

**MINUTES  
CITY OF GOOSE CREEK  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 2020, 5:30 P.M.  
VIDEO CONFERENCE (ZOOM)**

**I. CALL TO ORDER – CHAIRMAN JOSH JOHNSON**

**Action:** Chairman Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.  
**Present:** Heather Byrd; Paul Connerty; Judie Edwards; Josh Johnson; Jeffrey Smith; Gary Berenyi  
**Absent:** None  
**Staff Present:** Planning Director Mark Brodeur; Planning Technician Brenda Moneer  
**Council Present:** Councilmember McSwain

**II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion:** A motion was made to approve the agenda. **Moved by** Commissioner Smith; **Seconded by** Commissioner Edwards.  
**Discussion:** There was none.  
**Vote:** All voted in favor. The motion carried (6-0).

**III. REVIEW OF MINUTES: JULY 16, 2020**

**Motion:** A motion was made to approve the minutes as submitted. **Moved by** Commissioner Edwards; **Seconded by** Commissioner Byrd.  
**Discussion:** There was none.  
**Vote:** All voted in favor. The motion carried (6-0).

**IV. PUBLIC HEARING: PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE CITY OF GOOSE CREEK ZONING ORDINANCE TO INCLUDE LANGUAGE AFFECTING ALL SECTIONS AND TABLES ESTABLISHING THE ZONING CLASSIFICATION HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (HI).**

Chairman Johnson stated there was a miscommunication with this agenda item as this was supposed to be a discussion item. He opened, presented the process for a Public Hearing, and asked City staff to present a Staff Report. Mr. Brodeur stated he would like to read his Staff Report for the record.

**Proposal:** The proposal is to add a new Zoning classification in the City's Zoning Code to accommodate heavier industrial uses in the City and more specifically to accommodate the present uses on the Century Aluminum's Mt Holly campus.

**Background:** Century Aluminum owns approximately 5,000 acres of property in the vicinity of the City, much of which is contiguous to the City and eligible for annexation into the City under the terms of an Annexation Agreement between the City and Century Aluminum. Under the terms

of the annexation agreement, the property has been divided into five parcels: Parcel A, Parcel B, Parcel C, Parcel D and Parcel E.

The Mt. Holly industrial campus is located in this acreage on Parcel D, which consists of approximately 2,440 acres and is identified as TMS #223-000-0021. Other than the plant site, the Century Aluminum property is largely undeveloped and is surrounded by forest lands. The Mt. Holly smelter has a production capacity of 229,000 metric tons of aluminum per year. According to Century Aluminum, it is the most advanced plant of its kind in the United States, a pacesetter in production efficiency, energy utilization and environmental protection.

This is a heavy industrial user. With over 310 employees, the facility would qualify as one of Goose Creek's largest employers upon annexation. The plant has been active since 1980 and has been under the jurisdiction of Berkeley County.

The annexation of the Century Aluminum property and the formation of a municipal electric utility to serve the Mt Holly aluminum smelter and other new developments within the Century Aluminum property, have been a top priority of the City Administrator, Mayor and City Council over the past 18 months. Once it was determined by Planning & Zoning Staff that a new zoning district would be the most efficient way of zoning the property for its current use upon annexation, Century Aluminum and the City worked diligently over several months to draft the proposed Heavy Industrial Zoning District description. The annexation of this property will be financially beneficial to the City and service from the city's electric utility (at rates lower than those of its current supplier) will allow Century Aluminum to continue current operations at the Mt. Holly aluminum smelter and expand its production. The City anticipates the receipt of new property taxes, business license fee revenues, electric service revenues, and the development of new employment opportunities for City residents upon the occurrence of an anticipated plant expansion (within the existing Mt. Holly footprint).

By the terms of the annexation agreement, Century Aluminum has already annexed Parcel A, Parcel B and Parcel C (properties along US HWY 176 and Old Mt. Holly Rd) into the City and such parcels have been designated with a zoning classification of General Commercial (GC).

The City currently has two other Industrial Zoning Districts. One is the Light Industrial District (LI) and the other is the General Industrial District (GI). Both zones combined (approximately 177 acres) constitute less than 1% of the total land in the City.

