



CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES

February 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Ouellette called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: **Carolyn Shearer, Darlene MacMillan, Jack Ferguson, Cynthia Pavlich, Raymond Saelens, Greg Ouellette, Sam Beidoun, Dominick Tringali**
Also Present: Director of Community Development Steve Cohen, Assistant Director of Community Development Devin Lang, Mayor Brian Marzolf
Guests: 0

LOCATION: Administrative Conference Room, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

3. PERSONS WISHING TO BE HEARD - None

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 11, 2024

Moved by Beidoun to approve the minutes of December 11, 2024.

Second by MacMillan.

VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, MacMillan, Saelens, Pavlich, Shearer, Tringali, Ferguson, Ouellette
No: None Motion Carried (8-0)

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Beidoun nominated Mr. Ouellette for Chairperson.

There were no other nominations.

Ouellette accepted the nomination for Chairperson.

Second by Shearer.

VOTE: Yes: Beidoun, Shearer, Saelens, MacMillan, Tringali, Ferguson, Pavlich, Ouellette
No: None Motion Carried (8-0)

Ms. Pavlich nominated Mr. Beidoun for Vice Chairperson.

There were no other nominations.

Beidoun accepted the nomination for Vice-Chairperson.

Second by Ouellette.

VOTE: Yes: Pavlich, Ouellette, MacMillan, Shearer, Tringali, Ferguson, Saelens, Beidoun
No: None Motion Carried (8-0)

Mr. Ouellette nominated Ms. Shearer for Secretary.

There were no other nominations.

Shearer accepted the nomination for Secretary.

Second by Beidoun.

VOTE: Yes: Ouellette, Beidoun, Shearer, Pavlich, Tringali, Ferguson, Saelens, MacMillan
No: None Motion Carried (8-0)

