

CITY OF AUBURN PLANNING BOARD  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2014 6:30 PM, MEMORIAL CITY HALL

Present: Sam Giangreco, Anne McCarthy, Tim Baroody, Crystal Cosentino, Sheli Graney

Absent: Frank Reginelli

Staff: Jennifer Haines, Director, OPED; Steve Downing, Code Enforcement Officer and Greg Gilfus, APD Traffic Officer

Agenda Items: Introduction to future site plan application of Auburn Homeless Housing, Presenter: Stephanie Hutchinson, Auburn Housing Authority

Chair calls the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited. Roll is called.

**Agenda Item 1: Approval of December 3, 2013 Meeting Minutes.**

Chair asks for a motion to approve the minutes of the December 3, 2013 meeting. So moved by Crystal Cosentino, seconded by Shelli Graney. All members vote approval. No members opposed. Motion carried.

**Agenda Item 2: Application for Major Site Plan Review for the construction of a 14,000 square foot warehouse building at 318 Genesee Street. Applicant: Mark Peters, Coffee Host.**

Applicant is continuing to work on application. Chair asks for a motion to table the Major Site Plan Review. Motion made by Tim Baroody second by Anne McCarthy. All members vote approval. Motion carried.

Application tabled until next meeting.

**Other Matters.**

**Introduction to future site plan application of Auburn Homeless Housing. Presenter: Stephanie Hutchinson, Auburn Housing Authority.**

Acting Chair asks for presenter to introduce project.

Stephanie Hutchinson, Auburn Housing Authority, 20 Thornton Ave- Provides background of a potential site plan that may be in front of the Board in February. In my position at the Housing Authority I have had the opportunity to be part of the Auburn Homeless Task Force and serve on the Homeless Task Force Executive Committee as well as am chair of the Auburn Affordable Housing Committee. In 2011 we realized the extent of homelessness in the community and identified a number of gaps that exist for housing homeless single females and families. Many of these individuals and families are referred to as chronic TANF families who cycle through the Department of Health and Human Services. The reasons why they cycle through are numerous but many of them have poor rental history and poor credit. Auburn Housing Authority as well as others, turn people away because of poor rental history. Other housing complexes or landlords also check credit and may turn them away because of poor credit. Also, there are minimum income requirements at many affordable housing complexes and some of them cannot meet the minimum income requirements. Finally many of these families have run into compliance issues for Section 8 vouchers because they did not have supports in place, they moved frequently or because they were convicted.

To address this issue the Auburn Housing Authority partnered with the Rescue Mission, who signed a contract with the Cayuga County Department of Social Services to provide case management services, and the Rescue Mission rented four units for transitional housing for single women or women with families at Malone Village. The way it works is that women who are going to Health and Human Services are being hoteled, referred to us and then the Rescue Mission provides case management services. They are placed in the transitional apartments, where they can stay up to 90 days and receive intensive case management and are assisted by the Rescue Mission in a permanent housing search and placement. It is difficult to find permanent housing if a customer is on public assistance because a family of 3 or 4 may only be getting about \$700/month for housing and basic needs. Rescue Mission now rents an additional 6 units for permanent housing and has office space at Malone Village. Rescue Mission is serving 60 families and has stayed with them, providing them with case management even when they are permanently housed. These families do not have repeat cycles through Department of Social Services anymore and do not face homelessness. The program has a 91% success rate however, there are problems: They are running out of landlords and therefore placing families in neighborhoods that are not as desirable.

In response we developed a transitional and permanent housing plan for these families. The proposal will include 28 units for homeless women and children. The Rescue Mission units will be moved to the new development. Auburn Housing Development Corporation will build and own the houses and lease them to the Rescue Mission for 25 years. The Rescue Mission will be onsite to provide Case management to families residing there. The units include: 4 one-bedroom units, 10 two bedroom units and 14 three-bedroom units.

We would like to keep the transitional units at 4 and have 20 permanent housing units and 4 units as flex units, meaning that they are permanent or transitional units based on the need. However, we are expecting the need will be permanent housing units. Clients will be able to stay there as long as they comply with case management and are not presenting any problems. As you can see on the drawing (refers to displayed site plan) we are proposing a community center where the Rescue mission will be doing community planning and there will be office space for Rescue Mission Staff and any other agencies such as Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency that will be providing support onsite. Referrals will come from Health and Human Services.

We have been communicating with the neighborhood. We sent letters to 56 households in the neighborhood and met with a couple of the neighbors and a County Legislator. The response has been generally favorable but I am not sure what the reaction will be in the future. In general I do not receive a lot of complaints from the neighbors. We met with the school district including Genesee Elementary since it may put a greater burden on that specific elementary school.

