



Mayor and City Council Regular Session

Tuesday, January 07, 2025 at 6:30 PM

City Hall, 875 Main Street, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30083

Minutes

Mayor and Council: Dr. Beverly Jones – Mayor | Post 3 :Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Smith

Post 1: Council Member Anita Bass | Post 2: Council Member Mark Marianos

Post 4: Council Member Gil Freeman | Post 5: Council Member Shawnette Bryant

Post 6: Council Member Teresa Crowe

Staff: Shawn Edmondson - City Manager - City Clerk | Maggie Dimov - Assistant City Manager - DDA/Economic Development Director | Shavela Ames - City Clerk | Jeff Strickland - City Attorney| Richard Edwards - City Planner

City of Stone Mountain, GA Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/CityofStoneMtn/>

Link to join Webinar: [\[LINK\]](#)

Public Hearing

City Attorney Strickland spoke to informed those in attendance the rules of procedure for public hearings.

672 Pepperwood Trail (Parcel ID: 18 074 03 133) Request – Variance from Section 5-1.5(A)(4) to reduce the minimum front yard setback from 50-feet to 17.5-feet. (City Planner Edwards)

City Planner Edwards spoke to those in attendance and provided context to the lot and what the applicant is requesting.

A representative of Habitat for Humanity spoke to Mayor and Council. They noted that this variance request was to rebuild the home.

IN FAVOR:

Joan Monroe: Monroe noted that the community is looking forward to the rebuilding of the lot. But the city should notify the property owners regarding potential problems.

Jelani Linder: Linder noted that they are in support of this.

IN OPPOSITION:

Ms Thomas: Thomas noted that they are neither for or against it. Thomas noted that it is important to be cognizant of the neighbors.

City Planner Edwards noted that this is a variance request, not a rezoning request.

672 Pepperwood Trail (Parcel ID: 18 074 03 133) Request – Variance from Section 5-1.5(A)(6) to reduce the minimum rear yard setback from 40-feet to 34.5-feet. (City Planner Edwards)

Combined with the first item.

968 & 990 Sexton Drive (Parcel ID: 18 090 07 026 & 033) Request – Special Use Permit to allow for two (2) vacation home facility units. (City Planner Edwards)

City Planner Edwards spoke to those in attendance and provided context to the lot and what the applicant is requesting.

IN FAVOR: N/A

IN OPPOSITION: Joan Monroe: Monroe noted that they are in opposition from this due to 1) the Planning Commission's decision. 2) The potential precedent that would be set by allowing this.

Ms. Thomas: Thomas requested that metrics be brought during SUP variances. Additionally, Thomas noted that it is important to keep the city a city, and not a commercial industry.

Grace Kelly: Kelly noted that they are in the Planning Commission. Additionally, Kelly confirmed that the applicant originally requested that all units become AirBNB's.

Clint Monroe: Monroe noted that there are strong economic incentives into converting the apartment units into AirBNB's. Monroe noted that it is important to avoid setting a precedent, and overruling the Planning Commission's prior judgement.

Adjournment

Mayor Jones Adjourned the Public Hearing at 6:57 PM ET

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Call to Order

Meeting was Called to Order at 06:57 PM ET

Determination of Quorum

PRESENT

Council Member: Post 1 Anita Bass

Council Member: Post 2 Mark Marianos

Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Ryan Smith

Council Member: Post 4 Gil Freeman

Council Member: Post 6 Teresa Crowe

Mayor Beverly Jones

ABSENT

Council Member: Post 5 Shawnette Bryant

Invocation and Pledge

Mayor Jones led the Invocation and Pledge

Citizen Comments – Including comments from public/stakeholders (3 minutes per comment)

Comments from the Public

The public comments are reserved exclusively for comments from the public and not for immediate reply. The purpose of public comment is to allow the public to voice city related requests, concerns or opinions only during the public comment portion of the City Council meeting. I. The Mayor and City Council reserves the right to extend or limit the length of public comments based on: (1) the issue under discussion; (2) the number of items on the agenda; and (3) the extent to which the speaker remains constructive in their comments and questions. II. The public may not directly confront the public speaker but must direct all comments and questions to the Mayor and City Council. III. Public harassment of or confrontation with a public speaker will not be tolerated. Members of the public violating tenets two or three will be asked to sit down or leave the premises.