6. PETITIONERS – None.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS – None

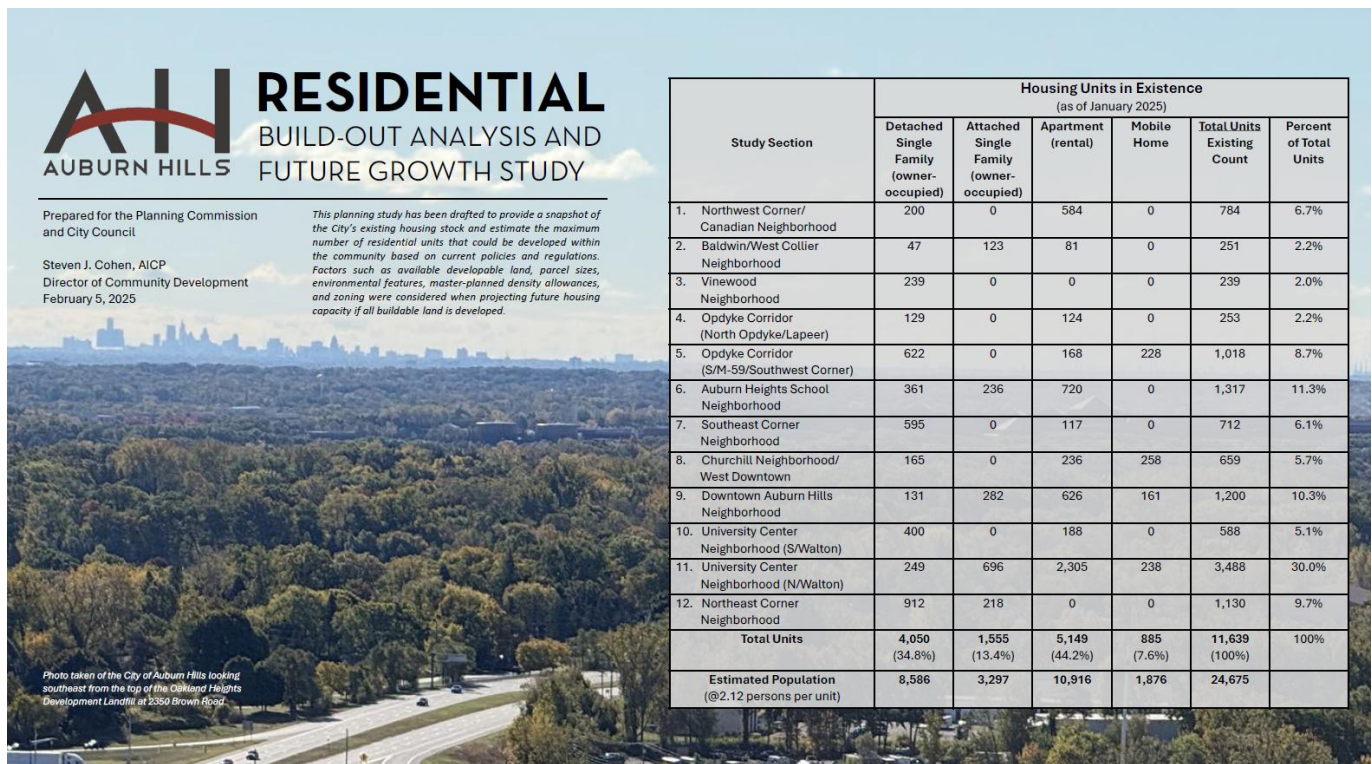
8. NEW BUSINESS

8a. City of Auburn Hills 2025 Residential Build-Out Analysis and Future Growth Study

Mr. Cohen presented the *City of Auburn Hills 2025 Residential Build-Out Analysis and Future Growth Study*. He explained potential future build-out scenarios based on the current zoning and master land use plan. The study divided the City's residential areas into 12 sections and showed each section's existing and projected unit count.

In general, the residential build-out analysis showed the following:

1. Auburn Hills is approaching build-out in its residential districts.
2. Auburn Hills has a highly diverse housing stock in terms of product and price points, with a heavy emphasis on attached units and rental products.
3. Auburn Hills has no “easy” greenfield development sites left. Most new developments proposed over the next 25 years will be complicated infill projects.
4. The primary locations left to add owner-occupied detached single-family homes are the Northwest and Northeast Corners of the City. The study shows an approximate net of 543 new detached single-family homes could be built on the remaining residential-zoned land in Auburn Hills (about 1,152 people). These new units are projected to be in small infill developments or on existing vacant homesites. Thus, if the City wishes to increase homeownership, it will need to occur via attached-unit condominium projects.
5. If Auburn Hills leaders desire to grow the City’s population beyond the projected 28,323 people, private housing investment will need to occur in non-residential areas.



Summary page within the residential build-out analysis presented by Mr. Cohen

Mr. Cohen stated that the analysis showed that the City has 11,639 housing units, with an estimated population of 24,675. It is projected that the City could add approximately 1,725 housing units at build-out, increasing its population by approximately 3,657 people. It is noted that these estimates primarily focused on existing residential areas and did not address potential residential conversions of hotels or office buildings in the T&R District. The City may add additional housing units through commercial conversions; however, these uses are not permitted by right and will be implemented via the Planned Unit Development option at the sole discretion of the Planning Commission and City Council. This study is the basis for the City's new Housing Policy Statement.

After reviewing Mr. Cohen's analysis, the Planning Commission elected to generally leave the Master Land Use Plan and zoning as currently adopted in terms of land use classifications. Mr. Cohen stated he would formally initiate an update per the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to the City's Master Land Use Plan, last updated in 2018, to allow the Planning Commission to make editorial/minor changes to the document to facilitate the completion of the process this year.

8b. City of Auburn Hills Housing Policy Statement

Mr. Cohen presented a draft Housing Policy Statement. In December, the Planning Commission asked staff to review the City's existing housing stock and draft a housing policy statement in response to a recent amendment to the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Governor Whitmer, on November 13, 2024, signed HB 5557 to amend the Michigan Planning Enabling Act to expressly include housing as a core provision of a master plan, with an emphasis on promoting a range of housing types and including assessments and policies for addressing those demands.

