

Council Meeting
May 13, 2021

Members Present: Mayor Buddy Duke, members Terry McClain, Greg Paige, Walter Cowart, Vivian Sharpe and Jody Greene.

Others Present: John Flythe, Rhonda Rowe, Tim Tanner, Chad Castleberry and members of the public.

Invocation was given by Councilman McClain

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes: Councilman McClain made a motion to approve the minutes of April 19, 2021 as presented. Councilman Paige second with all in favor.

Public Hearing (Cook County Land Ventures): Councilman Paige made a motion to enter into public hearing to gain input on the rezoning application filed by Cook County Land Ventures. Councilwoman Sharpe seconded the motion to enter into public hearing. The application requests that 26.278 acres of property on Washington Post Road and identified as Map 0040 Parcel 002 and Map 0039C Parcel 042A be rezoned from GB (General Business) to R8 (Residential). The applicant's intent is to rezone the property and develop apartments for 55 year and older residents. William Bush spoke in favor of the application stating that when they purchased the property approximately 10 years ago it was zoned residential. They had it rezoned to general business about 8 years ago when they were considering placing Adel Outfitters on this property. Since then, because of them remaining in their current location, there is no need to build on this property. They are asking that it be reverted back to residential. He stated the proposed residential apartment development will be a great asset to the community and the citizens. It will be similar to the one located off of N. Gordon Avenue and is one of the nicest areas, in his opinion. It has been well kept and he is asking the city to consider the application for the good of the city and the citizens.

Mark Karras spoke on behalf of the application stating that he plans to submit an application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for an affordable housing community on a portion of this property. It will be very similar to Bear Creek Village off of N. Gordon Avenue, with the exception of these being one story. That project has been successful and the proposed development will be managed by the same company. It will operate like a sister property and will be available to residents age 55 and older. Last summer, the city adopted an Urban Housing Plan which includes and would help meet redevelopment goals. Councilman McClain asked how many units are being proposed to which Mr. Karras responded, 52. In response to Mayor Duke's question about the number of bedrooms, he advised it would be 1 and 2 bedroom units. Mr. Karras added that the rent is lower than market rates. The residents have to meet income eligibility requirements since the units are income restricted (working individuals with modest income). Councilman Cowart asked about the parking. Mr. Karras advised there are 2 parking spaces per unit. Mrs. Altheia Paige asked if everyone has to be 55 years of age that lives in the apartments? Mr. Karras responded that at least one person has to be 55 years of age. No one under age 18 can live there.

Alton Copeland, a resident of the area, spoke in opposition to the project. He presented a petition with 8 signatures of other residents in the area against the rezoning for the project. He stated he has been through promises all his life and only gets half of them. He would rather this project be done somewhere else. It is quite in the area and he has already been through this with the truck stop, and lost.

Ulysses Gear spoke in opposition stating that he owns a piece of property on Washington Post Road and it is quite out there now. You don't know what could go in once you rezone.

Donna Turner stated she has lived on Washington Post Road for 22 years. It is quiet and she opposes the rezoning.

City Manager John Flythe advised the rezoning request had been before the planning commission who had a 4-4 vote; it is, therefore, considered denied by that board. They provided no further recommendation to the council.

There was no one else present to speak either for or against the application and the public hearing was declared closed.

Ord. #21-01 (Cook County Land Ventures): This ordinance, rezoning property of Cook County Land Ventures from GB to R-8, was read for the first time.

Library Board Appointments: The council was presented letters from the Library Board requesting that Judy Stracke and Ronald F. Mitchell be reappointed to the board. Both terms expire on June 30, 2021. Councilwoman Sharpe made a motion to reappoint Mrs. Stracke and Mr. Mitchell to the board. The terms will be for 3 years and will begin on July 1, 2021. Councilman Greene seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Burwell Avenue Street Closing: The council was presented with a request from the Cook County Chamber of Commerce requesting that Burwell Avenue be closed from 4th Street to 6th Street from 3:00 on Friday, May 14, 2021 until 5:00 on Saturday, May 15, 2021 for the annual daylily festival. The request includes the depot parking lot. Councilman Cowart made a motion to approve the request. Councilman Paige seconded. All were in favor.

City of Cecil Sewer Agreement: City Manager John Flythe advised the council that the City of Cecil has caught up their past due utility payments but have not been remitting the monthly charge of \$51.80 for fixed costs which include labor and mileage to daily check the pump station and perform maintenance. He further noted that Cecil does pay a larger base fee than Adel residents. He stated that we are sending only one person now, instead of two, and we have to check the lift station daily at the racetrack. After a brief discussion, Councilman Greene made a motion to charge off the outstanding fixed charges of \$259. Councilman McClain seconded with all in favor. Councilman McClain then made a second motion to delete the monthly fixed charges of \$51.80 on all bills going forward. Councilman Greene seconded. There were no opposing votes.

