

## **ROME CITY COMMISSION**

**Monday, September 26, 2022**

The Rome City Commission met at 6:30 p.m. this date in the City Commission Chambers of City Hall, 601 Broad Street. Mayor Stevenson presided with Mayor Pro Tem Cochran, and Commissioners Bojo, Beeman, Doss, Quick, Askew, Collins and McDaniel present. Commissioner Quick opened the meeting with prayer and led in the salute to the flag.

### **Minutes – September 12, 2022**

The Minutes of the September 12, 2022, meeting, as submitted in writing by the Secretary, were approved by unanimous consent.

### **Fire Prevention Month**

Commissioner Askew presented a proclamation proclaiming October 2022 as Fire Prevention Month in the City of Rome. This proclamation was presented to representatives of the Rome Fire Prevention and Education Office.

A video promoting Fire Prevention Month was shown. The video involved City and County departments, and Sparky, the Fire Prevention mascot.

### **A22-09-01 Annex 6 Rooney Road**

Commissioner Quick presented annexation file A22-09-01 the request to annex property located at 6 Rooney Road and identified by tax map number H13J-257. The request is to remain at the existing Suburban Residential zoning. The Planning Commission has recommended approval of this request.

Assistant Rome/Floyd County Planner Brice Wood reviewed this file, displayed maps and photographs of the subject and surrounding properties. He explained that this is a single-family residence.

Mayor Stevenson called a public hearing to order concerning this request. There was no one speaking in favor or opposition and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Quick moved to approve the annexation of 6 Rooney Road with Suburban Residential zoning as requested. Commissioner Cochran seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

### **Z22-09-01 Rezone Martin Luther King Jr Blvd and Gibbons Street Properties**

Commissioner Quick presented rezoning file Z22-09-01 the request to rezone properties located on Martin Luther King Jr Blvd and Gibbons Street from Community Commercial and High Density Traditional Residential to Urban Mixed Use. These properties are identified by Floyd County Tax Map Numbers J13O-059, J13O-060, J13O-061, J13O-062, and J13O-063. The Planning Commission has recommended approval for this request.

Assistant Rome/Floyd County Planner Brice Wood reviewed this file and displayed maps and photographs of the subject and surrounding properties. Mr. Wood stated that this rezoning request was presented to the City Commission in May 2021 and the request, at that time, was not approved. Mr.

Wood further stated that the plan was to build three story structures which will be used as apartment dwellings. Previously, the roofs on the structures were a pitched type of roof, however the plan has changed for a flat style more urban roof.

Mayor Stevenson called a public hearing to order concerning this request. Speaking in favor of the rezoning was Mr. Patrick Cash, P.O. Box 472 Rome, GA, owner of the property and Bill Jones, 9 Mimosa Dr., Rome, GA, the architect for the project. It was explained that the plan is to construct 36 dwelling units on this site. These will consist of 1-, 2-, and 3-bedroom apartments. 75 parking spaces are planned. Mr. Jones noted that 75 is more than the number of parking spaces that are required. Also speaking in favor of the rezoning request was Mr. Charles Love, 304 Kingston Ave. Mr. Love stated that there were numerous residents of North Rome in attendance in 2021 to oppose this rezoning. Mr. Love stated that he would like this neighborhood in North Rome to look as good as neighborhoods located in other parts of town. Mr. Love also spoke in favor of the proposed Tax Allocation District for North Rome.

Speaking in opposition to this request was Sharon Kinnebrew – Jones, 31 Gibbons St, Annette Birdsong, 36 Gibbons St., Robert Owens, 61 Mathis Dr (family member at 27 Gibbons St.) and Rev. Freeman, 1 Etowah Terrace. Those speaking in opposition to the proposed apartment project referenced that these units would bring more traffic, trash, drugs, and crime to the area. Overall, while these citizens acknowledged that additional housing units are needed, they were opposed to this particular project. There was some support for a lower number of apartment units, but opposition to the planned 36 units. Their comments were in objection to the 3-story height of the planned units since the dwellings units in the area are all typically 1-story homes. A reference was made that the neighbors did not know of this planned rezoning request until the “last minute”.

