

TOWN OF AURORA
TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION
March 28, 2022

The following members of the Aurora Town Board met on Monday, March 28, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. for the purpose of holding a work session. The Board met in-person and via Zoom at the Aurora Municipal Center, 575 Oakwood Avenue, East Aurora, New York. Public attendance was permitted at this meeting.

Present:	Charles D. Snyder	Councilman
	Luke Wochensky	Councilman
	James F. Granville	Councilman (via Zoom)
	Joseph McCann	Councilman
	James J. Bach	Supervisor
Others Present:	Brigid Maloney	Town Attorney
	Elizabeth Cassidy	Code Enforcement Officer
	Greg Keyser	GHD Engineering
	David Gunner	Highway Superintendent
	Shane Krieger	Chief of Police
	Jim Kittner	Asst. Code Enforcement Officer
	Adam Zaremski	Aurora Library Board
	Elizabeth Wilber	Live Stream Coordinator

Supervisor Bach opened the work session at 6:30 p.m. with a moment of silence for those affected by the Ukraine conflict followed by the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag. Mr. Bach noted the regular meeting would begin immediately after the work session and that Councilman Granville is attending the work session via Zoom from 110 Tunyo St., Los Alamos, New Mexico.

1) Open Development Area – 10 Ellis Drive, W. Falls:

William and Rebecca Heidt, 10 Ellis Drive, submitted an application for development (a new single-family residence) on an Open Development Area (ODA) lot. The following is a timeline of what has transpired to date:

2014 – ODA approved for a single-family residence (under Chapter 79 of the Town Code prior to driveway bump-outs being a requirement).

2021 – Owner is currently occupying the current structure which consists of a residence on the second floor and garage/workshop on the first floor. Plans are to construct a single-family residence behind this building which will be turned into an accessory building with no residential unit. ZBA approves building height and front yard variance for the accessory building.

2021 (December) – Owner submits application ODA application to Town Board to revise the original ODA to construct a new single-family residence and convert the current building into an accessory building based on ZBA variance.

2022 (January) – Town Board refers ODA application to Planning Board.

2022 (February) – Planning Board reviews application and recommends waiving the driveway bump-out requirement, changes to the SEAF and an erosion and sediment control plan.

2022 (March) – ZBA unanimously approves a variance waiving the requirement for driveway bump-outs.

2022 (March) – Owner submits SEAF with changes and an erosion/sediment control plan.

2022 (March) – ODA application is before the Town Board for consideration

Councilman Snyder asked what kind of buffering is between the house area and the properties to the east on Old Glenwood Road. Mr. Heidt responded the majority of the area is wooded and he has planted spruce trees, most of which are 5' to 6' tall.

2) East Aurora Baseball & Softball, Inc.:

Jeff Voss, EABS Board member and Bill Wlodarczyk, EABS Treasurer, spoke to the Town Board about the baseball/softball program and the proposed agreement for EABS's use of the baseball diamonds at Gleed and Community Pool Park. Supervisor Bach stated that one of items still not decided on is the maintenance fee that the EABS will pay to the Town. Bill Wlodarczyk noted that they had donated \$2500 for diamond dirt last year.

Jeff Voss suggested reciprocal indemnity in the agreement and have EABS as additional insured on the Town's insurance. Bill Wlodarczyk stated that the fields are used by others such as the East Aurora High School, Aktion Club and other groups that want to rent them. The Board and Town Attorney will continue to review the proposed agreement.

3) Senior Exemption Increase – Proposed Local Law:

Senior Citizens with certain income levels can apply for tax exemptions for town/county and school taxes. Recently the Erie County Legislature raised the limit for county taxes. In order to promote consistency and avoid confusion for those residents applying for senior exemptions, the Town Board is considering raising the maximum allowable income level to \$37,399.00 to match the County limit. Local Law Intro 2-2022 was presented to the Board to allow them to set a public hearing on the matter.

4) CDBG – Grant Award Agreement:

The Town applied for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for funds to replace exterior doors, install automatic door openers and install LED lighting at the Aurora Senior Center. The Town was notified that it will receive \$95,190.00 toward the project. The Subrecipient Agreement between Erie County and the Town of Aurora needs to be executed by the Supervisor.

5) DA (Highway Bridge fund) – Fund Shortage:

Capital Project H7 – North Grove Street and Whaley Avenue bridge replacement/repair has a cash deficit of \$9,869.12. The bookkeeper is requesting an interest free interfund loan from A (General Fund) to DA (Highway Fund Townwide) in the amount of \$9,869.12 to make the capital project whole. Highway Superintendent Gunner has agreed to reduce spending in the 2022 DA fund in order to repay the A Fund at the end of 2022.

6) Major's Park – Hubbard entrance proposal:

Councilman McCann stated Town resident Orlando Monaco has developed a plan to enhance the Hubbard Road entrance to Major's Park. The plan includes repairing or replacing signs and planting trees and wildflowers. Highway Superintendent Gunner stated that this would have to be maintenance free as he does not have the work force to take over. Mr. Gunner noted the Highway Department currently uses the area for staging for highway projects and he would not build it out further. Councilman Wochensky stated he would like to hear from others, including neighbors in the area. Councilman McCann wants to refer it to the Open Space Committee for review.

7) Surplus Snowblower/Trade with Town of Lancaster:

Highway Superintendent Gunner stated there is a street snowblower that has not been used by the highway department in probably twenty years. He would like to have it declared surplus inventory and trade it to the Town of Lancaster highway department in exchange for paving at Community Pool Park. Councilman Wochensky asked if there was an agreement for this. Mr. Gunner responded that paving is covered under the mutual aid agreement that highway

departments in other towns have entered into. The Town Attorney stated that something needs to be in writing that memorializes the agreement.

8) Rails to Trails discussion:

Councilman Wochensky gave a brief update on the Erie County Rail Trail that will eventually be going in along the abandoned railroad tracks in the western portion of the Town of Aurora. Mr. Wochensky stated that the West Falls Conservation Society and the ECRT are working on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) due to the fact that the trail goes through the WFCS property.

Jack Bouquin, President of the WFCS, stated that they received an MOU last year, but did not find it to be satisfactory. Mr. Bouquin noted that he sent the MOU back to Deb Fenn of the ECRT with another request for her to review it. Mr. Bouquin noted that he has not heard from the ECRT since May 2021 and that the WFCS wants the things, promises, that the ECRT has said about the WFCS and the trail in writing. The WFCS concerns need to be nullified. Mr. Bouquin stated that there needs to be a way to get users of the trail either through or around the WFCS property to avoid shooting events.

Councilman Wochensky stated that this Town Board will not support a resolution that does not include the WFCS being able to operate as they always have. Mr. Wochensky noted that the ECRT only gets funding if the Town issues a positive resolution as that is only fair to the residents.

Mr. Bouquin suggested that the ECRT use Davis Road as an alternate route until a “fix” at the WFCS can be worked out.

Councilman Wochensky is proposing an informational hearing on April 25, 2022 at the Aurora Municipal Center to have a discussion with the residents/property owners who live or own property along the trail and sending a letter to those residents/property owners notifying them about the hearing.

Martha L. Librock
Town Clerk