

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

April 15, 2008

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Beidoun, Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Kittle, Mitchell, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent. None
Also Present. Planner & Community Development Director Cohen, Recreation Director Marzolf, Senior Director Adcock
Guests. 3

LOCATION: Wesson Room, Community Center, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD - None

MINUTES

Ms. Verbeke moved to approve the minutes of March 6, 2008.

Supported by Mr. Pierce.

**VOTE: Yes: All
No: None**

Motion Carried (9-0)

PETITIONERS – None

SPECIAL PRESENTATION - (6:10 p.m.)

Mr. Cohen introduced **Steve Dearing, OHM Traffic Engineer**. The hi-lights of the Roundabout presentation are as follows:

- Old rule was yield to the right, with roundabouts you would yield to the left.
- The smaller the roundabout; the lower and more consistent the speed limit can be controlled.
- Crash reductions are noticeable - most being minor vehicle damage with minimal personal injuries.
- Roundabouts are much safer for pedestrians to cross, especially when using a splitter island.
- Less land is needed for roundabout construction, which could mean a lower cost.
- There is lower vehicle delay when using roundabouts.
- Fuel economy is another positive benefit by utilizing roundabouts.
- Pedestrian cross walks are usually placed one or two car lengths before the approach of the roundabout.
- A study is being completed at this time for about 112 roundabouts and hopefully will be completed by late summer.
- Question is if Dutton and Squirrel Road would be a candidate for a roundabout. Mr. Dearing stated it could be a good candidate for a one lane roundabout.
- Target speed for rural areas entering and circulating speed is 25 mph; and for urban areas target speed is 18 to 22 mph.
- Another area recommended would be the Lapeer, Opdyke and Taylor Roads area. A study would need to be completed.
- The cost of the roundabout can be paid 100% by the state; the cost to purchase the land and complete the study would be the city's responsibility.

Meeting was recessed at 7:10 p.m.

Meeting was reconvened at 7:20 p.m.

Mr. Cohen presented Commissioners Pierce, Ouellette and Doyle with their Michigan State University certificate for Master Citizen Planners. The city is looking into Commissioners Beidoun certificate.

Ms. Hurt-Mendyka informed the commissioners that Mr. Cohen is now the Planning & Community Development Director for the city.

Mr. Cohen advised the commissioners that Ms. Laurie Johnson in our office has been promoted to Economic Development Coordinator and Shawn Keenan, Water Resources Coordinator is joining the Community Development Department.

LONG RANGE PLANNING (7:29 p.m.)

Recreation Director Brian Marzolf presented the Planning Commissioners an update regarding the Parks and Recreation Plan.

The current plan (2004-2008) is a good plan, it's ambitious, with over \$11 million of development included in the Action Plan – and defined objectives to maintain and improve existing parks and facilities; to build new parks and facilities in areas of need; and to expand programming and community events for residents of all ages, and to build pathways to connect neighborhoods with parks, schools and businesses.

Major items:

- We built the Skate Park - a major undertaking - \$250,000 not including land
- We built the Community Center - even bigger undertaking and operation \$5.5 million
- We're building the multi-sport athletic field in Civic Center Park – \$1.25 million, with play anticipated for this fall

City pathways –

- Built path-filled gap on Squirrel Rd. just south of Tienken
- Built path-filled gap on Adams Rd. from Clinton River Trail south to Auburn
- Opdyke Rd and Walton Blvd will see improvements with current and planned construction for an estimated total of \$7 million+ of development during the current plan time frame of 2004-2008.

Program and events – expanded programming (up 200+% since 2005) in areas of health and fitness, and athletics (with new Community Center fitness and gym spaces), as well as arts/crafts with the new Craft Room, and nature programming at Hawk Woods, and at the Community Center. We've rented rooms for many, many baby showers, graduation open houses, birthday parties, and receptions...and the gym for several competitive basketball and volleyball groups.

New program - Summerfest in Village Center area, now with the Car Show on the third day of the event, Spooktacular Halloween event in the Village Center, we've brought back our evening Concerts on the patio of the Community Center, and even revived the old Friday night dances the seniors used to have at the Fire Hall on Opdyke...and events like the Easter Egg Hunt, Bluegrass Festival, Fall Festival in the Woods, and the Halloween Trail continue to be big hits with the community.

Hawk Woods campground and facilities – improvements to the trail system including the marsh boardwalk in 2006, the cabins/lodge/campground, and the nature center building, we're replacing one cabin this year, hope to replace one per year.

Clinton River Trail – mile markers added, major trail signs added at Opdyke and Adams Rd., trail map boxes, trim/clear edges of trail, trail clean-ups, tree plantings

Community Center staff – we've managed to build a good staff of part-time employees (custodians, front desk clerks, and building supervisors) to help us manage the Community Center, which operates six days a week until 9pm.

Developed/refined Park Security Program – with the implementation of the Park Monitors working in the parks during times when parks are being used (after work and on weekends) to help ensure rules compliance and to be ambassadors for our park system – has helped control the Skate Park and reduce vandalism of park facilities since the programs' inception in 2006.

Major items not accomplished in current plan:

- Perhaps the area that we did not fare so well was in the acquisition of more land and the subsequent development of more neighborhood parks and tot-lots.
- Development of the park-to-park river trail (Riverside to River Woods) – RFQ out now for a master plan
- Development of an amphitheater at Riverside Park
- Development of a Spray Park
- Lighting for Civic Center ball diamond
- River Woods Park Phase III development (picnic areas east side of river)

Ms. Verbeke left at 7:50 p.m.

MASTER LAND USE PLAN (7:55 p.m.)

Mr. Cohen explained the new master plan will be more of a booklet style. Some items to be addressed will be LEED Building requirements and bio-swales. Policies will be included in the master plan and looking into high-rise areas; possibly Doris Road. Redevelopment is also an area that needs to be explored.

Mr. Cohen explained legally the Planning Commission cannot request developers to setback future right-of-ways for a roundabout.

Mr. Kittle does feel that City Council and the Planning Commission have somewhat of a disconnect. He was assuming once the plans are submitted to City Council that it is enthusiastically approved by the Planning Commission. Mr. Cohen explained that as long as the zoning ordinance is adhered to legally the Planning Commission needs to approve the plan. Mr. Kittle would like to see the Planning Commission table an item if there are outstanding issues prior to bringing it forth to City Council. On a PUD the Planning Commission has full discretion.

Mr. Cohen explained the Planning Commission should be getting direction regarding the Village Center Master Plan after City Manager Auger has a chance to review the plan.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is May 1, 2008.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Jeanne Tyler
Clerk III