner Whitely said, just one comment.

Chairman Ellis said, yes, sir.

Commissioner Whitely said, they – I got the Dean [Kicklighter] mike. My – my mike wasn't coming on either. I just want – I just want to make a statement to the young lady, who – who just spoke. The average rent in Savannah currently is one thousand six hundred and eighty-four dollars a month, and I definitely understand your – your thoughts, and I will share also, the County is working on other projects, to include, one we're working with Habitat for Humanity in Port Wentworth. So, I don't want you to think that this is our only effort as it relates to affordable housing. We understand this is a big issue.

Commissioner Whitely said, now, I want to just share, though, the other side of that. This is a private business entity. We do not own that hotel. We only own jurisdiction as it relates to government. So, that's what we're administering here.

Chairman Ellis said, all right?

Commissioner Whitely said, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Ellis said, did I get everybody? All right. Let me have a motion to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, can – can I make one (inaudible).

Chairman Ellis said, yes, sir. All right, point.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, would there be any limits on how many people you would allow to live in one room?

County Attorney Hart said, you could have –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, I – I guess I'm asking the gentleman that's petitioning. I'm – I'm trying to ask him a question that was your question.

Chairman Ellis said, yeah. Mr. Wilbanks. Is he still there?

Mr. Wilbanks said, so we – yes, sir. We – we typically lean on the jurisdictions to set density limits. What we typically see is two adults per studio unit as the limit. It gets a little bit gray when we speak to children. We do recognize that overcrowding is a concern. You have egress concerns. I'm – I'm happy to work with the Commission and operate within limits. If you're asking what we would consider an appropriate number, it's two adults per unit.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, two adults is appropriate in – in your –

Chairman Ellis said, MPC – MPC –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, if we were to – if we were to limit. Go ahead.

Mr. Clements said, so, what he was speaking to in terms of density goes to units per acre. The number of occupants per room, in this instance, would be governed by BSRS, who – who's not here right now –

Chairman Ellis said, mm-hmm.

Mr. Clements said, – that's – that's health code; those are the construction requirements, that the Attorney was talking about. So, that – that number is written down. It's not in our report, because it's beyond my jurisdiction, but it does exist.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay, and that was a two with y'all? In those that's already written or –

Chairman Ellis said, yeah. He doesn't want to say, 'cause it isn't his – the Attorney.

County Attorney Hart said, the part that becomes tricky, and – and the petitioner basically said, what it's tricky, is you get a single parent with two kids, three kids –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yeah.

County Attorney Hart said, – good credit report, good this, good that, do – do you want them living in one room together, okay? That's just the reality of the situation. Two adults, that's a different story, now. Three adults, hmm, I don't know about that.

Chairman Ellis said, mmm.

County Attorney Hart said, and that's the main thing you – you got to worry about, is becoming over crowded, and people not doing what they're supposed to. But that's inherent in any kind of venture similar to this anywhere you try it. So, you just got to wait and see what – how it happens.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, so –

County Attorney Hart said, but we could put limits on it, and we'd work with them on how they handle, say, single parents with several kids.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, can you repeat that? Did you say we can put limits or we did put limits?

County Attorney Hart said, we can put limits on it.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay.

County Attorney Hart said, I mean, the two adults, you know, I don't see a problem with that, but I – I – I would – you start putting three or four people in these places, they – they – you know, they're just not built for that.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right. Either two adults or one adult with one child or something like that?

County Attorney Hart said, yeah.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, so, two people.

County Attorney Hart said, that – that's – that's what we would think would be the easiest to handle. Now, they may have – they've done this elsewhere, and they may have some type of formula that has worked well for them –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, yeah.

County Attorney Hart said, – and we would certainly be willing to look at that.

County Manager Kaigler said, yeah. And – and, Mr. Chairman, if I may, I want to re-emphasize something the Attorney said early on. We normally don't allow this. So, this is like a pilot for us.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right.

County Manager Kaigler said, so, we're going to see how this works out, and I would suggest, and – and recommend to staff – MPC staff and our Building Safety staff, is when they bring back the management plan, we're going to have that identified as to how – what's the density. How many people per unit and those kind of things. Because if we don't regulate that, we can get some abuse, in – in certain areas, and you'll have –

Mr. Clements said, just have –

County Manager Kaigler said, – kind of deviant activities and – and some of the same things that Commissioner Whitely – what we talked about with the other properties out there at Gateway. We – we're trying to correct that.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, so, we don't have to address today –

County Manager Kaigler said, no, we don't have to address today –

Chairman Ellis said, no.

