

Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2014

(02:30 on DVD)

Roll Call

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

Full Member 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.

Minutes

No minutes available for approval at this time.

Planning Board discussion on a proposal to amend the City Of Auburn Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 60, Section 60-172.a (1) to modify the restriction on residential homes in the Agriculture and Resource Protection District pursuant to Article IV, Division 3- Use Regulations of the City of Auburn Ordinances. *This item was originally considered at the December 10, 2013 and January 14, 2014 meetings and tabled.*

Chairperson Bowyer stated that this meeting would proceed more as a workshop than as a Public Hearing but would accept public comment. Because the item for discussion may have been tabled at the last meeting, he asked for one of the members to make a motion to take it off the table.

A motion was made by Dan Philbrick and seconded by Emily Mottram to remove this item from the table. After a vote of 6-0-0, the motion carried.

(04:35 on DVD)

Douglas gave a summary of what had transpired in the last few meetings regarding the proposed text amendment and then proceeded to read the staff report.

(25:05 on DVD)

A discussion ensued between Board members and City staff about the wording of the text amendment. They spoke about the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan and that committee's decisions regarding the Rural and Agricultural zoning districts. The meeting was then opened up for public comment.

(49:50 on DVD)

Open Public Input

Mike and Darlene Reardon of 272 South Witham Road explained why they decided to bring forth the petition.

Robert Gagnon suggested that the zoning be swapped on the Reardon's property to give them the ability to accomplish their goal of building a home in the pasture land area of the Agricultural zone. The Board members continued discussing this option and other possible solutions.

(57:57 on DVD)

Michael Lyons of 35 Gouling Lane in Danville spoke about issues that people in Danville have had over the years losing members of the community. He said land could not be passed on for family members to build upon so sons and daughters of the older people in the area could only come back to Danville when there was a house up for sale. He explained the original intent of the Ag zone in 1960 (when farming was flourishing) was to keep growth under control and lessen the tax burden to those owning large parcels of land. He said times have changed and people in Danville have noticed that the Agricultural land around them, especially near the turnpike, has been identified by the City as prime commercial land. He said as citizens, they feel that when the City needs their commercial land it's ok to convert Agricultural land into commercial land but the City services will be there regardless. He gave the example of logging which is an accepted use in the Ag Zone, as still needing the services of fire, police and road maintenance. He stated it is a political process because most of the amendments to the Ag and Resource Protection Zone occur when it is feasible for the city but not when a resident asks for an amendment. He ended by asking if it's really agricultural land we are protecting or are we protecting certain corridors for commercial/industrial development.

(01:05:50 on DVD)

The Board members discussed some of the issues that were brought up by Mr. Lyons. Dan Bilodeau suggested that the Board start meeting twice a month to help accomplish some of the goals listed in the Comprehensive Plan.

(01:11:20 on DVD)

Douglas read a draft of the findings for approval and a draft of the findings for non approval.

(01:16:50 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer stated that because Marc Tardif was absent, the Associate member elevated to Full member status for this meeting would be Kenneth Bellefleur.

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

Chairperson Bowyer asked each Board member individually whether or not they were in favor of sending a favorable recommendation to the City Council. Those in favor: Ken Bellefleur, Dan Bilodeau, Dan Philbrick and Chairperson Bowyer. Those opposed: Emily Mottram and Evan Cyr. Robert Gagnon said he was still on the fence and wanted to hear from Police, Fire and Assessing Departments before making a decision.

(01:20:43 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer stated that before sending specific language to the Council, a draft should be circulated to the various departments for their input as Mr. Gagnon suggested.

A lengthy discussion on the proposed language transpired between Board members and City staff.

(01:46:00 on DVD)

A motion was made by Robert Gagnon and seconded by Dan Bilodeau to forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council. After a vote of 4-2-1, the motion carried. (Evan Cyr and Emily Mottram opposed and Robert Gagnon abstained)

Chairperson Bowyer suggested that City staff draft up specific wording of the amendment to pass around to Board members for review prior to sending to the Council.

OLD BUSINESS:

None at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

Discussion on Revised Planning Board By-Laws and Procedures.

(01:49:20 on DVD)

After a general consensus, the Board members decided to name the new Planning Board workbook Policies and Procedures. Douglas told the Board members that what they had before them were examples of several compilations and said he was totally open to whatever direction the Board wanted to go. He talked about what other Planning Boards use as their rules and regulations and mentioned that this was just an introductory to get the process started for Auburn. Chairperson Bowyer stated that this was long overdue and mentioned that it was almost embarrassing that Auburn did not have one already. He said it serves multiple purposes with one being the Board's responsibility to the public to have rules and procedures and make those known.

The Board members discussed the possibility of having more than one meeting per month so they could begin working on the document and have it completed as soon as possible.

(01:59:20 on DVD)

Chairperson Bowyer mentioned that the Planning Board doesn't do much planning and said he was pleased that this gives a broader sense of the Board's responsibilities than simply waiting until someone files an application. Several members proposed ways to go through the process of working through the document. Chairperson Bowyer listed a few of the items he wanted to see changed in the workbook document. A lengthy discussion continued amongst Board members and City staff regarding language in the new Planning Board Policies and Procedures draft document.

(02:26:20 on DVD)

ADJOURNMENT