

# **Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes January 12, 2021 (Virtual Meeting)**

## **1. ROLL CALL:**

**Regular Members present:** Mathieu Duvall – Presiding, Evan Cyr, Dana Staples, Dan Carroll, Stacey LeBlanc and Stephen Martelli

**Regular Members absent:** Darren Finnegan

**Associate and other Members present:** Riley Bergeron

**Associate and other Members absent:** Vacancy

**Also present representing City staff:** Megan Norwood, City Planner II and Eric Cousens, Director of Planning & Permitting

Chairperson Duvall called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for a roll call. After roll call, Chairperson Duvall stated that Riley Bergeron’s Board member status would be elevated to full membership status for the remainder of this meeting.

## **2. MINUTES: Approval request of the December 8, 2020 meeting minutes.**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dana Staples to approve the December 8, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Chairperson Duvall said his last name was misspelled on the last page of the minutes. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion passed as amended.

**(2:45 on YouTube Recording)**

## **3. PRESENTATION: 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan (Phil Crowell)**

### **a) Planning Board to Provide Feedback at February Meeting**

Phil Crowell, Auburn City Manager went over some of the Economic Development CIP items that were adopted this year, specifically, Dangerous Buildings, Comprehensive Plan Property Acquisition Plan and the Downtown Parking and Walkability. He also went over the 5-year plan and asked that the Board members discuss the proposed CIP and provide feedback before March 1<sup>st</sup>. Mr. Crowell and Eric Cousens answered questions from the Board members.

**(46:45 on YouTube Recording)**

**4. ORDINANCE/MAP AMENDMENT/PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed expansion of the form-based code zoning district T-4.2 Traditional Downtown Neighborhood, to replace the current zoning in the Multi-Family Urban district in the New Auburn neighborhood consisting of the streets from Riverside Drive to Ninth St. and portions of Broad and South Main St., pursuant to Chapter 60, Article XVII Amendments, of the City of Auburn Ordinances.**

Megan went over the staff report and she and Eric answered questions from the Board members.

(55:50 on YouTube Recording)

### **Open Public Input**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dan Carroll to open the public input part of the hearing. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Walter Reed of 173 Third Street said he had serious concerns regarding this zone change. He spoke about the risk of losing more green space in the neighborhood, labeling his property as being downtown, loss of parking spaces and the narrowing of streets. He said this felt like the Government stepping in and doing unfair regulations. He suggested that the City fix the bad regulations instead of changing the zoning and allow the process for appealing to happen if needed.

Peter Cyr of Sixth Street agreed with what Mr. Reed said. He was curious about the intent of this rezoning and asked why they would be doing it so far up the New Auburn Hill. He said the density does not need to be more than it already is. He challenged the Board to explain the true intent as to why this is necessary and why so far up the hill.

Suzette Cyr of 121 Sixth Street said this community is built on a hill and having to rebuild her home 5 feet from the property line would be impossible because the house is on a knoll. She said she was concerned about having a zoning law that asks that houses be moved so close to the sidewalk. This she said, loses the residential neighborhood feeling that they have.

### **Close Public Input**

A motion was made by Dan Carroll and seconded by Evan Cyr to close the Public Input part of the hearing. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Evan Cyr clarified that the Ordinance does not say that you must build your house 5 feet from the road. It says you cannot build closer than 5 feet. He said that the proposed zoning better matches the existing character in that area.

Eric put up the GIS mapping of the Sixth Street area and measured the distance between some of the houses and the street. A discussion ensued between Board members and staff.

