

Dear Ms. Lovingood:

As requested, I am responding to your note regarding my interest in joining the Stone Mountain Planning Commission.

A little background...

After living in New Orleans since the early 1970's (less 5 years living in Nashville after Hurricane Katrina), my husband, Dave, and I made the emotional decision to move out of that historic city and search for our next home town. Over an almost two-year period, we visited cities in numerous states hoping to find just the right place. Then, merely by chance, we happened upon Stone Mountain (thank you Sara Abrams). Immediately for Dave but not so immediately for me, Stone Mountain climbed to the top of our list, the final decision being made after a chance encounter and amazing personal tour of much of Stone Mountain Village by Shani and Jelani Linder (thank you Karen Patton/Sweet Potato Cafe). We were shown not only the physical landscape of the city, but additionally we honestly discussed the reluctance we had about moving to an area with such a complicated history. Through Shani and Jelani (and a few others we met along the way), we experienced the passionate and caring love these strangers/residents felt about their hometown. It was a bit infectious!

If you had previously asked me if I would ever be interested in being on a city's Planning Commission, I know my answer would have been no. My belief is there is no doubt that Stone Mountain is in a potential "growth spurt" with the need for varied perspectives, (having a New Orleans background certainly offers one such "different" perspective), various points of view (heck, my age offers that!), and a strong desire for Stone Mountain to blossom (SMV would not have been our choice had we not believed we would see such growth).

I am now retired, having been an Executive Assistant for over 40 years. Some of the areas I worked in include the healthcare, engineering, hotel/motel, non-profit, and education fields. I have personally experienced and been part of businesses/organizations that have grown and thrived as well as those that have struggled. In many if not most instances, the interactions and cooperation of those on the team have made the difference. I know how to be on and part of a successful team.

Stone Mountain is special. The recent excitement for its success is apparent. I would like to be a more involved part of that excitement and growth and ask that I be considered and approved to be on the Planning Commission for the City of Stone Mountain.

Thank you
Joyce Thomas
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