

## **CITY COUNCIL MEETING**

**May 9, 2016**

**BUSINESS: CONSIDERATION OF THE APPLICATION OF PORT OF ST. MARYS, LLC TO AMEND THE CITY OF ST. MARYS, GEORGIA ZONING ORDINANCE BY ADOPTING THE PORT OF ST. MARYS INDUSTRIAL AND LOGISTICS CENTER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT TEXT, J-25467.0001**

**PURPOSE:** Consider the application of Port of St. Marys, LLC to amend the City of St. Marys, Georgia Zoning Ordinance by adopting the Port of St. Marys Industrial & Logistics Center Planned Development District Text, J-25467.001 regulating the use of property known as the “Old Gilman Mill Site”.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Planning Commission & Staff recommends approval of the Ordinance for the rezone to Planned Development Industrial, Mixed-Use and Conservation Area, with the Special Conditions attached.

**HISTORY/ANALYSIS:** Old Weed & Ready Plantation, LLC submitted a letter to the City of St. Marys on November 17, 2015 authorizing Port of St. Marys, LLC and its designated agents, permission to apply for a rezoning request, site plan approval or related applications. The Port of St. Marys, LLC submitted a request to rezone Tax Parcel 149 004, previously known as Durango Paper Mill, located on Osborne Street and approval of the Planned Development Zoning Master Plan. The present zoning for this parcel is PD-Mixed Use. The applicant is requesting to rezone the parcel to PD-Industrial to include Industrial, Logistics, Marine Facilities and Commercial Uses. The total property is approximately 722 acres consisting of approximately 557 acres of combined uplands and freshwater wetlands, and approximately 165 acres of salt marsh.

The intent of the Port of St. Marys Industrial & Logistics Center Planned Development District is to create a rail served industrial, manufacturing and maritime facility on the former Gilman/Durango Paper Mill site. The proposed Planned Development will promote economic development along with manufacturing and logistic jobs for St. Marys and Camden County. The Port of St. Marys Industrial & Logistics Center Planned Development District is anticipated to be constructed in multiple phases over a period of approximately 15 years. The PD Text and Zoning Master plan are non-specific in regard to the final location of land uses to allow flexibility in the future.

This plan includes zoning for manufacturing with a barge dock and ship berths, cargo handling and rail intermodal facilities, as well as, shore based infrastructure. Initial plans indicate approximately 3000 linear feet of barge & vessel berthing is attainable on the North River. Proposed facilities are subject to Georgia Department of Natural Resources and USACE permitting. The marine facilities will enable industrial operations to access the North River. St. Marys River, Intracoastal Waterway, and the Atlantic Ocean and serve as a key component to the vision and success of the project.

Due to the anticipated size of the industry and the amount of land impacted, the rezone application and development plans submitted on November 3, 2015 were forwarded to the Coastal Regional Commission of Georgia as part of a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) application (Exhibit I)

forwarded for their review. The DRI Findings Report (Exhibit J), submitted on December 1, 2015, stated the project is consistent with the St. Marys Vision, Comprehensive Plan Goals and Policies. The Regional Future Development Map illustrates this area as Developing and Developed which is consistent with the proposed development. The DRI report provided analysis showing consistency between the proposed DRI plan and the Guiding Principles in the Regional Plan.

The applicant held two open houses to provide information and answer questions with regard to the proposed rezoning for the old Durango Mill site. Nearly 100 citizens to the first meeting held on Saturday, December 5, 2015 at the St. Marys Elementary School. There were about 75 citizens present at second meeting which was held on December 15, 2015 at the St. Marys Elementary School also hosted by Chris Ragguci of the Port of St. Marys, LLC.

The Planning Commission held Public Hearings on February 18 & 25, 2016, pursuant to Section 110-185(a) of the St. Marys Municipal Code and received 49 letters or e-mails, along with nearly five hours of public comment and testimony, on public record, which was closed at 5:00 PM on March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016. A duly noticed Special Called meeting was held on March 14<sup>th</sup>, whereupon the Planning Commission unanimously moved to approve, with Conditions the Rezone application to PD Port Industrial, PD Mixed Use and PD Conservation Area, as identified on "Exhibit A."

The City Council held a duly noticed Public Meeting on April 4, 2016 and continued until date certain. Special Conditions were proposed at that meeting and Revised Special Conditions are attached. Also attached, a letter of recommendation from Frank E. Jenkins, III, of Jenkins & Bowen, Attorneys at Law, upon request of the Council, as well as, the Wetlands Jurisdictional Determination provided by the Army Corps, with cover letter from the applicant's team and the Revised Height Overlay District map, "Exhibit – C".

These materials, along with the Planning Commission's Recommendations provide ample evidence for a rezone of the property to the Planned Development Port of St. Marys Industrial and Logistics PD. The Special Conditions provide protections well beyond a General Industrial zoning request and provisions are provided through Special Use Permitting for local control of industries who wish to exceed zoning requirements.

**ATTACHMENTS:** City of St. Marys Planning Commission *Recommendations; Revised Special Conditions, "Exhibit H- Explained"; Revised Special Conditions, "Exhibit H- Clean Version"; Letter from Frank E. Jenkins, III, review of Special Conditions, on behalf of the City; Jurisdictional Wetlands Determination, with Cover Letter; Revised "Exhibit- C, Height Overlay District".*

**Department Director:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Jeffrey S. Adams, PhD, Community Development Director

**City Manager:** \_\_\_\_\_  
John J. Holman, City Manager