

## **Rome-Floyd Planning Commission Minutes**

**Location:** Sam King Room

**Date:** May 6, 2021

**Time:** 2:30PM



### **CALL TO ORDER**

**Determination of Quorum** - Senior Planner Wood called the roll and determined that a quorum was present.

**Members present:** Frank Brown, Charles Love, Anthony McClain, Terry Jones, Ivy Lowery, Steve Miller, Ghee Wilson, Tom Bennett

**Members absent:** Logan Boss, Melissa Eldridge

**Ex-Officios present:** Larry Maxxey, Randy Quick

**Staff present:** Artagus Newell, Brice Wood, Brittany Griffin, Sammy Rich, Gary Burkhalter, Bruce Ivey, Mary Catherine Chewning, Jordan Allen, Frank Beacham, Chris Jackson

**Public present:** Iris Kennebrew, Nannette B., Missy Kendrick, Raymond Salmon, Robert Owens, Melissa & Glenn Bowman, Kerry Brown, Juan Guzman, H. Bernard Young, Brandon Bowen, Steve Hendricks, D. Brown, Kenneth Parker, Ashley P., David P., Robert & Wanda Morgan, Patrick Cash, Ronald & Faye Weatherby, Betty Ford, Henrice Berrien, Hugh White, Mark Cochran, Ethan Garrett, Bill Jones, Walt Busby, Michael Pearson, Chuck Hardin, Mattie M., Michael Connell, Jung Eyn Yoon, Adan Escutia, John Yoon, Olivia Morley

**Welcome and Introduction of Visitors** – Chairman Bennett welcomed the visitors and asked all guest to sign in.

**Approval/Modification of Agenda:** Staff stated that there was a modification to the agenda. Staff requested the removal of the ULDC Text Amendment until a later date. Modification was approved by common consent.

**Approval of minutes from April meeting** – Terry Jones made a motion to approve the April minutes, which was seconded by Frank Brown and passed by common consent.

**(City) Z21-04-03** – Requests rezoning for the following properties: 0 Martin Luther King Dr., Floyd County Tax Parcel J130059, to be rezoned from Community Commercial to Urban Mixed Use. Applicant/Owner: Patrick Cash/Cash, Edward A 1/2 INT & Sally Cash 0 Gibbons St. Floyd County Tax Parcel J130060, to be rezoned from High Density Traditional Residential to Urban Mixed Use. Applicant/Owner: Patrick Cash/Cash, Edward A 1/2 INT & Sally Cash 17 Gibbons St. Floyd County Tax Parcel J130061, to be rezoned from High Density Traditional Residential to Urban Mixed Use. Applicant/Owner: Cash Construction Co ½ & Sally Johnson 19 Gibbons St. Floyd County Tax Parcel J130062, to be rezoned from High Density Traditional Residential to Urban Mixed Use. Applicant/Owner: Patrick Cash/Cash, Edward A 1/2 INT & Sally Cash 0 Gibbons St. Floyd County Tax Parcel J130063, to be rezoned from High Density Traditional Residential to Urban Mixed Use. Applicant/Owner: Patrick Cash/Cash, Edward A 1/2 INT & Sally Cash

Senior Planner Brice Wood introduced the application and read the staff report to the commission. Wood presented photos of the area to the Planning Commission. Wood stated that letters of support were submitted - one letter was submitted by the North Rome Dairy Queen and the Rome Floyd Development Authority. Wood stated that Missy Kendrick with the Rome Floyd Development Authority is present in the meeting. Patrick Cash, applicant and owner, spoke in favor. Cash stated that he believed his project lined up with the UMU zoning. Cash stated that 10-14 units for this development would not be economically feasible and went on to explain that UMU zoning would make this project worth his time and money. Cash stated the past year and half Rome has had multiple housing summits in regards to housing in Rome, where he heard about how the city needs density. He said he believes his project proposes infill, density, and multi-family. Cash stated that he felt he was answering the challenge that the city had set before the builders. Cash stated that he believed his building would not be an eye sore and it would attract development to the area. Bill Jones, architect for the project, spoke on behalf of the application. Jones stated that they would like to do the 36 units for density. Jones stated that they had built setbacks into the site plan as well as landscaping. Jones stated that he believed their development would not need on street parking and has all the parking they will need. Matt Harper, a builder in the community, spoke in favor of the application. Harper stated that he believes this project is what Rome needs. Missy Kendrick, on behalf of the Rome Floyd Development Authority, spoke on behalf of this application. Kendrick stated that she believes this project is what Rome needs. Bill Temple, a local realtor, spoke in favor of the application, stating that Patrick Cash is a good residential homebuilder and that this project is what Rome needs. Temple stated that this project needs to pass because so many homebuilders are watching this project. Temple stated that we need to send a message that Rome is open for business. Walt Busby, a local builder, spoke in favor of the application. Busby stated that the building may not be a perfect building, but it is needed in Rome. Iris Kinnebrew, a homeowner on Gibbons, spoke in opposition to the application, stating that she believed that this was not the best location due to the entryway being located on a curve – Kinnebrew stated that if they did not exit along MLK then they would have to go down Gibbons Street. Kinnebrew questioned whether emergency crews could get in and out of the development. Kinnebrew stated that the parking and traffic access is a big issue with her opposition. Kinnebrew questioned if the development would have children because she did not see any play equipment on the plans. Kinnebrew stated that this is a historical area of significance to the black community and that the businesses that were once there are no longer there. Kinnebrew stated she believed the building is not fit for the area – 36 units on 1.6

