

Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2014

Roll Call

Full Members present: Robert Gagnon, Evan Cyr, Emily Mottram, Robert Bowyer Presiding, and Dan Philbrick.

Full Members absent: Marc Tardif

Associate Members present: Mia Poliquin Pross and Kenneth Bellefleur

Also present representing City staff: Eric Cousens, Director of Planning & Permitting and Douglas Greene, City Planner.

(00:45 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. He stated that the members of the City Council would be joining the Planning Board members for review of the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) involving the Maine Army National Guard property so would be taking that item out of order on the agenda to hear first.

The following are the detailed meeting minutes generated by Integrated Planning Solutions:

Eric Cousens, Director of Planning, spoke about the JLUS and introduced the IPS team. Kat introduced the members of the Policy Committee (Frank Piffath, Ann Martell, Steve Bouchard, Mary LaFontaine, William Dionne and John Blais) who were present at the meeting.

Kat went over the powerpoint presentation. John Blais addressed the screens which showed the MEARNG site and asked if there were any questions. Robert Bowyer had questions on the maps on pages 61 and 62. He asked if the land marked with cranberry stripes is owned by the City, MEARNG, or someone else. (The larger parcel is owned by the DOA and the smaller piece is owned by a private organization but leased to the MEARNG.) Kat noted that all private land is highlighted in turquoise. Robert asked if it is easier for the City to acquire the land, or if it would be easier for the MEARNG to acquire it. If the Guard acquires it, would there be limitations on the land coming from the guard?

John Blais told of a 2002 moratorium on MEARNG purchasing new land. However, they have a new authorization to acquire land, but it must be contiguous. At that, Robert stated that it would be easier for the City to acquire the land.

Leroy Walker noted that we did not mention bike paths. Kat told him we identified areas where sidewalks make sense to have and other areas where multi use shoulders should be put in. Leroy stated that he believed there is a R/W into Mt. Apatite on the Minot Road. Kat told him the report has a notation that the city may want to consider the Minot Road access point for future use. They would have to consider the traffic on that high speed roadway before adding another

entrance. Leroy believes that the City will need to swap. Kat noted opportunity to work with interested land owners to develop compatible economic activities along with the new access. She also said that the total acreage the City acquires could be used to offset the loss of Mt. Apatite property in the swap.

Robert stated that the land has different characteristics. The land swap basically would be swapping unequal elements. It seems dangerous to do the swap based solely on the acreage amounts as it is now and how it might potentially be used in the future. Kat stated that the previous ratio was 2:45/1, but that it would be wise to take a look at different ways to establish a value. The ball fields were built by MEARNG but the ASLL spent a lot of money improving the site. There are a lot of intricacies to consider in valuing the land. Eric noted that the zoning in the area is agricultural only, which should keep the value down.

City Councilor Tizz Crowley encouraged the City to put the report on the web and provide a hard copy for the Auburn Public Library. She asked if she could get an electronic copy of the Figure 6.2 in the Recommendations Section because she likes to sort the worksheets in a different ways. She asked if there is anything the City can do in the next 90 days. Kat noted that the City could work with MEARNG to redo the lease.

Adam Lee said that making a recommendation for this project was difficult because the contingencies may not be acceptable and asked if the Committee has recommendations if the ACOE's approach isn't acceptable.

Kat said it did not, but the pathways are laid out in the alternative actions and individual strategies. Beth Della Valle added that there are other studies going on right now, including one looking at consolidating the Athletic fields and the City will likely want to take the results of those studies into consideration in determining its next move should the city and the DOA not come to an agreement.

City Manager Clinton Deschene asked if MEARNG identified any long range plans for the facility in the future.

John Blais noted that they always have things in the works. Most precedent is the expansion of the field maintenance shop which was identified in their long range plans. Front and center, MEARNG wants to reactivate the firing range. It will be addressed in the future. They typically plan 7 years out, could be 10 years.

Clint Deschene asked whether the Committee ever considered doing a complete relocation of MEARNG within the City of Auburn so that the GRC might be kept intact.

Leroy stated that the guard did build the ball fields, but they worked on it in two week increments on drills. The City of Auburn and many volunteers had much more time invested in getting the fields ready.

Kat noted that there is no ratio on the table at this time.

The hearing was opened to public comment.

Steven Wright of the Hatch Road complimented everyone on the report and asked how we arrived at the numbers on the Options listed on Page 63. Kat told him to look on pages 82-84 to see the cost estimates. Detailed engineering and appraisals have not been done at this time. Additional information is being given to Eric.

