

# **Auburn Planning Board Meeting Minutes**

## **August 10, 2021**

### **1. ROLL CALL:**

**Regular Members present:** Evan Cyr, Darren Finnegan, Dana Staples, Riley Bergeron, Mathieu Duvall - Presiding, and Stephen Martelli,

**Regular Members absent:** Stacey LeBlanc

**Associate and other Members present:** Joseph Morin

**Associate and other Members absent:** Brian DuBois

**Also present representing City staff:** Eric Cousens, Director of Planning & Permitting and John Blais, Urban Development Specialist.

Chairperson Duvall called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and asked for a roll call. He stated that because there was a full member absent, Joseph Morin's status would be elevated to Full acting membership for this meeting.

### **2. MINUTES: Approval request of the July 13, 2021 meeting minutes.**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dana Staples to approve the July 13, 2021 meeting minutes as presented. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion passed.

Chairperson Duvall asked for consensus from the Board to switch the order of items 8 and 9 on the agenda. There were no objections from Board members.

### **3. ZONING MAP AMENDMENT/PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed Amendment to the Low-Density Country Residential and Rural Residential Strips abutting the Agriculture/Resource Protection Zone to expand from a Width of 450 feet to a Width of 750 Feet from center line of roadways. Discuss updated maps with planning board members.**

John Blais gave a brief overview of what the City of Auburn was proposing by showing maps depicting some of the lots throughout the City that would be affected. He and Eric Cousens answered questions from Board members.

**(24:50 on YouTube Recording)**

#### **Open Public Input**

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

Bruce Bickford of 64 Cameron Lane asked that the Board consider adding a 9.5-acre parcel to the rezoned areas mentioned.

Norm Caron of 66 Chickadee Drive asked if this means he will add more property between the front property line and the road. He also asked if the easement behind his property will go away if this proposal goes forward.

Pam Russo of 745 West Auburn Road said she was concerned about the watershed, septic systems building upward and the addition of new homes because of the reduction in frontage requirements.

Mike Lyons from Danville asked why was this so urgent and said it probably should have gone to the Comp Plan Committee for review. He said these properties could be identified as future land use so if the property owner wanted to make the change in the future, they could bring it up to the City Council at that time.

Jessica Blanchard of 96 Blanchard Road said traffic evaluations were needed along Route 4 where properties are developed and spoke about roads needing maintenance because they are terrible.

Mark Demers of 298 Trapp Road said his biggest concern with this rezoning is developers coming in and purchasing some of these properties and putting in housing development in residential areas like they have on Danville Corner Road.

Carl Bernard of 448 Youngs Corner Road said he was opposed to this because he wants to keep the country looking the way it is.

Jan Philips of 173 West Shore Road said she was concerned about the south end and particularly the north end of Taylor Pond because of the topography in those areas. She said any run-off from development will run downhill and have an impact on the pond.

**(37:35 on YouTube Recording)**

Rick Breton of 1109 Summer Street spoke about the property being surrounded by the Ag Zone.

Connie Field of 295 Station Road said she was trying to understand what is being proposed.

Kenneth Sonagere of 482 West Auburn Road asked what will the tax increase be per acre of rural residential acreage. He added that Lake Shore Drive at the intersection of Route 4 is a death trap and adding development does not make sense.

Lance Pierson of 134 West Shore Road said we should have residential development and landowners should have a say.

Pam Russo of 745 West Auburn Road says she's concerned that this is the 1<sup>st</sup> step being taken for future development and sees this as a slippery slope.

Art Dingle of 512 Danville Corner Road was not sure why he was notified since his property was across the road. Eric clarified that all property owners within 500 feet of affected properties were also notified.

**(48:10 on YouTube Recording)**

Rex Rhoades of 880 Lake Shore Drive said the City of Auburn should not encourage strip development and should develop closer to the City center.

Kathy Shaw of 1200 Sopers Mill Road said she's a farmer and also Chairperson of the Auburn Forestry and Agricultural Commission. She said this proposal is a further dilution of our forest, farms and fields and a money grab for more development. She said we need to manage growth in a thoughtful manner.

Russell Libby of 730 Perkins Ridge Road said he was not in favor of selling house lots.

Nancy Cecil of 464 Maple Hill Road said she was concerned about development on a neighboring lot.

Anita Poulin of Old Danville Road said neighbors are getting less water pressure due to development. She said that many at the bottom of the hill have had to have new wells put in because of the development on top of the hill. She is concerned that taxes are going to go up when the Ag land becomes residential.