County Manager Kaigler said, – but what we will do, is we will –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, but it will be –

Chairman Ellis said, when the plans –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, addressed before –

Chairman Ellis said, – come back before us.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, – it actually opens.

Chairman Ellis said, yeah.

County Manager Kaigler said, when the management plans comes back, we'll address that then.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, okay.

Chairman Ellis said, so –

Mr. Clement said, it – it was the Comm – the Planning Commission's intent that we not try to enforce preemptively –

Commissioner Whitely said, right.

Mr. Clement said, but to see a plan, and to the Attorney's point, you know, one mother, two small children; two adults; I – I don't know what the formula is, but there is a maximum occupancy. If you've ever been to a restaurant, there's a number on the door, how many people can occupy that space –

Commissioner Kicklighter said, right.

Mr. Clement said, – by square foot. So, we'll – we'll figure that out. We don't have an answer today, nor are you required to for this first step –

Chairman Ellis said, right.

Mr. Clement said, – of this sequence of events.

Chairman Ellis said, it's got to come through the management plan, see?

Mr. Clement said, yes, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Ellis said, all right? And – and know that MPC, you're planners, not implementers.

Mr. Clement said, that's correct.

Chairman Ellis said, got you. Yes, sir.

Commissioner Whitely said, so, my question is for the Manager or the Attorney, so, when this is – you know, should we go forward with this today, the management plan, how will that present to us? Will it be in the form of a – a – a Certificate of Occupancy approval or what would be the action that would bring it before this Commission?

County Attorney Hart said, we would want to see copies of the doc – typical type lease they have, typical type of profile that they use, and requirements for, you know, renting to people and other things concerning their operations. Do they have a set of rules that everybody has to abide by? How do they enforce those rules?

Commissioner Whitely said, not – not to cut you off, I – I understand what would be in it, what I'm saying is, what – what action would the Commission take when its' – 'cause it says that it will be submitted to the Commission, right –

County Attorney Hart said, right, well what we –

Commissioner Whitely said, – so when it's submitted to us, what action would we be taking? Would it be like an approval or disapproval of a – of their management plan?

County Attorney Hart said, sure.

Commissioner Whitely said, okay. Got you. Just keeping it simple.

County Manager Kaigler said, 'cause you – you're going to have to do a – we're going to have to do a – the County's going to have to issue a Certificate of Occupancy.

County Attorney Hart said, yeah.

County Manager Kaigler said, at that point, we'll – we'll bring it back to you.

Commissioner Whitely said, got it.

County Attorney Hart said, and we – we would work with these folks. I mean, and – and review their stuff and make suggestions, and I'm sure Building Safety will make some suggestions about their concerns. You're going to have a hundred and twenty kitchens here, so –

Commissioner Whitely said, right.

County Attorney Hart said, you know, you need to be aware of that. And – and then when we think we've got it as good as we know how to do it, we're going to bring it up here, and somebody might have a better idea, may say, oh, it's the greatest thing since canned beer or something.

Commissioner Whitely said, yes, sir. I just wanted to be clear on how we can expect to see it, so that the developers are on the same page, but also the public and the neighbors are on the same page as to what the next steps would be. So, thank you for that.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. Do I have everybody now? Let me have a motion to close the public hearing.

Commissioner Whitely said, so moved, Mr. Chairman.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, second.

Chairman Ellis said, properly motioned and second that we close the public hearing. You ready for the question? Please cast your votes. All votes are in. All right.

[NOTE: The public hearing was closed at 11:25 a.m., whereupon the following transpired:]

Chairman Ellis said, now, may I have a motion to approve?

Commissioner Whitely said, yeah. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a motion to approve the Second Reading as stated on the agenda.

Commissioner Kicklighter said, second.

County Attorney Hart said, with conditions.

Commissioner Whitely said, oh, with –

Chairman Ellis said, with the conditions, yeah.

Commissioner Whitely said, excuse me.

Chairman Ellis said, the conditions are a part of the recommendation.

Commissioner Whitely said, all right. So let me –

Chairman Ellis said, yeah.

Commissioner Whitely said, – rephrase my motion.

Chairman Ellis said, okay.

Commissioner Whitely said, I'd like to move – I move that we accept the Second Reading, as stated on the agenda, to include the conditions that have been recommended by the MPC and staff.

Chairman Ellis said, all right. It's been properly motioned and second. You ready for the question? Please cast your votes. All right. We're good.

