

CITY OF AUBURN PLANNING BOARD
TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2016 6:30 PM, MEMORIAL CITY HALL

Present: Anne McCarthy, Andy Tehan, Theresa Walsh, Crystal Cosentino

Absent: Sam Giangreco, Tim Baroody

Staff: Stephen Selvek, Senior Planner; Greg Gilfus, Auburn Police Department; Stacy DeForrest, Corporation Counsel

Agenda Items: 107-111 Ross Street Site Plan, Presentation by Auburn Housing Authority for Melone Village Renovation

Items Approved: None

Applications Denied: None

Applications Tabled: None

Acting Chair, Anne McCarthy, calls the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance is recited. Roll is called.

There is not a representative for the Auburn Extreme Softball Site plan application for the construction of a concessions stand. The application will be moved to the last item on the agenda.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of July 5, 2016 Meeting Minutes.

Chair asks for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2016 meeting. So moved by Andy Tehan, seconded by Theresa Walsh. All in favor. No members opposed. Motion carried.

Agenda Item 2: Presentation: Auburn Housing Authority to present initial preliminary plans for the Melone Village Renovation. Applicant: Auburn Housing Authority.

Stephanie Hutchinson, Director of Auburn Housing Authority- Auburn Housing Authority is 188 units of public housing that was constructed in two phases: 1952 and 1962. Our occupancy rate is about 98% and the average income of their clients is \$16,200. Melone Village has infrastructure needs as it has not been updated since it was built. Improvements include sidewalks, landscape, fencing, improve lighting, security cameras, new roofs, update plumbing and electrical, insulation, hot water heaters kitchens, bathrooms and basement work. We would like to add ten handicap units to the complex as we do not have any now and five being audio/visual equipped units. With the addition of a community building we will be able to provide our residents with internet access and outside agencies a place to meet with residents. Playgrounds will be added to the complex, which are necessary from a quality of life standpoint. This project will cost approximately \$20-30 million and anticipate funding to come from low income housing tax credits. This will be an enhancement of the neighborhood and the quality of life for our residents will be greatly improved.

Ed Kepplinger, Kepplinger Freeman Associates- Discusses the site plan and displays a graphic of the entire parcel. The property is about 16 acres in size. The Merriman Transitions Housing project is located on the east side of the site. It is currently under construction. Currently Melone Village includes 32 buildings. Two of the buildings will be demolished. This includes the current administration building and some housing off of Merriman Street. Two new buildings will be constructed in the same locations. The

administration building will be moved to the Merriman Street right of way, providing a central location. The existing parking lot by Merriman Street will be expanded by 20 parking spaces. There are currently 188 units and will be 188 units when construction is complete. All of the buildings will be renovated and receive new entrance canopies and patios off the back. On Thornton Ave there will be three units. Two units will be three bedroom ADA accessible units and one will be a four bedroom unit. In addition, a new building for utilities will be constructed. All of the existing parking lots in the complex will be renovated. Most of the sidewalks will be replaced; there will be new dumpster enclosures, 5 new playgrounds throughout the facility and landscaping will be improved with street trees and foundation plants.

Chair asks for Board comments.

Crystal Cosentino asks if all the handicap accessible units together. Stephanie Hutchinson responds that there are three accessible units on one side of the complex and additional accessible units will be in existing housing units on the other side of the complex.

Andy Tehan asks if any other parking lots besides the middle lot will be expanded. Response from applicant is no.

Chair asks for staff comments.

Stephen Selvek explains that the site plan has been shared with the DRC committee but not all of the departments have shared comments yet. However, the initial review of the site plan brought a concern with Merriman Street. On the site plan there is a red line outlining the street, and a significant portion of that area is a City Right of Way. With the project, they are looking to reconfigure the parking that occurs in that area. The City could abandon the street and turn it over to the Housing Authority while maintaining an easement for water and sewer. The other option would be to work within the current configuration to allow them to do the improvements.

Discussion on the need for five playgrounds vs. one or two large playgrounds took place. Stephanie Hutchinson explained that there is not enough room for one large playground. Each block will have similar small playgrounds that children can go; this will also make it easier for supervision purposes.

Auburn Housing Authority will submit a formal application and will be looking for approval within the next few months.

Agenda Item 3: 107-111 Ross Street Site Plan Review to construct a 1792 SF concessions building and restroom adjacent to the Herman Avenue playground. Applicant: Auburn Extreme Softball.