Citizen Comment (Dave Thomas): Thomas thanked the city for putting up lights on the Lawn on Main. Thomas spoke on agendas, specifically the length of them. Thomas noted that it would be important to add a start time, end time, and duration of each item, citing that the business community utilizes agendas that way.

Citizen Comment (Kay Nunez): Nunez spoke on the duration of the meeting, citing that it is important to engage the community in meetings that are not as long.

Citizen Comment (Hildi Freese): Freese thanked the volunteers that assist with the City/City Events. Freese thanked Carmon and Tony for hosting spectacular events.

Citizen Comment (Sarah Abrams): Abrams read a non-denominational Invocation.

Citizen Comment (Cheryl Dudley): Dudley spoke on Resolution 2024-14, citing that it violates GMA Principles.

Citizen Comment (Michael Nunley): Nunley spoke on the Final use of the lawn on the Main. Additionally, they noted that other cities are utilizing their greenspaces as a means to relieve property owners of their taxes.

Citizen Comment (Grace Kelly): Kelly spoke on the Final use of the lawn on Main. Additionally, Kelly noted that it is important to keep it as a greenspace.

Citizen Comment (Carl Wright): Wright spoke on the DDA Item, noting that there are other options that are more pressing than the DDA. Wright spoke on the vacant buildings and the importance of them being open businesses.

Citizen Comment (Joan Monroe): Monroe spoke regarding Roberts Rules of Order, noting that the rules were designed to intimidate individuals. Additionally, Monroe provided their opinion relating to keeping city employees protected.

Citizen Comment (Ms Thomas): Thomas requested the status to the 2023 and 2024 audit.

Citizen Comment (Jelani Linder): Linder noted that the Green Space is the most underutilized space in the city, citing the importance of using that space to provide relief from property taxes

Citizen Comment (Susan Taylor): Taylor thanked the city for the successful winter events. Taylor also spoke on the green space, and the importance of utilizing it.

Citizen Comment (Clint Monroe): Monroe noted that city administration should look at other cities on how they utilize their greenspace. Monroe additionally spoke on Resolution 2024-14.

Citizen Comment (George Callon): Callon noted that other municipalities have ordinances enforcing open hours that businesses must follow. Callon requests that City Council look into something similar.

Reading of Communications

Adoption of The Agenda of The Day

MOTION TO ADOPT

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED

City Manager's Report

1. City Manager - Shawn Edmondson

City Manager introduced new staff: Events Manager & City Clerk

City Manager Package can be found on the City Website.

Council Policy Discussion Topics

Unfinished Business

2. Discussion of the Approval of 672 Pepperwood Trail (Parcel ID: 18 074 03 133) Request – Variance from Section 5-1.5(A)(4) to reduce the minimum front yard setback from 50-feet to 17.5-feet. (City Planner Edwards)

MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSES

3. Discussion on the Approval of 672 Pepperwood Trail (Parcel ID: 18 074 03 133) Request – Variance from Section 5-1.5(A)(6) to reduce the minimum rear yard setback from 40-feet to 34.5-feet. (City Planner Edwards)

MOTION TO APPROVE THE REQUEST

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSES

4. Discussion on the Approval of 968 & 990 Sexton Drive (Parcel ID: 18 090 07 026 & 033) Request – Special Use Permit to allow for two (2) vacation home facility units. (City Planner Edwards)

MOTION TO APPROVE

Motion made by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

MOTION FAILS

5. 3rd read of Discussion and review of the proposal for Film Permit App called Apply4 (Assistant City Manager: Maggie Dimov)

MOTION TO APPROVE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSES

6. Discussion and approval of a proposed IGA between the City of Stone Mountain and the Downtown Development Authority of Stone Mountain (Assistant City Manager & Downtown Development Director Dimov)

MOTION TO TABLE IGA

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, No Seconded

MOTION DIED FOR A LACK OF SECOND

MOTION TO APPROVE IGA

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 6 Crowe.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Council Member: Post 4 Freeman

MOTION PASSES

7. Discussion and Approval of one of the three Forensic Audit Firms presented to Council: (1) Forensic Brothers Investigative Services investigators (2) Moore Colson (3) IAG Forensics & Valuation (Mayor Jones)

Mayor and Council had consensus to approve a Forensic Audit Firm on City Council Work Session January 21st, 2025.