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

- a. Commissioner Whitely moved to open the public hearing. Commissioner Lockett seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Stone, Hodge, Milton, and Adams were not present.]
- b. Commissioner Whitely moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Kicklighter seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Stone, Hodge, Milton, and Adams were not present.]
- c. Commissioner Whitely moved to approve the request to rezone with the stated and recommended conditions. Commissioner Kicklighter seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. [NOTE: Commissioners Stone, Hodge, Milton, and Adams were not present.]

~~AGENDA ITEM: 11.1~~
~~AGENDA DATE: October 4, 2024~~
~~AGENDA ITEM: 12.1~~
~~AGENDA DATE: October 18, 2024~~
~~AGENDA ITEM: 9.1~~
~~AGENDA DATE: November 1, 2024~~
~~AGENDA ITEM: 8.1~~
~~AGENDA DATE: November 15, 2024~~
AGENDA ITEM: 12.1
AGENDA DATE: December 6, 2024

TO: Board of Commissioners
THRU: Michael Kaigler, County Manager
FROM: Melanie Wilson, Director, MPC

ISSUE:

The petitioner, One Gateway Blvd LLC, is proposing to Rezone/Map Amendment to convert an existing hotel development into a multifamily residential use. MPC File Number: Z-0824-000494, PIN: 11028 01017. The MPC recommends approval with conditions. [District 6].

BACKGROUND:

The Petitioner requests approval of a Rezoning/Map Amendment to convert an existing hotel development into a multifamily residential use. The subject parcel was developed as a Best Western motel in or about 1985 and the Petitioner seeks to convert the existing guest rooms into approximately 120 single-room occupancy (efficiency) dwellings. The subject property consists of 6.39 acres and is presently developed as a former ~9,000 square foot restaurant and 120-room motel constructed in 1985 per the Chatham County Tax Assessor. The property was rezoned from 'A-B' (Agriculture-Business) to P-B-C (Planned-Business-Community) in September 1985. Staff was unable to locate any files associated with the rezoning request.

FACTS AND FINDINGS:

1. *Will the proposed zoning districts permit uses that would create traffic volumes, noise level, odor, airborne particulate matter, visual blight, reduce light or increased density of development that would adversely impact the livability or quality of life in the surrounding neighborhood?*

Staff Comment: The site is fully developed as a motel in a commercial zoning district at present, with all necessary public utilities, access and parking required in place. The proposed zoning district and use are compatible with uses in the immediate area. The site is situated along an appropriate high-volume transportation corridor with nearby access to SR 204 and I-95. The site is also in close proximity to a public transit route. No significant adverse impact to the surrounding neighborhood is anticipated.

Yes No X

2. *Will the proposed zoning districts permit uses that would adversely impact adjacent and nearby properties by rendering such properties less desirable and therefore, less marketable for the type of development permitted under the current zoning?*

Staff Comment: The site is fully developed as a motel and restaurant in a commercial zoning district at present. No new construction is proposed. The intensity of use on the site could be expected to decline slightly as a result of the rezoning, as occupant turnover would decrease in frequency. The nature of land use will not change substantially nor be detrimental to adjoining properties or land uses. Alternatively, nearby businesses should see new regular clientele.

Yes No X

3. *Will the proposed zoning district's permitted uses generate a type or mix of vehicular traffic on a street or highway that is incompatible with the type of land use development along such street or highway?*

Staff Comment: The proposed use is unlikely to generate traffic incompatible with adjoining uses. Vehicles of similar nature to those current and prior would be expected to utilize the site.

Yes No X

4. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses that would generate greater traffic volumes at vehicular access points and cross streets than is generated by uses permitted under the current zoning district to the detriment of maintaining acceptable or current volume capacity (V/C) ratio for the streets that provide vehicular access to the proposed zoning district and adjacent and nearby properties?*

Staff Comment: Traffic volumes are likely to remain relatively consistent or possibly decrease as a result of the requested rezoning. What can be expected to change is the volume of traffic exiting and entering the site at common commute times, as residents would likely have more regular commuting times than visitors or travelers. The traffic generated, however, should not be of a volume in excess of the capacity of adjoining roadways.

Yes No X

- 5. *Will the proposed zoning districts permit uses or scale of development that would require a greater level of public services such as drainage facilities, utilities, or safety services above that required for uses permitted under the current zoning district such that the provision of these services will create financial burden to the public?*

Staff Comment: Existing public utilities can accommodate the use proposed as the site is already developed. However, there will likely be school-aged children placing new demand on the school system, particularly for school bus transportation.

Yes No X

- 6. *Will the proposed zoning district permit uses or scale of development that would adversely impact the improvement or development of adjacent and nearby properties in accordance with existing zoning regulations and development controls deemed necessary to maintain the stability and livability of the surrounding neighborhood?*

Staff Comment: The improvement of adjacent properties is not likely to be impacted by the proposed zoning change.