Alley Request (Courthouse): Mayor Duke presented a request on behalf of Chief Judge Clay Tomlinson, Judge Dick Perryman, Sheriff Hanks, Clerk of Court April Garrett and Probate Judge Chase Daughtrey to change the alley between the courthouse and funeral home so that traffic is one way from west to east, with the exit onto Parrish Avenue. The request states that due to the parking on the east side of Hutchinson Avenue being in close proximity to the alley, traffic flow should be one directional. Several accidents have almost occurred on court days when they experience high parking volumes. Councilman Greene made a motion to approve the request. Councilman McClain seconded. The decision was unanimous.

Dr. Treva Gear: Dr. Gear came before the council on behalf of concerned citizens in reference to the complaints filed on April 5, 2021. She wanted to know what actions have been taken to address the issues. City Manager John Flythe advised the council had a work session and had a presentation by Advanced Cylinder and Tank. The attorney is to study and get authority from the Mayor and Council on a response. City attorney Tim Tanner stated that a petition was filed and he needs to get direction as to how the council wants him to proceed. The nuisance is alleged from an odor. He stated he can engage with the owner to see if there is any way to abate the smell and also discuss relocation. Mayor Duke asked Mr. Tanner to engage with the property owner to try and come up with a solution. During discussion, Mayor Duke noted there has been no physical proof anyone is sick from the product. Dr. Gear insisted the council uphold the law. She stated that in 2014, the company said they were moving, but they have not. For over 10 years the residents have suffered. She would hope you would abate the nuisance and doesn't understand this conversation. She asked if there was any justice for this community? Mayor Duke advised the EPD has not had any findings and allows Advanced Cylinder & Tank to continue business. Dr. Gear stated that the people elected you to protect us! The EPD says this is a nuisance. The council is supposed to protect us. Mayor Duke stated we try to look out for both, the business and the citizens. Dr. Gear stated she was requesting any MOU's the City of Adel, AIDA or EDC has under the open records request. Mayor Duke asked Dr. Gear to place her request in writing. Dr. Gear then asked in response to the petition filed by residents concerning Blockstream, has there been any action taken? Mayor Duke stated we are doing what we need to do, which is to take decibel readings. Dr. Gear stated she also wants to get the MOU's on Blockstream. She will be in contact for those as well as any further action. Mr. Flythe stated we have no MOU's with Advanced Cylinder & Tank. City attorney Tim Tanner stated he would begin engaging with them next week. Altheia Paige then questioned Mayor Duke regarding his comment concerning alleged sickness. She stated she has asthma, along with problems with lungs and migraines. She doesn't have to make a formal complaint. She called the EPD but the EPD got in touch with the City of Adel. She stated someone on the other corner constantly goes to the hospital. She stated when you say alleged, I have called. Mayor Duke added that what he is stating is there is no documentation that sickness is caused by the odor. He added "I am just the messenger". Mrs. Paige stated that Councilman Paige has been sick. We've got issues the city is not addressing. Now you're putting it in the hands of the attorney. Mayor Duke stated the odor floats to the ice plant. He's been over to Advanced Cylinder & Tank and spoken with them several times.

Dr. Michael Noll – Dr. Noll, a Professor of Geography at Valdosta State University, came before the council concerning the proposed wood pellet plant and to share insights into the biomass energy sector,

including the long-term viability of such projects in the context of an evolving European wood pellet market. He stated that biomass energy is dirty and talked about the compounds produced that are threatening to health. In addition, there will be a fleet of trucks making deliveries that will add to the emissions. These emissions pose significant health risks including cardiovascular disease and pulmonary disease. He stated this industry is non-sustainable and would lead to biomass clear cutting. They affect predominantly minority neighborhoods. They contribute to global greenhouse emissions. It is not carbon neutral, not clean, and not renewable. They exist because they are heavily subsidized. He encouraged using taxpayer money to invest in other clean-up projects. He noted they are trying to stay at under 250 tons because of other requirements they would have to meet if they exceeded that number. He noted that in 2010 a letter was received supporting that compounds are ultimately killing you, even though they may be doing so slowly. He advised the council he hoped they would reconsider this project; it is not good for you. In 2010, the same type project was trying to locate in another area and we ultimately grew the support of the commission after we showed them documentation concerning that project.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.

Rhonda P. Rowe, City Clerk

Luther L. Duke III, Mayor
