

"Not yet approved"

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

August 4, 2005

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Doyle, Hurt-Mendyka, Hitchcock, Kresnak, Luenberger, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent. Beidoun
Also Present. City Planner Cohen, Deputy Police Chief Mynsberge, Engineering Consultant Stevens, Planning Intern Tanury
Council Members McDonald and Newkirk
Guests 42

LOCATION: Avondale Administration Building, 260 S. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills MI 48326

Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Visioning Workshop

Mr. Cohen and Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka welcomed those in attendance to the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Visioning Workshop. Mr. Cohen introduced the Planning Commissioners and the City Council members who were present.

Mr. Cohen explained that the City's neighborhood planning process has been done quite successfully within six (6) other neighborhoods in the community and that the City was addressing planning issues one neighborhood at a time. He explained the meeting was a brainstorming session designed to identify issues in the neighborhood.

To start discussion, the following topics were discussed in depth with all those attending:

- By-pass road and dead-end of Waukegan to address school traffic concerns originally proposed in January 2001.
- Future development of Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Gateway Free Methodist Church properties.
- Code enforcement and problems with rental properties.

Recap of the Discussion

West Side of Squirrel Road

- The *2001 Waukegan Road By-Pass Proposal* along Clinton River Trail was discussed in depth. It was determined that the by-pass had benefits, but it was not supported by the majority of residents present at the meeting who reside on Waukegan. Residents who live on the north side of Waukegan explained that they did not want the traffic in their backyards.
 - Other related issues
 - A road connection from Avondale High School to Auburn Road would not be feasible due to existing development and the expense of building a bridge over the Clinton River.
 - Forcing traffic onto South Boulevard and closing Waukegan was not possible because the City needs the road connection to Squirrel Road for emergency response.
 - Need to investigate need for traffic light at Waukegan and Squirrel intersection.
- Request to improve Police enforcement of vehicle speed on Waukegan and illegal Clinton River Trail use by dirt bikes, snow mobiles, etc.
- Suggestion to work with residents to find appropriate locations to add street lights along Margaret, Caroline, Bessie, and Henrydale.
- Ask DPW not to dump snow on sidewalks at road intersections. DPW does great job with snow removal in general.
- Request for Police to talk with Boys and Girls Club regarding kids leaving the facility without proper supervision.

East Side of Squirrel Road

(Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Gateway Free Methodist Church properties)

- Redevelopment of the Church's Lumber and Free Methodist Church properties was discussed in depth. Pastor Kim Martin explained the Free Methodist Church planned to sell its property and relocate.
- Residents requested the City not allow retail uses or rental property (apartments) as part of the redevelopment.
- It was discussed that a "mixed use project" would be appropriate for the redevelopment of these properties due to their location adjacent to the Village Center.
 - Office. Church's Lumber is master planned to be redeveloped for office buildings.
 - Residential. Discussion on need for "rooftops" or homes to draw people into the Village Center to support service business like bookstores, restaurants, coffee shops, etc.
 - Suggestion that single-family homes with 50 ft. wide lots would be appropriate for the southern part of the Free Methodist Church property, which would be similar in character to the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood to the west.
 - Further, owner-occupied residential attached units (e.g., town homes, stacked flats, etc.) would be acceptable as a transition between the office buildings and single-family homes.
 - Greenbelt. Residents attending requested that the City work with the future developer(s) to provide a park or greenbelt along the hill on the east side of the Free Methodist Church to maintain a buffer.
- The idea of the City buying these properties for parkland was discussed, but determined to not be financially feasible. It was also noted that three (3) municipal parks are located within close proximity of the neighborhood.

Ideas for Improving the Village Center

- Need anchor in the Village Center, like grocery store or movie theatre.
- Add family and chain restaurants.
- Add coffee shop / more small shops / bookstore.
- Add business services / copying center.
- Work to help existing heavy industrial businesses relocate out of the Village Center.
- Request additional Police enforcement of speed limit on Squirrel Road and Auburn Road to help improve pedestrian and bike safety.

Code Enforcement

- Need to improve rental standards and find way to better monitor minimum housing standards.
- Problem with single-family homes being converted into multiple-family units.
- No consensus on limiting number and location of cars and RV's (e.g., campers, trailers, boats, etc.).
- No consensus on limiting parking on the lawn.
- Work on flyers and personal contact to educate residents where RV's are supposed to be parked on residential property.
- Number and behavior of pets was a concern.
- Request that the City help provide financial assistance for fixed income homeowners to facilitate repairs.
- Work to maintain architectural compatibility with new homes.
- Address vegetation in right-of-way and overgrowth on sidewalks.

Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka and the Planning Commission thanked those attending the meeting and announced the next meeting will be in two weeks at the Auburn Hills City Hall Council Chambers.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING – The next regularly scheduled meeting is August 18, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Steven J. Cohen, AICP, PCP
City Planner