acres is too dense. Kinnebrew stated that Gibbons was not large enough for the school bus. Kinnebrew stated she does not believe this location should be zoned UMU – She is afraid he will increase the density from 36 units to more. Hugh White, a local real estate investor and general contractor, spoke in opposition. White explained that he grew up on Gibbons street and discussed the previous urban renewal project from the North Rome area. White stated the road was a two-lane road, also referencing the difficulty for school buses to traverse the street. Kinnebrew requested to submit a petition from neighbors in opposition. She also mentioned increase in property values. Kinnebrew stated she had a petition to submit to the commission in opposition from the Gibbons street property owners. Terry Jones made a motion to accept the petition, which was seconded by Ghee Wilson. The motion passed with Steve Miller being the lone dissenting vote, questioning why the petition didn't include the signer's addresses. Chair Bennet closed the public hearing. The commission deliberated amongst themselves. Charles Love stated that he believed neighborhood and community preservation is important. Love stated that the commission should listen to the community. Love stated that he believed that North Rome needed more homeownership, stating that 70% of the neighborhood is composed of renters. Love stated that historic preservation in this area is very important. Love asked if Patrick Cash spoke to anyone in the neighborhood. Cash stated he spoke to Ester Vaughn. Love stated that Vaughn does not live in the neighborhood. Love stated that he knows locations that Patrick Cash could build on in North Rome that would be more appropriate. Love stated that this project does not meet the Comprehensive Plan. Love stated that he was part of the comprehensive plan steering committee when they created that plan. Love stated that 36 units is too dense for that area. Commission member Steve Miller stated that the Planning Commission does not always listen to the community – Miller referred to a convenience store that was approved at Burnett Ferry and Shorter Avenue. Miller stated that he did not agree with Love. Miller stated that UMU is appropriate for this area. Love rebutted Miller and stated that this development is not a gas station. Commissioner Ivy Lowery stated that the property was currently zone community commercial, and that the property could be developed as a hotel/motel. Commissioner Terry Jones stated he wanted to focus on the UMU zoning. Jones stated that this area does not meet the UMU zoning standards and that he believed that this plan is the opposition of the UMU design as set forth in the ULDC. Jones stated he was concerned regarding the precedent that would be set associated with the continual zoning of properties to UMU. Anthony McClain stated that the apartment complex does not meet the minimum parking that he believes would be necessary for this many units. McClain questioned where the car overflow will go. Frank Brown state that he lives in that neighborhood and he has seen how many individuals stand in that area. Love stated that he believed the cars and parking are the main issue. Love stated that this project does not fit in with the UMU zoning nor does it fit in with the community. Love stated that he is concerned with the gentrification of the area and property values going up. Lowery questioned the applicant as to how many units were single bedroom units. Cash stated six units would be single bedroom. Lowery stated that there is a need for single individual housing and stated that there are 57 parking spots for this development. Miller agreed that there are opportunities to address the amount of cars that people who live here can have. Ivy Lowery made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Steve Miller. McClain questioned what the motion entailed and Lowery confirmed that she meant approval as submitted. The motion failed 5-3 with Lowery, Miller and Bennett being the only “yes” votes. Charles Love stepped out of the room for a moment.

