

MINUTES OF A MEETING AS HELD BY THE
TOWN OF AURORA PLANNING & CONSERVATION BOARD

February 6, 2019

Members Present: Donald Owens, Chairman
Alice Brown
Laurie Kutina
David Librock

Alternate Member:

Absent/ Excused: Richard Glover
Norm Merriman
Jerry Thompson
Timothy Bailey
Douglas Crow

Also Present: William Kramer, Code Enforcement Officer
1 member of the public

Chairman Don Owens presided over the meeting which began at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, 300 Gleed Avenue, East Aurora, NY. He led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Don Owens states that Alice Brown will be a voting member this evening.

Dave Librock made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 7, 2018 meeting. Seconded by Alice Brown. Motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Don Owens states he has been appointed Chairman of the Planning Board again and has also been appointed for another 7 year term.

Don Owens states that John Deibel of Eco Verde Organics has passed away. Discussion by members about John and Eco Verde Organics.

Laurie Kutina asks is Eco Verde is officially closed?

Bill Kramer states that yes, they have until June to leave the site.

Don Owens asks Bill Kramer about November's meeting ODA variance on Knox Road (643 Knox Rd., Sally Erbe). Are they moving forward with that project?

Bill Kramer states that they do not have their building permits yet. Neither one of them (Erbe or Kruglov) have pulled their permits yet to build.

Don Owens asks if the building department has any further information to share.

Bill Kramer states that the building department is processing some applications for the Mill Rd (Aurora Mills) subdivision.

Laurie Kutina asks do they get permits for each individual house?

Bill Kramer states yes they do.

Further discussion by members on progress at Aurora Mills.

Don Owens states that as indicated in previous meetings, my wife and I have made an offer to purchase property along Center St. along Cazenovia Creek, East Branch, and I think the Town Board is looking at it to approve it with some guidance from the Town attorney. I'd like to see it happen because it would be a good entrance to Cazenovia Creek and Majors park from Center St.

Don shares an historical photo of the creek at the Center St. bridge. He states I would like to re-establish the recreational use and ability along the creek.

Further discussion by the board members on the creek.

Don Owens asks does the Planning Board have any desire in getting involved with any environmental projects within the Town? I was involved at one time in some of the redesign of drainage and that worked out very well. I'd like to get back into that.

Laurie Kutina states I agree, and I think especially lately with thaws and freezes, the more of that we do, the better off we'll be.

Don Owens states that will reduce erosion, sedimentation, sediment in the water. Don will get in touch with Highway Dept to schedule something.

Further discussion about water, pipes in front of Laurie's property, etc. by the board members.

Don Owens asks is there anything else the Planning Board would like to look at, help with?

Laurie Kutina states that the DEC is giving out grants for environmental projects, invasive species projects, so if that's something that the Town decides to pursue, I can help, I can try and help with that.

Don Owens states I will contact Dave tomorrow

Laurie Kutina states that's DEC, I don't work directly for DEC so I should be able to write grants without a conflict of interest.

Don Owens states I think we should be open to that and help out the environment in the Town of Aurora. Is there anything else that should be discussed before we end tonight meeting?

Tony Rosati (as member of the public) I have some questions, one is did the campground on 20A get approved or moved?

Bill Kramer states that it's still in progress.

Dave Librock states I just talked to him, he's making some revisions after we looked at it.

Tony Rosati states that the second question was in light of that commercial compost operation is part of the question in some people's minds is what is the vision potentially for agricultural zones in the Town. You could ask the Town Board if they want you to do guidelines on composting boundaries? It seems like we're missing an opportunity to grow revenue on the assessments on Agricultural zone properties. We could potentially even encourage greenhouses, for instance. Right now the Town seems to be very reactive; have you gotten any guidance from the Town Board?

Don Owens states that we haven't gotten any guidance from the Town Board. Any thoughts Bill?

Bill Kramer states that it's a problem with all the Agricultural zoning that we have, no one takes advantage of it. It just isn't used for farming.

Don Owens states that most of that land area is basically idle, it's not even used for growing crops.

Tony Rosati states there should be something we could try to explore, different avenues to pursue. For instance in Niagara County, they're aggressively pursuing solar farms. We're not

set up for that in the Ag zone, we're only set up for it in the Industrial zone. So is there an opportunity there, set up some setbacks, etc. to easily expand into some of these larger properties like where the compost site was going to be. You wouldn't have complaints from surrounding owners regarding truck traffic, etc. like the compost site. Again, to possibly increase revenue in the Town.

Further discussion by board members on solar opportunities, encouraging/attracting new businesses for revenue, not necessarily residential on these larger Agricultural properties. Master Plan?

Tony Rosati states is there any discussion of selling the property where the Town Highway Department is? I see the potential of saying create a road there and try and reduce some congestion in the traffic circle? I spoke with Dave Gunner and he was open to the idea of possibly relocating to possibly fireman's field or other locations. Clearly you have an opportunity there to look at standard retail which may or may not be an interest now, but again, it's good access for commercial kind of properties.

Don Owens states again, that's something that a Master Plan could help with.

Laurie Kutina states there was a regional Master Plan done in the past but the Town never adopted it. But it does exist.

Don Owens states that that won't occur unless the Town Board is highly in favor of it.

Tony Rosati states that I feel limited on the ZBA side with trying to craft suggestions from that board to the Town. I feel like we're more reactive and judicial whereas by definition your board is Planning. It gives you more opportunity to reach out and ask questions, "should we be looking at something like this", "what are the goals for 2019", "should we look at flood control", etc. Again, the more we can be proactive about things, the better.

Don Owens states what does the Planning Board think, any suggestions?

Laurie Kutina states that I've been taking notes on your (Tony's) suggestions and maybe we could look at some of these and try to move forward. I think especially with EcoVerde, we were kind of behind that and so I'd like to get out in front, help the Town get out in front.

Dave Librock states that poor planning on Eco Verde's part was part of that, whereas if they came to us first we could have given them suggestions from the start on possible locations, etc.

Further discussion by the board members on EcoVerde, possibly having a process in place for business looking to do a project in the Town to come to the Planning Board first for better upfront communication, Planning Board being a resource.

Don Owens states is there anything else that needs to be discussed tonight?

Don Owens states what I'd like to do maybe next month is to take another trip to look at things around town.

A motion was made by Laurie Kutina and seconded by Dave Libroch to adjourn at 7:50 PM.

THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY April 3, 2019 AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 300 GLEED AVENUE, EAST AURORA, NEW YORK