Yes No X

- 7. *Will the proposed zoning districts permit development that is inconsistent with the comprehensive land use plan?*

Staff Comment: The proposed zoning is generally consistent with the Comprehensive Plan’s designation of the parcel as a suburban commercial gateway. The proposed zoning district would permit residential development at a scale that is desirable in close proximity to a regional-scale commercial center. Though not presently designed for ease of pedestrian access, transit is available, and residents would have access to a variety of restaurants and a local grocery store.

Yes No X

BLUEPRINT ALIGNMENT:

Quality of Life – Goal 4: To provide effective and efficient government services while ensuring that processes and procedures are planned and executed with transparency.

FUNDING:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Accept MPC recommendation with enumerated conditions.
2. Remand the case back to MPC with further guidance for reconsideration.
3. Deny the petitioner’s request and maintain current zoning.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

The present circumstance is unique in that it involves the reuse of an existing commercial structure for a residential purpose; specifically, the residential conversion of a motel. Many jurisdictions have adopted single-room occupancy (SRO) ordinances in an effort to ensure a high quality and standard of living for occupants of such developments, but Chatham County has not elected to do so at present. For this reason, attachment of targeted conditions to the rezoning may be necessary and desirable.

An SRO Ordinance would principally effect the adoption of a minimum dwelling square footage and associated minimum common area size to ensure that residents have adequate activity and recreation space onsite. *The Zoning Administrator has established an approximation of 220 square feet as the minimum floor area required for a two-person dwelling based on the standards of the International Residential Code (IRC). The Code further stipulates provision of a full bathroom and kitchen area with sink.*

Section 2-19 of the Chatham County Zoning Ordinance defines an ‘efficiency’ as follows: “An efficiency dwelling unit shall be defined as one room, excluding bathrooms and storage areas, designed as a unit to provide a complete housekeeping facilities for one or two persons living as a single housekeeping unit or family.” The Ordinance does not explicitly list their use as permitted in any zoning district nor does it specify a minimum square footage. Per the Petitioner, each proposed dwelling is between 288 and 300 square feet. The City of Savannah has adopted supplemental use standards for SROs that may offer relevant insight for appropriate framing of the use to ensure its proper maintenance and safe habitability for future residents. It should be noted

that unlike the present approach, the City Ordinance regards one residential unit as 1/2 of a dwelling unit, meaning two individual SRO units are regarded as a single dwelling for unit-per-acre density determination.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Planning Commission recommends approval of the requested Zoning Map Amendment to R-3-19 with the following conditions:

- 1. The maximum number of residential units shall not exceed 120.
- 2. On-site management shall be present on a 24-hour basis.
- 3. The minimum rental period shall be for 30 days.
- 4. A minimum of 1,200 square feet of indoor 'common area' shall be provided for the use.
- 5. On-site laundry facilities shall be provided.
- 6. The Petitioner shall partner with Chatham Area Transit (CAT) in the construction of a bus shelter at the bus stop for Route 17 adjoining the property on E. Gateway Blvd.
- 7. A management plan shall be submitted to the Chatham County Commission at the time of consideration consisting of the following:
 - a. A detailed description of applicant screening policies, criteria, and residency requirements;
 - b. Standard rental procedures;
 - c. A detailed description of supportive services that will be provided, including a list of service providers.

=====

13. INFORMATION ITEMS

Chairman Ellis said, let's go to Mr. Manager. You're on with information.

County Manager Kaigler said, yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. In front of you, you should have, for your information, some – some updates from our Strategic Planning Department, and one thing I want to highlight is as of today, December 6th, we're opening up our Blueprint process. That will be on the County's website. So, if anyone who wants to apply to the County for Blueprint funding, now is the time to get started, and we are accepting applications.

County Manager Kaigler said, also, want to highlight the Live Oak Public Libraries reading challenge there. We're in a reading challenge program, which starts December 2nd through January 3rd. And those are my updates, Mr. Chairman.

- 1. PROGRESS REPORT ON GENERAL FUND CONTINGENCY ACCOUNT - M&O AND THE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT (SEE ATTACHED).**

ACTION OF THE BOARD:

A status report was attached as information.

=====

- 2. LIST OF PURCHASING ITEMS BETWEEN \$2,500 AND \$9,999 (See Attached.)**

AGENDA ITEM: 13.2

AGENDA DATE: December 6, 2024

**List of Purchasing Items between \$2,500 and \$24,999
That Do Not Require Board Approval**