(1:27:25 on YouTube Recording)

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dan Carroll to forward a favorable recommendation to the City Council with regards to the Proposed expansion of the form-based code zoning district T-4.2 Traditional Downtown Neighborhood, to replace the current zoning in the Multi-Family Urban district in the New Auburn neighborhood consisting of the streets from Riverside Drive to Ninth St. and portions of Broad and South Main St., pursuant to Chapter 60, Article XVII Amendments, of the City of Auburn Ordinances. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

## **5. ORDINANCE/MAP AMENDMENT/PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed creation of a transition zone shown on the referenced map for adjacent parcels on the border of two form-based code**

**zoning districts which would allow property owners to select one of the two districts to apply to their property in the area adjacent to Academy, Elm, Maple, Pleasant, High, Drummond and a portion of Spring Street and the Laurel Avenue and Newbury Street neighborhood pursuant to Chapter 60, Article XVIII Amendments, of the City of Auburn Ordinances.**

Megan went over the staff report and presented maps on the screen. She and Eric Cousens answered questions from Board members.

(1:41:25 on YouTube Recording)

### **Open Public Input**

A motion was made by Dan Carroll and seconded by Dana Staples to open the public input part of the hearing. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Nickolaus Charneski, representative of the Auburn Housing Authority asked if they could potentially change the zones in the 2 lots they own, 65 Pleasant Street and 154 Court Street because of their locations in the T-4.2 & T-5.2 zones and Megan said as long as they were located in the hatch marked areas of the map.

### **Close Public Input**

A motion was made by Dan Carroll and seconded by Stephen Martelli to close the public input part of the hearing. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

A lengthy discussion ensued amongst Board members and staff.

(2:13:50 on YouTube Recording)

A motion was made by Dan Carroll and seconded by Stephen Martelli to table the proposed creation of the transition zone shown on the referenced map for adjacent parcels on the border of two form-based code zoning districts which would allow property owners to select one of the two districts to apply to their property in the area adjacent to Academy, Elm, Maple, Pleasant, High, Drummond and a portion of Spring Street and the Laurel Avenue and Newbury Street neighborhood pursuant to Chapter 60, Article XVIII Amendments, of the City of Auburn Ordinances. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dan Carroll to send a recommendation to the City Council to review their motion regarding the rezoning of 186 Main Street. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

- 6. REVIEW/DISCUSSION: Planning Board Policies and Procedures**
  - a. Adopt Revised Attendance Policy**
  - b. Adopt New Section Pertaining to Findings**
  - c. Discussion on Codifying Motions in the Policies & Procedures**

Chairperson Duvall suggested they take each item up individually and decide how they wanted to move forward with each.

**a. Adopt Revised Attendance Policy**

Megan gave a brief update and after a short discussion the following motion was made:

**(2:22:30 on YouTube Recording)**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dana Staples to adopt the revised attendance policy to include the revision provided by Board member Mrs. LeBlanc who stated that it should read: The executive session to address attendance. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

Dan Carroll asked if Item #6 on the Agenda was a spot for the Board to come up with parameters as to what is going to determine moving forward for a live in-person meeting versus on Zoom. Chairperson Duvall replied that we are currently living through exceptional circumstances and codifying the ordinance or policy's specific rules around these circumstances is not necessary. The Board's decision to meet via Zoom is driven by the City and said he understands the frustration but to make a rule change is over-kill in his opinion.

**b. Adopt New Section Pertaining to Findings**

There was no discussion amongst the Board members.

A motion was made by Dana Staples and seconded by Dan Carroll to adopt the new section pertaining to Findings. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

**c. Discussion on Codifying Motions in the Policies & Procedures**

A discussion ensued amongst Board members and staff regarding the language for motions and whether to incorporate some of the Robert's Rules language. It was decided to leave the process as they have been doing it but will strike Roberts Rules and replace with applicable sections in the Policies & Procedures.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT:** No members of the public spoke.

**8. PLANNING BOARD ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:** Chairperson Duvall mentioned that the February meeting is when the Board elects its Chair. Megan gave an update of the Comp Plan meeting.

**9. MISCELLANEOUS: Upcoming Items for February:** Megan mentioned additional FBC changes would be coming again in February and Eric stated there would be a Public Hearing on a rezoning for a portion of Trapp Road. Chairperson Duvall said they would be going over Procedures and the CIP.

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

**(2:56:17 on YouTube Recording)**

A motion was made by Stephen Martelli and seconded by Evan Cyr to adjourn. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion passed.