**(County) Z21-05-04** – Requests rezoning from Suburban Residential to Heavy Industrial for the portion of the property shown on the plat at for the property at 0 Turners Bend Road, Rome, GA 30165, Floyd County Tax Parcel F14X008. Applicant/Owner: Brandon Bowen/General Shale Products, LLC

Senior Planner wood introduced the application and presented the file to the planning commission. Wood provided the commission with photos. Charles Love reentered the meeting before Wood was finished with the staff report. Chair Bennett opened the public hearing. Branden Bowen, Attorney on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favor of the application. Bowen stated that GP had a lumber mill that was shared with international paper for the past few years. International Paper informed GP that they would need to relocate their wet deck. Bowen stated that this was a minimally invasive industrial use. Bowen stated that General shale currently owns the property – this sale is depended on the rezoning. This project is not a job creator but a job sustainer. Missy Kendrick, on behalf of the Rome Floyd Development Authority, spoke in favor of the application. Kendrick state that she did not believe this project would have a negative effect on the neighborhood. Ronalf Wetherbery, an adjacent property owner, state dhe was in objection to the development. He stated that the nosie will be a disruption for the neighbors in the area and the water is an issue. Wetherbery stated that his property will depreciate. Alyssa bowman, an adjacent property owner, spoke in opposition of the project. Bowman stated that she believed the 200 ft buffer was too small to protect the neighbors from the noise and pollution. Bowman questioned if GP would pay them for their depreciated property. Kerry Brown questioned how many trucks would be in and out on the daily? GP stated that normally a wet deck is used 2 to 3 times a year. There will be multiple times per year that the property will not be used. During peak time it will be 60-70 trucks per day – in the off season there may be 4 trucks per day. Brown stated that he had a different property that they could enter and exit that would prevent GP from using the residential road. Brown stated that there are 300 people that live off of this residential road. Terry Jones made a motion to accept Brown’s map into the record, which was seconded by Ghee Wilson and unanimously approved by common consent. Ken Parker, an adjacent neighbor, spoke in opposition, stating that the intersection where GP will be working is an issue because there are multiple lanes of travel that make it impossible for traffic and logging trucks to safely maneuver. Parker stated that people roll through stop signs when there is good visibility. Parker expressed support for Brown’s alternative entrance off the bypass proposal. Parker stated that wet decks have an issue with frosting cars and can create a visibility issues. Parker repeatedly expressed concern regarding traffic safety. Juan Guzman, an adjacent neighbor, spoke in opposition, stating that he believed that the measurement presented by GP was 3 feet into his yard. Guzman also questioned how they would handle noise, smell, and trash. Bowman questioned what the property could be used for once it was rezoned to heavy industrial. Faye Weatherby, an adjacent property owner, expressed concern about the water and mosquitoes. Upon rebuttal, Bowen state that GP did not have access to the area that was presented on Brown’s plan. Bowen stated that they would have to use the bypass for access to the GP property. Bowen stated that the bypass was designed for this type of traffic to GDOT standards. Bowen stated that he understood the concerns of the community, but that this is the best use of industrial to have in this location. Bowen reiterated that 60-70 trucks loads through a 12-hour day would be how this location functions. GP will need a wood yard in Floyd County in order to keep the 18 GP jobs. Chair Bennett closed the public hearing. The commission deliberated amongst themselves. Terry Jones questioned the operation times,

the buffer zone, and the noise. Ivy Lowery questioned the buffers. Wood stated that the buffer requirement is 200 feet for heavy industrial when adjacent to residential zoning. Lowery requested to see the parcel viewer. Wood presented the commission with the parcel viewer so they could see the zoning of the surrounding areas. Lowery stated that a majority of the property around Alabama Highway is already zoned industrial. Steve Miller made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Lowery. The motion carried with an 8-0 vote.

**(City) Z21-05-01** – Requests a special use permit for backyard chickens for the property located at 2 Sagewood Drive NW, Rome, GA 30165, Floyd County Tax Parcel H12Y006. Applicant/Owner: Francisco De La Cruz.

Senior Planner Wood presented the application and provided photos to the commission. The applicant was not present to speak to the application. Wanda Morgan, an adjacent neighbor, spoke in opposition to the application, stating that the applicant does have a rooster and that she believes that they do not have room for the chickens, nor are they properly cooped. Morgan stated that there is a large sanitation problem with the applicant's property. Bob Morgan, an adjacent neighbor, stated that he was against the application because he could hear the rooster and could smell the chicken poop. Ghee Wilson made a motion to deny, which was seconded by Anthony McClain. The motion carried with a 8-0 vote.