Planning & Zoning staff looked at simply amending the GI zone to accommodate heavy industrial uses. The GI zone was created in response to the annexation of JW Aluminum, and particularly its backlot – which is a 17.45-acre parcel. The nature of Century Aluminum's smelting operation would not be permitted in the GI zoning designation. Revisions to the GI zone necessary to allow Mt. Holly's operations would permit activities and buildings that would be inappropriate on the 17+acre site in such proximity to residential uses directly behind it.

**Discussion:** The proposed Heavy Industrial zone would permit all current uses on the Century Aluminum's primary campus. Absent the creation of the new zone, any of the City's other zoning classifications would create non-compliance use throughout the site; that is not a desirable

outcome and should be avoided. The proposed zoning district seeks to avoid instances of non-compliance while permitting Mt. Holly's existing uses to continue in their current form.

**Recommendation:** Endorse the creation of a new Heavy Industrial Zoning District classification and forward your recommendation to City Council.

Chairman Johnson inquired if anyone from the Public submitted comments regarding this topic. Mrs. Moneer stated she has not received anything. A representative from Century Aluminum was present to answer any questions.

Chairman Johnson stated there are other industrial districts in the City. He stated it seems like we are trying to create a new zone for a specific user. He stated if a new zone is needed, then he feels this would be appropriate. Chairman Johnson stated the main portion of the Staff Report was related to the specific user itself. It also mentioned that certain General Industrial uses would not be allowed with the adjacent residential uses. Chairman Johnson stated currently concrete production, mining, landfills, and waste disposals are zoned GI. He would argue that adjacent residential properties would not want to have these in their immediate vicinity. He stated their may be an issue with the current GI zoning.

The Commission reviewed the proposed Heavy Industrial District zoning classification line by line and made their comments and suggestions.

- Motion:** A motion was made to continue this item until the next Planning Commission meeting. **Moved by** Commissioner Edwards; **Seconded by** Commissioner Byrd.
- Discussion:** There was none.
- Vote:** All voted in favor. The motion carried (6-0).

## V. PRESENTATION: LATEST INFORMATION AND PRESENTATION OF THE 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

A representative from TSW, Allison Bustin, stated her firm is currently involved in the Comprehensive Plan. She presented the agenda for her presentation:

- Meet the Consultants
- Process and Schedule
- Public Engagement Strategy
- Questions

She stated TSW are planners, architects and landscape architects and they bring expertise on land use, urban design, and zoning. Ms. Bustin stated also on the team is Arnett Muldrow and they are experts on demographics, housing, and economic development. She stated they will be crafting the Economic Development portion of the plan. Lastly, Keck and Wood is also apart of the team. Ms. Bustin stated they are experts in traffic, connectivity, and transportation strategies.

Ms. Bustin presented the following schedule:

- Research and Analysis – 75% complete

- Visioning – Mid September to December 2020
- Draft Recommendations – January to February 2021
- Final Report – March 2021

Ms. Bustin presented all the dates that are currently confirmed:

- Stakeholder Interviews – September 10<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>
- Planning Commission Meeting #2 – October 6<sup>th</sup>
- Public Workshop #1 – Mid October
- City Council Meeting (Update) – November 10<sup>th</sup>
- Planning Commission Meeting Public Workshop #2 – January 5<sup>th</sup>
- Draft Plan Open House – Early February
- Planning Commission Meeting #4 – TBD
- City Council Meeting (Adoption) – March 9<sup>th</sup>

Ms. Bustin presented the Public Engagement Strategy:

- Our philosophy is hands on engagement at every step
- Flexibility will be key
  - Our strategies can be done in-person or virtually
  - If virtual, we will utilize a platform called Social Pinpoint, which can replicate most of the activities conducted at a public workshop
  - Virtual options would be open for 1-2 weeks

## **VI. DISCUSSION: PARKING REGULATIONS**

Chairman Johnson stated he proposed minor changes to the parking ordinance with the intent to have more green space. He asked the Commission to review the changes and share their input which will be discussed at the next meeting.

## **VII. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMISSION**

No comments from the Commission.

## **VIII. COMMENTS FROM STAFF**

Mr. Brodeur stated he is looking to revise the City ordinance concerning PODs. He stated he also met with the consultant last week who is rewriting the sign ordinance. He reminded the Commission that certain members terms are expiring. Chairman Johnson stated a new application procedure is in place to which the Commission will be notified.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Smith made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Connerty seconded. All voted in favor (6-0). The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:55pm.

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Mr. Josh Johnson, Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_