

Re: Public Comments received by Katherine Cook, planning coordinator between 6/7/2022 and 6/16/2022

May 16, 2022

As we send out the letters to folks regarding these potential zone changes, staff receives calls and emails to ask questions, share their opinions, and consider how these changes might affect them and their city.

I have received a few dozen calls and several emails over the past week. Among other questions, people have frequently wanted to know how this affects their property, what kinds of businesses and structures and uses would be allowed in contrast to their current zone regulations, and whether certain areas of the City are to be included (see staff report on Area A).

I have received comments reflecting both favorable and unfavorably on the proposed changes. Among the favorable comments involved people learning they may be able to split and build on or sell a lot that they were not previously aware of. There were also people who expressed general agreement and one person in Area B asked whether this might mean they will receive city services like water and gas in the future.

Among the unfavorable comments I heard were concerns of multifamily homes degrading quiet, single-family neighborhoods, concerns that the traffic and infrastructure in the city could not support increased density, concern about mixed use buildings (noise, traffic, unsightliness) and fears of having commercial buildings five feet from the property line of a residential home.

Some people noted confusion about the mailed maps not being clear and expressed concern at the wording of the letter they received. Most people simply wanted to understand the change and seemed satisfied upon having a conversation.

I have received several emails, but two have offered an opinion in writing that reflect the unfavorable sentiments toward the proposed change:

“I live on Vickery Rd. and I am unable to attend the hearing next week. However, I am vehemently opposed to this redistricting.

Also, I don't see the agenda on the Auburn website. Nor can I find what “traditional downtown neighborhood” designation is. I assume it means denser and without height restrictions, but would like a definition from the planning board.”

(Email, 6/14/2022)

“Unfortunately, we will be out of state on the date of this meeting. We really wish we'd been given more notice since we can't change plans in a week and a half. That being said, we'd like to have some say in what the City feels should happen in our neighborhood

While we understand that time marches on and things change, a home is probably the largest investment that a family makes in their lifetime. We chose to make that investment in a nice, quiet residential area of Auburn (our hometown) in 1981. Since then the street has been widened and straightened. Manley Road has become more of a main thoroughfare with the traffic that used to continue on Hotel Road is now diverted to Manley. Vehicles arriving from outer Hotel Rd, the Turnpike/Washington Street area and the

airport neighborhood come screaming past our home like it's the Indy 500. Now the City would like to allow home based businesses, grow houses, office buildings and commercial buildings all through our neighborhood. Personally, we hate to think that our direct neighbor could be a commercial enterprise and they'd only need a 5 foot setback from our backyard. We wouldn't feel very comfortable with a three story office building overlooking our home, either. Just the thought of the extra traffic generated from any of these types of establishments hurts our sensibilities. We had truly hoped that we could "age out" in our home, but that was when we were living in an actual residential area and not a conglomerate of business/commercial/high-density residential buildings. If we had wanted that we'd have invested in a building downtown or on Center Street way back when.

Thanks for your attention to our concerns.

Lise & Jeffrey Lothrop

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(Email 6/13/ 2022)

Most of the comments were neutral or favorable about the change.