**(County) SUP21-05-03** – Requests a special use permit for a residential cluster for the property located at 1595 Old Summerville Road, Rome, GA 30165, Floyd County Tax Parcel J10Y121B. Applicant/Owner: Walt Busby

Senior Planner Wood introduced the application and presented the file to the planning commission. Wood stated that Pear Street is the only other residential cluster option in Rome that staff has found. Wood stated that an adjacent property owner had contacted him neither in favor, nor in opposition, but requested a fence around the development. Wood provided the residential cluster option language to the planning commission. Staff recommended approval that any final plans will need approval by other all other necessary departments, including the fire marshal. Walt Busby, the developer and property owner, spoke in favor of the application, stating that there are multiple bedroom options and that the drawing provided was conceptual. Busby stated that they would guarantee that the fire truck would be able to fit. Busby stated that they would include a green space, a walking trail, and a playground area. There was no one present to speak in opposition. Chair Bennett closed the public hearing and the commission deliberated amongst themselves. Miller questioned what the circular access was on the site plan. Busby stated it was a sidewalk, green space, and gazebo. Miller questioned the acreage of the green space. McClain questioned the setback requirement. Busby stated that it was 15 ft. Busby stated they added additional space to satisfy fire code. Steve Miller made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Ivy Lowery and carried with a 8-0 vote.

**(City) Z21-05-02** – Requests rezoning from Multi-Family Residential/Community Commercial to Multi-Family Residential for the property located at 706 Lee Avenue, Rome, GA 30161, Floyd County Tax Parcel J14G018. Applicant/Owner: Howard Alexander

Senior Planner Wood introduced the application and presented the file to the Planning Commission, along with the staff's recommendation of approval. Wood stated that all three parcels have been merged. Chuck Hardin, on behalf of the applicant, spoke in favor of the application. Hardin stated that one of the properties was zoned commercial even though the property was residential. Hardin explained they were looking to clean up the zoning. There was no one present to speak in opposition. Chair Bennett closed the public hearing. The commission deliberated amongst themselves. Terry Jones questioned what would happen to the two houses on the parcel. Hardin said they would be torn down. Ivy Lowery made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Terry Jones. The motion carried with an 8-0 vote.

**(County) SUP21-05-02** – Requests a special use permit for a solar farm for the property located at 2767 Calhoun Road, Rome, GA 30161, Floyd County Tax Parcel L12X015. Applicant/Owner: Rome Solar, LLC/Estate of Ray Whaley

Senior Planner Wood introduced the application and presented the file to the commission. Michael Connell, the applicant, spoke in favor of the application. Connell stated his business was hoping to build the solar farm on behalf of Samsung. Raymond Salmon, a resident in the area, spoke in opposition. Salmon stated that he believed this will cause a negative impact on his local farm and he is worried about runoff effecting his property. Salmon stated that an agricultural farm should not be destroyed, and that this property is too close to town for this type of development. Michael Pearson, an adjacent property owner, also spoke in opposition, stating he had spoken to roughly 20-30 neighbors and that the community was against this project. Sherald Salmon, an adjacent property owner, spoke in opposition of the application. Upon rebuttal, Michael Connell stated there is a 50-foot setback requirement and that there will be a vegetation buffer. Chair Bennett closed the public hearing. The commission deliberated amongst themselves. Terry Jones questioned how the panels will be affixed to the ground. Connell stated that the panels rotate to follow the movement of the sun. Jones questioned what kind of heat the panels would produce. Connell stated that the panels will not produce any additional heat because they absorb sunlight. Connell stated they will have silt fencing to prevent runoff. Ghee Wilson asked how many solar panels will be on site. Connell stated roughly 900. Charles Love made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Frank Brown. The motion carried with a 7-1 vote, with Ivy Lowery being the dissenting vote.

**(City) Z21-05-03** – Requests rezoning from Community Commercial to Low Density Traditional Residential for the property located at 202 Lavender Drive, Rome, GA 30165, Floyd County Tax Parcel I13X283. Applicant/Owner: Adan Escutia

Senior Planner Wood presented the application and introduced the files to the commission, along with the staff recommendation of approval. Ivy Lowery had to leave the meeting. A quorum was still present.

Adan Escutia, the property owner, spoke in favor of the application, explaining he is looking to redo the property and move into the residence. There was no one present to speak in opposition. Ghee Wilson made a motion to approve, which was seconded by Charles Love. Prior to voting, Miller questioned who would be conducting the work necessary to repair the house. Escutia stated he will be doing the work himself. The motion passed with a vote of 7-0.

Brice Wood then gave an update on the status of the previous month's applications.

Chair Bennett then made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was approved by common consent. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:46 PM.

Staff Reports:

- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1656/Z21-05-04---Turner-Bend-Rd-County>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1657/SUP21-05-02---Calhoun-Rd-County>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1658/SUP21-05-03---Old-Summerville-Rd-County>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1659/Z21-04-03---Gibbons-Street-City>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1660/Z21-05-01---SUP-for-Backyard-Chickens---City>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1661/Z21-05-02---Lee-Ave-City>
- <https://ga-rome.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/1662/Z21-05-03---Lavender-Dr-City>
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