Rick Whiting of 24 Beaver Road said he served on the Planning Board and Comp Plan Committee and is more in favor of incremental growth instead of rapid change. He suggests that the City Council and Planning Board should slow down and finish the Comp Plan and then start looking at some of these fairly radical changes and really pay attention to what the citizens think about this and not what the City Council thinks.

Jim Tartre of 518 Johnson Road said being in the other room, he couldn't see or hear what was going on and suggests that they have another meeting in one room where everyone can hear a better presentation of exactly what is going on. People don't understand what impact this may have on their property so is not in favor of the Board voting tonight.

Ken Violet of 181 Stone Road said it's time to make changes and is in favor of this proposal. He said he knows there are a lot of people opposing but there are people that paid taxes for many years that want to use their property but can't.

**(1:03:10 on YouTube Recording)**

Bob Hayes of 172 Allen Avenue said we are not comprehensively approaching this; it's been piece meal. He said we need to slow down and use the approach that was done in the past and make the changes at one time.

Holly Lasagna of 220 West Auburn Road and Ward 1 Councilor thanked the public and encouraged those that don't want to speak publicly, to reach out to their City Councilor and voice their opinion.

Leland Faulkner of 2426 Turner Road said what bothers him the most is the lack of transparency. He said he would like to know who profits from the process and who the players are. He said there are no

details and questions the ecological and traffic impacts.

Nancy Cecil of 464 Maple Hill Road said this needs further discussion because of the lack of clarity as voiced by many people here tonight.

### **Close Public Input**

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

Evan Cyr asked staff to provide clarity to some of the comments and questions that were asked during the Public Input part of the Public Hearing.

John and Eric answered questions from Board members and presented maps and data sheets on the screen. After a lengthy discussion, the following motion was made:

**(1:50:40 on YouTube Recording)**

A motion was made by Dana Staples and seconded by Riley Bergeron to Table this agenda item to a date certain of the regular Planning Board meeting which falls on September 14, 2021. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

#### **4. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE/PUBLIC HEARING: Comprehensive Plan Chapter 1: Goals, Policies & Strategies, Section G: Transportation Policies. First review.**

Eric went over the staff report and presented slides on the screen.

### **Open Public Input**

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

No comments.

### **Close Public Input**

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

**(2:03:15 on YouTube Recording)**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Stephen Martelli to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed amendment of the Comprehensive Plan, specifically the Transportation Policies Chapter as it is written in the staff report dated August 10, 2021. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

#### **5. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE/PUBLIC HEARING: Comprehensive Plan Chapter 1: Goals, Policies & Strategies, Section K: Promoting Food Access and Production and Growing the Agriculture Economy Policies. First review.**

Eric went over the staff report and presented slides on the screen.

### **Open Public Input**

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

Camille Parrish of 42 Lake Street said she is very much in support to have this chapter included in the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Close Public Input**

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

Evan Cyr said he supports neighborhood store ideas for better food access and suggested having language that supports Neighborhood Business Zones throughout the City. He said the City should work with some of these partners to develop sponsorships that are mutually beneficial for the sponsor as well as the City. He spoke about removing barriers to doing agriculture in the Ag zone.

**(2:21:00 on YouTube Recording)**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dana Staples to send a favorable recommendation to the City Council the adopted proposed amendment to the Comprehensive Plan promoting food access and production in growing the agriculture economy chapter with the following recommendations; that language be added to support neighborhood access to food by considering zoning that allows for neighborhood stores with additional recommendation to consider adding strategies to help fund efforts such as but not limited to sponsorship and to include language to work on removing barriers to all levels of agriculture in all zones, specifically to support both large and small agriculture in all zones. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.

## **6. WORKSHOP: Comprehensive Plan Chapter 2: Future Land Use Plan. (Draft Mapping & Zoning Updates)**

Eric went over the staff report and presented slides on the screen. He answered questions from Board members. After some discussion, Eric said staff would plan to bring this item back for a Public Hearing in September.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

## **8. MISCELLANEOUS:**

### **a) Upcoming items for September**

Eric went over the items coming in September and answered question from Board members.

**9. ATTENDENCE DISCUSSION: Possible executive session; personnel matter, pursuant to 1 M.R.S.A Sec 405 (6) (a).**

Board members agreed to wait until all Board members were present before addressing this item on the agenda.

(2:47:35 on YouTube Recording)

**10. ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion was made by Evan Cyr and seconded by Dana Staples to adjourn. After a vote of 7-0-0, the motion carried.