Stephen Selvek notes that a representative for the Auburn Extreme Softball organization is not present. However, an application for the construction of a concessions and restroom building at Herman Avenue was received. Since we do have public attending the meeting tonight we will open the public to be heard portion of the meeting and any comments brought forward will be shared with the applicant. The Board cannot answer questions but can refer them to the applicant.

Don DeGiovine, 12 Drummond- Backyard borders the northwest corner of the ball fields. This was public property owned by the City for East end children to play at the playground. About seven years ago the school district took over and constructed two ball fields. After construction they posted no trespassing signs at both fields. The way they took the playground away was behind closed doors, there was not a hearing where people could comment. The games are on the weekend and are loud. There is not any parking. Opposed to the bathroom and concession stand primarily because of the way the land was transferred without public input.

Christopher Bourke, 206 North Hoopes- The proposed building is only 50 feet from my back fence. I am concerned with the City engineer stating that there is not a need for a drainage study. The building is about 30 feet from a floodplain and it is on a probable floodplain which is seen on the FEMA. Our properties are located on an 1800 old dump and our properties do not drain down, they drain out to the stream. They are going to take away more than half of the field behind my house and put a building and pave it. It is going to change the drainage. How is the building going to be lighted? The building is larger than my house and the proposed metal building is unsightly. It is not within the atmosphere of the neighborhood. If this concessions stand is needed, it should be located where the current pavilion is. There is water and sewer there because 30 years ago it was a bathroom facility. There is not enough parking available for these accommodations. They park on my lawn and the street. Also upset that the applicant did not show up.

Kathy DeBagio, 85 Ross Street- I agree with everything people have said. The traffic and foot traffic is bad and the garbage is uncontrollable. The concessions stand is going to add to it. Two months ago there was a hypodermic needle lying in the road. Has a question if Auburn Extreme Softball team is a private team, part of the school or a corporation. It is outside the zoning of the neighborhood and has concerns with flooding, lighting and inviting crime. The neighborhood is deteriorating.

Phil Meyer, 238 North Hoopes- I have been here for 42 years, yard borders the property, and I have watched the fields go from being wooded to weeds to being maintained by the City. Drainage is very poor. A sewer line was abandoned under my garage and placed on the backside of my property. The creek floods and has a lot of debris. Traffic has increased starting at 6am on the weekends. The fields should be open to the public, it is owned by the school. The entrances to the fields are taped up and they have taken the area away from the locals. I am concerned with parking. It is a bad idea and is upset that no one showed. Also feels that the concessions will provide them with money to expand the fields.

Don DeGiovine questions how the property was transferred to the school district without public input.

Stephen Selvek responds that he can respond to some of the items that were brought up tonight. The softball fields are located on school district. At one point the property was owned by the City and then transferred to the school district. I do not know the details. The property we are looking at in respect to this application is owned by the City. It is a parcel adjacent to a City right of way which is the area between the fields and the proposed parcel. The Auburn Extreme Team is looking to lease the parcel from the City. City Council will need to approve the property lease.

Stephen Selvek also addresses the draining study question from Christopher Bourke stating that the City engineer looked at the disturbance that would be occurring. The building size is less than 2,000 square feet so by the standards a drainage study is not needed. If the disturbance was an acre or more a storm water pollution prevention plan is required. However with your concerns and the drainage with the existing lots, I will share them with the City engineer.

Christopher Bourke raises his concerns about the proposed concessions stand moving too fast and the proper studies are not being done. Also states that the applicant has a strategy by not showing up.

Stephen Selvek states that this is a City owned parcel and it is the intent of Auburn Extreme to lease the parcel from the City. Ultimately, City Council will have to approve the lease and is separate from the decision made by this Board. Concerns can be addressed to City Council as well since they have a role in the overall approval process. Stephen Selvek recommends labeling the SEQRA review for the proposed project.

Rosanne Bourke, 206 North Hoopes, asks which councilor represents her neighborhood. Stephen Selvek responds that all City Councilors serve at large.

Motion to table the SEQRA Resolution for 107-111 Ross Street made by Theresa Walsh; seconded by Andy Tehan. All in Favor. No opposed. Motion Carried.

Other Items:

No other items brought before the Board.

The date of the next Planning Board meeting is September 6, 2016 at 6:30 pm.

Motion to adjourn made by Andy Tehan and seconded by Theresa Walsh. All in Favor.

Respectively submitted by Renee Jensen