With the public comments concluded, Mayor Stevenson closed the public hearing. Commissioner Quick moved to approve the rezoning request as submitted and Commissioner Bojo seconded. The City Commission had considerable discussion regarding this rezoning plan. Each commissioner made comments, some in support of the project and some in opposition. Mr. Cash was questioned regarding his planned rent for these units. Mr. Cash stated that he anticipated \$1,350-\$1,400 per month in rent. Some commissioners feel that level of rent is not affordable housing, while other commissioners expressed their belief that that level is in keeping with affordable housing amounts in 2022. During the course of this discussion, it was noted that the owner and architect for this project has changed the apartment plan somewhat from the 2021 request. There is more setback from the property lines than was originally planned, the number of parking spaces has increased, and the roof line has been flattened. These changes were made to make the project more acceptable. Some City Commissioners expressed their desire to protect this neighborhood. However, it was noted that there had been recent rezonings that were not in keeping with surrounding neighborhood requests such as Chulio Rd. area, Dodd Blvd., and Summerville Park.

With the discussion concluded, Commissioner Quick’s motion to approve the rezoning as submitted, was approved by the following vote:

**YES: Cochran, Bojo, Doss, Quick and McDaniel**  
**NO: Beeman, Askew, and Collins**

### **Z22-09-04 Rezone 232 South Broad Street**

Commissioner Quick presented rezoning file Z22-09-04 the request to rezone 232 S Broad Street from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Office Commercial. This property is identified by Floyd County Tax Map Number J14E-275. The Planning Commission has recommended approval for this request.

Assistant Rome/Floyd County Planner Brice Wood reviewed this file and displayed maps and photographs of the subject and surrounding properties. Mr. Wood stated that this is a residence that has been used for multi-family occupants. However, the owner of the property would like to use it as a single-family dwelling, and that is not allowed with an ONI zone. Neighborhood Office Commercial is compatible.

Mayor Stevenson called a public hearing to order concerning this request. There was no one speaking in favor or opposition to this request and the public hearing was closed.

Commissioner Quick moved to approve the rezoning request of 232 South Broad Street from Office Institutional to Neighborhood Office Commercial as requested. Commissioner Askew seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor.

From the photographs, it was noted that the house appears to be in a somewhat dilapidated condition. Mr. Wood stated that the owners are currently working on improvements to the structure.

### **Local Option Sales Tax Agreement**

On behalf of the Joint Services Committee, City Manager Rich outlined the proposed Local Option Sales Tax (L.O.S.T.) Agreement that the City and County Commissioners have developed. This new agreement, if approved, would increase Rome's Local Option Sales Tax distribution from 41.7% to 45.2% beginning January 2023. As part of this agreement, the City of Rome will take over possession of the following properties:

- The Forum
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Parking Deck
- Town Green
- Rotary Plaza
- Chief John Ross Pedestrian Bridge
- 5<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge

Floyd County will take over possession of the following:

- Entire Law Enforcement Center and 6<sup>th</sup> Ave. Parking Deck
- The Marine Armory/Parks and Recreation Headquarters

Mr. Rich stated that if the intergovernmental agreement is approved, it will take some time for some of these facilities to change hands, due to relocations.

Mayor Pro Tem Cochran moved to approve the concept of this L.O.S.T. Agreement along with the exchange of physical assets. Commissioner Quick seconded, and the vote was unanimously in favor. The City and County attorneys will work on specific intergovernmental agreements for the transfer of

these properties. The new Local Option Sales Tax Distribution formula must be submitted to the State of Georgia by the end of 2022. The City Commission thanked the Floyd County Commission along with City Manager Rich and Finance Director Toni Rhinehart for their work on this project.

**Joint Services Committee Meeting**

Mayor Stevenson announced that the Joint Services Committee will meet on Tuesday, October 4<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. at the Floyd County Administration Building.

**Finance Committee**

Mayor Pro Tem Cochran announced that there will be a called Finance Committee meeting on Friday, September 30<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Water and Sewer Committee**

Commissioner Bojo announced that the Water and Sewer Committee will meet on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Keep Rome/Floyd Beautiful Commission**

Commissioner Beeman announced that there will be a community clean up on October 7<sup>th</sup>. International Paper is the partner in this effort.

**Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission**

Commissioner Quick announced that the Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission will meet on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 p.m. in the Sam King Room.

**Solid Waste Commission**

Commissioner Askew announced that the Solid Waste Commission will meet on Tuesday, September 27<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. in the Sam King Room.

**General Administration**

Commissioner Collins announced that there will be a called General Administration Committee meeting on Thursday, October 6<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in the Carnegie Training Room.

**Downtown Development Authority – Harry Brock and Rome/Floyd Planning Commission – Vic Hixon**

Commissioner Collins moved to appoint Mr. Harry Brock to serve on the Downtown Development Authority and Mr. Vic Hixon to serve as the City Appointee on the Rome/Floyd Planning Commission. Commissioner Askew seconded the motion and the vote was unanimously in favor.

**Adjourn**

With there being no further business, Mayor Stevenson adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.

Joseph F. Smith  
City Clerk