

STATE OF GEORGIA)
EFFINGHAM COUNTY)

RESOLUTION NO. 022-026
RESOLUTION ENACTING A MORATORIUM FOR A PERIOD OF FOUR MONTHS
ON COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL RE-ZONINGS FOR PROPERTY TO BE
USED FOR MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND R-6 SINGLE FAMILY
RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT PURPOSES WHILE THE COUNTY CONSIDERS
CHANGES TO ITS ZONING ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, recent development trends in the County suggest that current trends for R-6 multi-family residential use and R-6 single family residential district use may not be adequately addressed by the current County Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of Effingham County, Georgia (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) is vested with substantial powers, rights and functions to generally regulate the practice, conduct or use of property for the purposes of maintaining health, morals, safety, security, peace, and the general welfare of the unincorporated areas of the County; and

WHEREAS, Georgia law recognizes that local governments may impose moratoria on zoning decisions, building permits, and other development approvals where exigent circumstances warrant the same, pursuant to the case law found at Taylor v. Shetzen, 212 Ga. 101, 90 S.E.2d 572 (1955); Lawson v. Macon, 214 Ga. 278, 104 S.E.2d 425 (1958); and most recently City of Roswell et al v. Outdoor Systems, Inc., 274 Ga. 130, 549 S.E.2d 90 (2001); and

WHEREAS, the Courts take judicial notice of a local government's inherent ability to impose moratoria on an emergency basis; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Supreme Court, in the case of DeKalb County v. Townsend, 243 Ga. 80 (1979), held that, “To justify a moratorium, it must appear first, that the interests of the public generally, as distinguished from those of a particular class, require such interference; and second, that the means are reasonably necessary for the accomplishment of the purpose, and not unduly oppressive upon individuals.” The Board has found that the interests of the public necessitate the enactment of a moratorium for health, safety, morals and general welfare purposes by means which are reasonable and not unduly oppressive; and

WHEREAS, the Board therefore considers it paramount that land use regulation continues in the most orderly and predictable fashion with the least amount of disturbance to landowners and to the citizens of the County. The Board has always had a strong interest in growth management so as to promote the traditional police power goals of health, safety, morals, aesthetics and the general welfare of the community; and in particular the lessening of congestion on County roads, security of the public from crime and other

dangers, promotion of health and general welfare of its citizens, protection of the aesthetic qualities of the County including access to air and light, and facilitation of the adequate provision of transportation and other public requirements; and

WHEREAS, it is the belief of the Board that the concept of “public welfare” is broad and inclusive; that the values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary; and that it is within the power of the Board “to determine that a community should be beautiful as well as healthy, spacious as well as clean, well balanced as well as carefully patrolled,” Berman v. Parker, 348 U.S. 26, 75 S.Ct. 98 (1954), it is also the opinion of the Board that “general welfare” includes the valid public objectives of aesthetics, conservation of the value of existing lands and buildings within the County, making the most appropriate use of resources, preserving neighborhood characteristics, enhancing and protecting the economic well-being of the community, facilitating adequate provision of public services, and the preservation of the resources of the County; and

WHEREAS, the Board is, and has been interested in developing a cohesive and coherent policy regarding residential and commercial growth and zoning in the County, and have intended to promote community development through stability, predictability and balanced growth which will further the prosperity of the County as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the Board has directed the Development Services to evaluate possible revisions to the Effingham County Zoning Ordinance and development regulations with respect to the regulation of R-3 multi-family residential and R-6 single family development so as to address current development trends; and

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the citizens of the County to place a moratorium on the application and issuance of residential and commercial re-zonings until the review is completed.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA, in regular meeting assembled and pursuant to lawful authority thereof, as follows:

1. In order to adequately study said issues and any zoning ordinance amendments determined to be required, the Board finds as follows: the zoning ordinance and comprehensive land use plan require review as they relate to R-3 multi-family housing and R-6 single family housing; substantial detriment and irreparable harm may result if further regulation of R-6 multi-family housing and R-6 single family housing is needed and not implemented; said review of the ordinance and plan requires that a cessation of limited duration of rezoning be implemented with regard to R-6 multi-family housing and R-6 single family developments; and it is necessary and in the public’s interest to delay, for a reasonable and finite period of time, the acceptance or processing of any applications for such developments to ensure that the design, development, and location are consistent with the long-term planning objectives of the County.

2. There is hereby imposed a moratorium on the acceptance by County staff of rezoning or the acceptance of applications for rezonings for the development of R-3 multi-family housing and R-6 single family developments as such as provided for under the zoning ordinance of the County. For purposes of this moratorium, the “multi-family developments” and “single family developments” are those that are currently allowed under the County zoning ordinance in the following zones:

Section 5.6 R-3 Multifamily Residential Districts.

Section 5.8 R-6 Single-family residential district (4.5 dwellings per acre).

3. The duration of this moratorium shall be until the County adopts amendments to its zoning ordinance, abandons this effort by vote of the Board, or until August 16, 2022.

4. This moratorium shall have no effect upon rezonings occurring before the effective date of this Resolution.

5. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Board that all sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses and phrases of this Resolution are and were, upon their enactment, believed by the Board to be fully valid, enforceable and constitutional. It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Board that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, each and every section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is severable from every other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase therein. It is hereby further declared to be the intention of the Board, to the greatest extent allowed by law, no section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution is mutually dependent upon any other section, paragraph, sentence, clause or phrase of this Resolution. In the event that any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this Resolution shall, for any reason whatsoever, be declared invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, it is the express intent of the Board that such invalidity, unconstitutionality or unenforceability shall, to the greatest extent allowed by law, not render invalid, unconstitutional or otherwise unenforceable any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs or sections of the Resolution and that, to the greatest extent allowed by law, all remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs and sections of the Resolution shall remain valid, constitutional, enforceable, and of full force and effect.

6. All Resolutions or parts of Resolutions in conflict with this Resolution are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed.

7. The preamble of this Resolution shall be considered to be and is hereby incorporated by reference as if fully set out herein.

8. The proper officers and agents of the County are hereby authorized to take any and all further actions as may be required in connection with this Resolution.

9. The Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

SO ADOPTED THIS ____ DAY OF SEPTEMBER, 2021.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF EFFINGHAM , COUNTY, GEORGIA

WESLEY CORBITT, CHAIRMAN

ATTEST:

STEPHANIE JOHNSON, CLERK

[COUNTY SEAL]