

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

September 21, 2022 (special meeting)

Members Present: Donald Owens, Chairman
Jeanne Beiter
Timothy Stroth
Alice Brown
Douglas Crow
Norm Merriman

Alternate Member: Angela Griffis

Absent/ Excused: Grace Viger
Laurie Kutina

Also Present: Liz Cassidy, Code Enforcement Officer
Chuck Snyder, Councilman
William Heidt, FFAE
Ray Murphy
1 member of public

Chairman Don Owens presided over the meeting which began at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall, 575 Oakwood Avenue, East Aurora, NY. He led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Review and recommendation for revision to approved site plan for the Rural Outreach Center at 730 Olean Rd. as presented by William Heidt, architect.

(note: Site Plan application submitted for the purpose of revision to the approved Site Plan from September 13, 2021. Scope of revision: fences)

Doug Crow begins by summarizing the changes that were submitted as compared to the original approved Site Plan. Changes to the fence on both the north and south sides of the property including changes to existing/new trees. After discussing with the contractor on site, further plan adjustments to include change from split rail to chain link at the rear of the property on both the north and south sides.

William Heidt provides further clarification of the plans as presented.

Tim Stroth notes that the board members are all understanding the north side changes.

Doug Crow discusses the major change is at the south side of the property changing the 6' high privacy fence to 4' high chain link fence.

Discussion moves to south side fence changes. If plans move forward with wood privacy fence, there would be a need to remove existing mature trees. Contractor and ROC would like to keep as many of the exiting trees as possible. Additionally per site visit by the board the split rail fence at the south side of the property by the road would be moved further onto the ROC property in order to avoid removing additional existing vegetation. Split rail fence would continue in front of existing pine trees all the way to the proposed section of wood privacy fence. Discussion also includes maintenance for lights.

Doug Crow notes that wood privacy fence vs. chain link is more of a visual barrier.

Angela Griffis notes that the chain link fence will be located within the existing trees and is more flexible in order to keep trees. Per contractor the chain link can go up to 6' height.

Chuck Snyder clarifies the Town Board's original plan was for the 6' high wood privacy fence to continue to the rail tracks at the rear of the property to protect the neighbors to the south if the ROC installs a playground. There are no plans to place a playground there anymore so the contractor felt a chain link fence would be sufficient to protect both properties.

Tim Stroth asks for the reasoning from 6' high fence to 4' high fence (chain link)

Mr. Heidt explains it's to keep costs within budget.

Doug Crow feels maintaining the same height that was approved, even though the material has changed, makes more sense. He feels keeping it as close to the original plan as approved is the best course of action.

Further discussion of how different fence styles are installed, location of shale on the property.

Alice Brown asks about the height of the chain link fences and why it would differ on the north side vs. the south side?

Doug Crow clarifies that he prefers the same height on both sides, he doesn't agree with major changes after original approvals.

Tim Stroth discusses practical reasons for making changes or compromises and how many compromises should the board think about? For example, compromise on the material (from wood board to chain link) but also compromise on the height? Something to consider.

Discussion moves to the split rail fence change on the south side of the property moving further into the property rather than being right on the property line including removal of vegetation, etc.

Norm Merriman believes the move will result in not defining the property line in that area. He doesn't agree that the fence location will require much removal of existing vegetation.

Discussion about defining property lines. Chuck Snyder clarifies the split rail fence's sole purpose was to define the property line.

Kristel Dedrick of 750 Olean Rd. (direct neighbor to the south) discusses *past* water issues from existing culvert and creek between the properties.

Discussion about grading on the south property line where the split rail fence will be. Ms. Dedrick clarifies that water is no longer an issue since the ditch was cleaned out.

Norm Merriman asks the board to think about longevity; what will be there longer, the fence or a specific tree? The property line or a specific tree? Think about the long term rather than the short term.

Jeanne Beiter reiterates the positive impacts of trees including providing ecosystem benefits, as well as sound and visual buffer.

Ms. Dedrick asks the board to consider requiring the wood privacy fence extend to the existing evergreen trees considering the winter when the weeds are gone. Ms. Dedrick also prefers the 6' height chain link fence in the rear of the property.

Discussion about the effectiveness of privacy fence in relation to the slope of the property, maintenance and screening provided by existing trees.

Tim Stroth moved to recommend the Town Board approve the proposed Site Plan fence revision at the North property line, based on clarification from site visit and architect:

1. 3'-6" high split rail fence (from road, continuing east to corner)
2. 6' high wood board-on-board privacy fence (from corner, continuing north to corner)
3. 4' high chain link fence (from corner, continuing east to rear property line)

Seconded by Angela Griffis

Upon a vote being taken:

ayes – five

noes – one

Motion Carried.

Tim Stroth moved to recommend the Town Board approve the proposed Site Plan fence revision at the South property line, based on clarification from site visit and architect:

1. 6' high wood board-on-board privacy fence (existing evergreen trees to remain; from existing evergreens, continuing east for 210' LF)
2. 6' high chain link fence (from easterly end of wood board-on-board privacy fence, continuing to rear property line)

Seconded by Angela Griffis

Upon a vote being taken:

ayes – five

noes – one

Motion Carried.

Tim Stroth moved to recommend the Town Board approve the proposed Site Plan fence revision at the South property line, based on clarification from site visit and architect:

1. 3’-6” high split rail fence (from road continuing east, extending on the north side of existing evergreens, ending at the wood board-on-board privacy fence)
2. Split rail fence to be located closer to the driveway

Seconded by Angela Griffis

Upon a vote being taken:

ayes – five

noes – one

Motion Carried.

OLD BUSINESS: None

CORRESPONDENCE: None

A motion was made by Doug Crow and seconded by Norm Merriman to adjourn at 8:07 PM.

THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY October 5th AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 575 OAKWOOD AVENUE, EAST AURORA, NEW YORK