Mr. Cohen explained that a housing policy statement is necessary to demonstrate compliance with State law and outline how Auburn Hills' Master Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance support *"a range of housing types, costs, affordability, attainability, ages, and other characteristics, including single and multiple-family dwellings to serve the housing demands of a diverse population."*

Mr. Cohen stated that the City's analysis demonstrates that it currently has an approximate 50/50 mix of owner-occupied and for-rent products. He explained that the policy outlines the City's diverse housing types and demonstrates compliance with the intent of the State law.

As a result, the Planning Commission concurred with the following goals of the housing policy statement:

1. Increase Opportunities for Homeownership
As a formal policy of the City, as the community nears the build-out of its housing stock, it desires to continue to promote and increase detached and attached single-family owner-occupied housing to the greatest extent possible. Homeownership is believed to keep residents rooted in the community; however, due to various geographic and economic factors, Auburn Hills has historically permitted ample multi-family rental housing developments. Compared to the City's overall housing stock, this high number of rental units has resulted in a much more transient population than other communities in the region. The residential build-out analysis identifies eight potential locations (three are under construction) where approximately 415 apartment units could be added. Rental products at those locations are not permitted by right and would require City Council approval via the Planned Unit Development Option. Thus, implementation and authorization to be developed as a rental product will be at the full discretion of the City Council, determined on a case-by-case basis. To comply with this policy, the remaining potential housing units envisioned in the City's analysis, detached or attached, must be developed as single-family owner-occupied units.
2. Preserve the Character of Established Large-Lot Neighborhoods
Auburn Hills leaders desire to preserve and protect the City's established large-lot neighborhoods and maintain their spacious rural character, fabric, and sense of community. Since 2000, several neighborhood master plan studies and zoning changes have been implemented to prevent developments that could significantly alter these areas' identities and disrupt the quality of life of their residents. The City hosts parcels of various sizes with homes of all types in neighborhoods ranging from urban/high-density to rural. Thus, the City's goal is to maintain some of its historical character and retain the established, rural atmosphere of large-lot neighborhoods.
3. Consider Population Growth in Non-Residential Areas Where Appropriate
The residential build-out analysis contemplates housing growth on a select few commercial and industrial properties, but no existing hotel or T&R district-zoned parcel was shown as a potential housing growth opportunity. The City has received inquiries in recent years regarding converting underutilized hotels, office buildings, and their associated parking areas to create new rental housing/apartments. The City's Zoning Ordinance does not permit housing products within the T&R District by right, and the City would prefer these properties to be utilized for non-residential purposes. The same is true for hotel properties in the B-2 and T&R Districts. Thus, implementation and authorization for a hotel or T&R District property to be redeveloped with housing products will be at the full discretion of the City Council via the Planned Unit Development Option, determined on a case-by-case basis, with a strong preference toward detached single-family homes or attached owner-occupied condominiums being offered

The Planning Commission thanked Mr. Cohen for his hard work and diligence on the detailed study and policy. They agreed that the data and analysis provided support the finding that the City currently hosts an adequate range of housing types, costs, affordability, attainability, ages, and other characteristics, including single—and multiple-family dwellings, to serve the housing demands of its diverse population.

Mr. Cohen stated that once the Planning Commission approves the study and policy, he will forward the information to the City Council in March for their approval.

Moved by Pavlich to adopt and recommend to the City Council approval of the City of Auburn Hills Housing Policy Statement and City of Auburn Hills 2025 Residential Build-Out Analysis and Future Growth Study.

Second by Saelens.

VOTE: Yes: Pavlich, Saelens, Tringali, Ferguson, Beidoun, Shearer, MacMillan, Ouellette

No: None

Motion Carried (8-0)

9. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Cohen informed the Planning Commission that four items are anticipated to be ready for review at the upcoming meeting. These projects include a self-storage addition at 975 S. Opdyke Road, a rezoning on Joswick Road, an amendment to the T&R Technology and Research Zoning District, and a Special Land Use Permit for outdoor seating at 3315 Auburn Road (former Dimitri's/Haus of Brunch).

10. NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

The next scheduled meeting is on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in the City Council Chamber.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairperson Ouellette adjourned the meeting at 8:34 p.m.

Submitted by:

Devin Lang

Assistant Director of Community Development