NO OTHER ACTION

8. Discussion on the DDA (CM Freeman)

MOTION TO TABLE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED

New Business

9. Re-appointment of Matthew McConnell to the Planning Commission for a three (3) year term (City Planner Edwards)

MOTION TO APPROVE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED

10. Appointment of Chountelle Hudson to the Planning Commission for a one (1) year term as a stakeholder member filling Felicia Evans vacated seat.(City Planner Edwards)

MOTION TO APPROVE

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED

11. Discussion on a proposal to allow property owners affected by the city initiated rezonings to re-apply for the proposed rezonings. (CM Marianos & City Planner Edwards))

NO ACTION

12. Discussion on the final use for the Lawn on Main (CM Marianos)

MOTION TO DESIGNATE LAWN ON MAIN AS MIXED USE (1)

SUBSTITUTE MOTION to postpone the discussion regarding the final use of the Lawn on Main (2)

MOTION BY CM Freeman, No Second

MOTION DIES (2)

MOTION TO DESIGNATE LAWN ON MAIN AS MIXED USE (1)

Motion made by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

Voting Nay: Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman,

13. Discussion on Updating the Code of Ordinances for the City of Stone Mountain to Protect Staff in the Workplace (CM Marianos)

Mayor and City Council provided consensus for the city Attorney to draft a policy/ordinance for the City of Stone Mountain to protect staff in the workplace.

14. Discussion on Implementing Roberts Rules of Order for City Council Meetings (MPT Smith)

NO ACTION TAKEN

15. Discussion on confirming the Downtown Development Authority's appointment of Robert Witherspoon as a Board Member (Assistant City Manager & DDA/Economic Director Dimov)

MOTION TO APPOINT (COMBINED WITH APPOINTING SARAH RASMUSSEN)

Motion made by Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Seconded by Council Member: Post 2 Marianos.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe

MOTION PASSED

16. Discussion on confirming the Downtown Development Authority's appointment of Sarah Rasmussen as a Board Member (Assistant City Manager & DDA/Economic Director Dimov)

17. 2nd Reading: Approval of the Landscaping agreement with Crabapple (Assistant City Manager & DDA/Economic Director Dimov)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

18. Discussion on the creation of a Financial Advisory Committee (CM Freeman)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

19. Discussion on leaving Council Chamber Partitions up (CM Bryant)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

20. Discussion and Modification of Resolution 2024-14; A Resolution to Enforce Adherence to Rules of Decorum and Ensure Equitable and Effective Meeting Management (Mayor Jones)
Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

New Ordinances and Resolutions

21. 3rd read of the Discussion on Ordinance 2025-01; an ordinance to amend chapter 12 (Licenses and Business Regulations) of the code of the City of Stone Mountain, Georgia, to regulate film production(Assistant City Manager & DDA/Economic Development Director Dimov)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

22. 3rd read of the Discussion and approval of Resolution 2024-15, a resolution establishing permit fee schedules for film production activities. (Assistant City Manager & DDA/Economic Development Director Dimov)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

23. Discussion and Approval of Resolution 2025-02 - A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE PENSION SECRETARY (City Clerk)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

24. Discussion and Approval of Resolution 2025-03 - A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH THE ELECTION SUPERINTENDENT (City Clerk)

Meeting Adjourned at 10:03 PM ET; item moved to next session

Remarks of Privilege

Announcements by The Mayor

Executive Session to Discuss Personnel, Legal, Cyber Security and/or Real Estate (if needed)

Adjournment

MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 10:03 PM ET

Motion made by Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Seconded by Council Member: Post 1 Bass.

Voting Yea: Council Member: Post 1 Bass, Council Member: Post 2 Marianos, Mayor Pro Tem: Post 3 Smith, Council Member: Post 4 Freeman, Council Member: Post 6 Crowe