What you are looking at is about 3.5 acres of open land in the middle of Malone Village and Garrow Street. Right now there is a small playground there that use to be City run and deed the property back to us a couple of years ago. We had this development in mind at that time. As for funding, we will apply in the middle of May to Homeless Housing and Assistance Program, a division of NY State OTDA, for a maximum amount of \$7.5 million dollars.

Chair asks for comments and questions from Board members.

Tim Baroody- What percentage of the Malone Village units are empty?

Stephanie Hutchinson- We are full. We have 3 vacancies due to normal turnover. We have a long waiting list. 50 households are on a waiting list for 1 bedroom apartments. Our other complexes, Olympia Terrace a 50 unit complex and Brogan Manor an 88 unit complex, are full. Our Section 8 waiting list is long as well.

Tim Baroody- Who will pay the management services for the Rescue Mission?

Stephanie Hutchinson- The Rescue Mission is privately funded, about 10% from Government sources, much of it is private donations, thrifty shopper, and bottle and can redemption. All operating funding will come from the Rescue Mission. The grant funding we are applying for is for construction money.

Tim Baroody- Are you tied with in other agencies to eliminate a duplication of services?

Stephanie Hutchinson- Yes, through the Homeless Task Force we have Options for Independence, Cayuga Seneca Community Action Agency, Catholic Charities and we will be partnering with most of them for this project.

Anne McCarthy- When will the grant be awarded?

Stephanie Hutchinson- There has not been an announcement for the funding round yet but we are anticipating there will be an announcement in early May. Last year announcements for funding were released in late April and funded applications were announced in October. If funding is received, best case scenario for us would be breaking ground in March 2015. It would take about a year to build.

Anne McCarthy- Is the grant for transitional housing or are there other areas you are competing against?

Stephanie Hutchinson- Yes, they do fund other types of housing. They say they prefer to fund new construction but they do fund rehab, and Single Room Occupancy developments as well. We have had favorable feedback from OTDA. They have not invested in Cayuga County but have invested in surrounding counties and communities.

Sam Giangreco- How many homeless do we have in the community?

Stephanie Hutchinson- I can put a number on families with children. Between April 2012 and March 2013 Health and Human Services housed 74 families with children in hotels with an average stay of 5 ½ weeks. Numbers for single men are extremely high, although I do not have those numbers with me. Chapel House has 19 beds and has men in overflow beds right now. Currently Health and Human Services has to pay to hotel each one of these households and they do not have the resources, like they use to, to have quality case management.

Tim Baroody- Who will have ownership and manage?

Stephanie Hutchinson- Auburn Development Corporation will enter into a lease with the Rescue Mission who will provide supportive services. The rent that the Rescue Mission pays on the units will cover maintenance and the Auburn Housing Authority will manage the units.

Sheli Graney- What is your construction design?

Stephanie Hutchinson- They will be two-story townhomes. There will be 14 buildings and each will have two units. (Displays drawing to Board members.)

Crystal Cosentino- Questions what the white boxes shown on the houses are.

Stephanie Hutchinson- They are fenced in yard areas.

Tim Baroody- There are two ways in?

Stephanie Hutchinson- Public access will be from Merriman Street and the Garrow Street access will be gated and for emergency access only. We will maintain it and keep it plowed but it is for emergency personnel only.

Sheli Graney- What is the difference between these units and the units at Malone village?

Stephanie Hutchinson- There will not be any difference in requirements. The program will operated the same. Some of the families that are permanently housed at Malone Village will move to the new development, while others may stay and become tenants of the Housing Authority.

Sam Giangreco- What will be the impact on school districts

Stephanie Hutchinson- We are anticipating 40-50 kids, but not all will be elementary school aged and many will probably be part of the Genesee School District already.

Tim Baroody- Is there Centro Bus location?

Stephanie Hutchinson- There is a stop on Thornton Ave and on Clymer Street.

Sam Giangreco- I think you have been doing the right thing, contacting the school district, neighbors and such. I am taken back by the number of homeless people

Stephanie Hutchinson- Funding for this community is not proportional as it may be for larger communities like Syracuse.

Tim Baroody- I volunteered at the Chapel House and it was not all local people

Stephanie Hutchinson- 98% of families in the Family Transitions program are City and County folks. In fact, mostly City. It is getting harder and harder to get services from Cayuga County unless you are from this County. People are being sent back to other Counties if they have places to stay or families.

Crystal Cosentino- By partnering with agencies such as the Rescue Mission we are ensuring that other Counties are being responsible for their own residents and we are helping our residents.

Stephanie Hutchinson-The nice thing about this project is that the program with supportive services is already implemented. It is not a pilot or something we are going to try out. We have it in place and know it is successful.

The date of the next Planning Board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 4, 2013 at 6:30p.m.

Motion to adjourn by Crystal Cosentino, seconded by Tim Baroody. All members vote approval. None opposed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectively Submitted by Renee Jensen