Mary LaFontaine asked whether we would only be using the ACOE appraisals or if the City would also have one done. Kat indicated that would be up to the city. If it is comfortable with ACOE's analysis, it could accept it; if it is not, it might choose to do its own.

Robert Gagnon asked the board to vote to close public comment.

Any final observations?

Mary LaFontaine stated that it was her pleasure to serve on the Committee and she appreciated all the efforts we put into it.

Eric stated that there were major gains made. It has been a long time since the City and MEARNG got together to discuss openly. This has set the tone for the City of Auburn to work more closely with MEARNG in the future.

Emily Mottram asked if there was something the city can do to help speed up ACOE's work, so the project doesn't go by the wayside? Kat suggested that the City Council and Planning Board may want to compose a letter to the ACOE to ask it to make the appraisal a higher priority – to convey a sense of the City's urgency. If no one pushes, will the request stay at the bottom of the list? John Blais said a letter from the City may help move the appraisal up on the ACOE's priority. The MEARNG has budgeted to pay the ACOE to do the appraisal. The Guard wants this to work. The ACOE/DA does not deal with land swaps every day. It takes a great deal of time to sort through. Whatever happens, there can be no restrictions on the land they receive. If the City wants to write a letter they encourage it. It may be helpful.

Tizz asked the City Manager if there was going to be a budget impact that he identify it before the next City Council meeting.

The report was unanimously accepted by the Planning Board.

This marks the end of detailed minutes by Integrated Planning Solutions.

(01:14:38 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer declared a brief recess at 7:15 pm and called the meeting back into session at 7:21 pm.

Eric requested a vote from the Planning Board members to accept the Joint Land Use Study report that was presented by the consultants. He explained it did not mean that the Board approved the report but just that they received it.

A motion was made by Robert Gagnon to acknowledge having received the report. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Public Hearings:

George Bouchles, an agent for B & M Builders, are seeking approval of minor subdivision plan and development review for a proposed three (3) lot subdivision, located at 325 Fairway Drive (PID # 170-004) pursuant to Chapter 60, Section 1360 of the City of Auburn Ordinances.

(01:16:05 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer explained the procedure that is used for Public Hearings. It was determined that there was no conflict of interest for this application so all Planning Board members could participate.

Douglas presented slides of the proposal via Power Point.

(01:23:35 on DVD)

Robert Gagnon asked how the frontage of lot 3 was waived. Douglas explained that lots on cul-de-sacs don't have to meet the normal road frontage for a lot in that zone. (Section 60-1359)

George Bouchles of CADmaster Drafting and Kim Visbaras, attorney for B & M Developers spoke about the 1988 Planning Board approval, the easements that exist on Ridgewood Development and about this proposal.

(01:27:12 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer asked who owns the rail bed. Mr. Visbaras answered we do. He said the rail bed will remain as part of the lots but there will be an easement on all 3 lots for their use. He added that they will develop the language with City staff to make sure that the language is acceptable and the parties that own those properties will not be able to develop or build on or otherwise affect the rail bed.

(01:31:12 on DVD)

Douglas spoke about the conservation easement.

(01:37:38 on DVD)

Open Public Input

No comment.

A motion was made by Robert Gagnon and seconded by Evan Cyr to close the public input part of the meeting. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Chairperson Bowyer explained that the two Associate members of the Board would be acting as full members in the absence of Marc Tardif and the vacancy of a full member.

Robert Gagnon asked about the public access way to the 2 lots being turned over to the City. Mr. Bouchles replied that there is a deeded access to the lots.

(01:40:51 on DVD)

Douglas concluded going over the staff report.

(01:44:06 on DVD)

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Robert Gagnon to approve the minor subdivision plan and development review for a proposed three (3) lot subdivision located at 325 Fairway Drive (PID # 170-004) pursuant to Chapter 60, Section 1360 of the City of Auburn Ordinances based on the Finding 1-3 included in the staff report and pursuant to the Conditions 1-4 of the staff report. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Minutes

A request to approve the May 13, 2014 meeting minutes was made by staff.

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Ken Bellefleur to approve the May 13, 2014 meeting minutes as presented. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

(01:47:08 on DVD)

Alan Manoian gave a status report on the Form Based Code process.

(02:12:25 on DVD)

Douglas spoke about Planning Board member status and informed the Board members that Chairperson Bowyer would not be seeking re-appointment to the Board once his term expired in July. There was a discussion about Board appointments and Council recommendations.

(02:23:400 on DVD)

Douglas updated the Board members with the status of the Ag Text Amendment proposal.

ADJOURNMENT

(02:27:05 on DVD)

A motion was made by Emily Mottram and seconded by Mia Poliquin Pross to adjourn. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried. Meeting was adjourned at 8:32 pm.