

AUBURN HEIGHTS SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD

PLANNING STUDY



City of Auburn Hills

City Council Agenda

September 19, 2005 Meeting

Agenda Item No. 10c.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Thomas A. Tanghe, Assistant City Manager, and Steven J. Cohen, AICP, PCP, City Planner
Submitted: September 12, 2005
Subject: Motion - Accepting the Planning Commission's Study and Recommendations for the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood

INTRODUCTION, HISTORY, AND FINDINGS

June 16th - The Planning Commission decides to study the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood.

August 4th - 42 residents attend a neighborhood visioning workshop held at the Avondale School District Administration Building.

- The following topics were discussed in depth:
 - By-pass road and dead-end of Waukegan to address school traffic concerns.
 - Future development of Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Gateway Free Methodist Church properties.
 - Code enforcement and problems with rental properties.

August 18th - The Planning Commission reviews the results of the visioning workshop and provides recommendations to the City Council.

- **Item #1 – No Waukegan By-Pass**

The By-Pass proposal was not favorably received by the neighborhood and would be costly to construct.

Recommendation: The Planning Commission recommends to the City Council that the Waukegan Road By-Pass not be pursued unless requested by petition of the residents of the neighborhood in the future.

- **Item #2 – Redevelopment of Church's Lumber and Gateway Free Methodist Church Properties**

Mr. Doug Manix of Campbell-Manix, explained to the Planning Commission that his company was in the process of purchasing both Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Free Methodist Church with the intent of developing a condominium project.

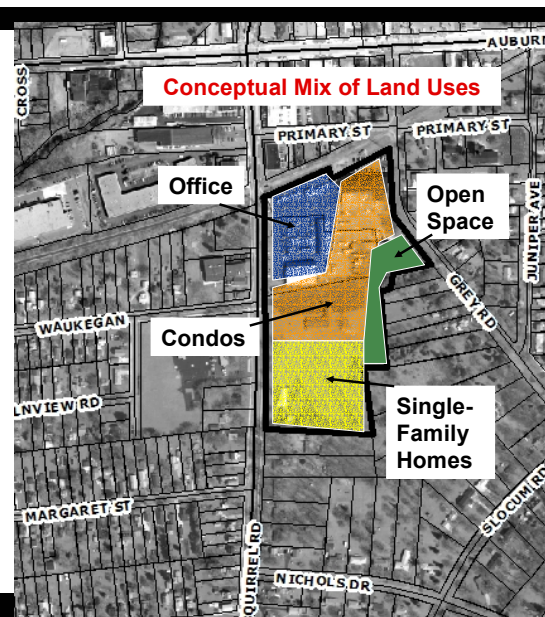
Some of the ideas brought forth for the redevelopment of these properties during the planning process were the following:

- Office and retail such as a pharmacy or coffee shop at the north end of the site
- Affordable housing for families
- High-end single family homes
- Senior housing with independent care
- Low-density residential
- Condominiums

Redevelopment of Church's Lumber and Free Methodist Church properties

Land Use Concept

- ✓ Mixed Use / PUD
- ✓ Need more residents near village center
- ✓ Mixture of office, condominiums, and single-family residential homes
- ✓ Request greenbelt and storm water detention along east boundary



Recommendation: The Planning Commission advises the City Council that the Commission is open to all the comments raised through the neighborhood planning process and recommended to the developer that he direct his team to be very creative and reflect the unique qualities of the surrounding area in any plans that they bring back to the Commission for consideration as a PUD/mixed use development.

- **Item #3 – Police, DPW, and Code Enforcement Issues**

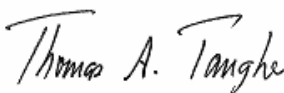
The following suggestions were made by residents during the neighborhood planning process and actions taken by the City staff:

- Request to improve Police enforcement of vehicle speed in the area
Status: The Directed Patrol Unit has been assigned to spend some time in the Auburn Road, S. Squirrel Road, and Waukegan Road areas.
- Request to improve Police enforcement of illegal Clinton River Trail use by dirt bikes, snow mobiles, etc.
Status: The request for more patrol of the trail has been placed on the Police Department's Daily Patrol Sheet (all 3 shifts). Park rules signs are also posted - "no motorized vehicles."
- Suggestion to work with residents to find appropriate locations to add street lights along Margaret, Caroline, Bessie, and Henrydale.
Status: No action will be taken unless the neighborhood petitions to have street lights installed.
- Request for Police to talk with Boys and Girls Club regarding kids leaving the facility without proper supervision.
Status: The Police Department has spoken to Boys and Girls Club representatives about the problem.
- Ask the DPW not to dump snow on sidewalks at road intersections.
Status: Request has been forwarded to the DPW
- Address vegetation in right-of-way and overgrowth on sidewalks.
Status: DPW addressed various problem areas immediately after the visioning meeting.
- Address the following code enforcement issues
 - Problem with single-family homes being converted into multiple-family units.
 - Work on flyers and personal contact to educate residents where RV's are supposed to be parked on residential property.
 - Number and behavior of pets was a concern.
 - Request that the City help provide financial assistance for fixed income homeowners to facilitate repairs.**Status:** The Community Development Department has been working on amendments to the City's ordinance, improving code enforcement techniques, and creating educational flyers to address many of the concerns raised by the residents in the neighborhood.

MOTION

"Move to accept the Planning Commission's study and recommendations for the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood."

I CONCUR:



THOMAS A. TANGHE, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER

**Excerpt
CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

August 18, 2005

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Doyle, Hurt-Mendyka, Hitchcock, Kresnak, Luenberger, Pierce, Ouellette, Verbeke
Absent. Beidoun
Also Present. City Planner Cohen, TIFA Chair Bennett, Council Member McDonald
Guests. 18

LOCATION: City Council Chambers, 1827 N. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326

PERSON WISHING TO BE HEARD – none

MINUTES

Ms. Verbeke moved to approve the minutes of August 4, 2005.

Supported by Ms. Doyle

VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Kresnak, Luenberger, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke

No: None

Motion Carried (8-0)

COMMUNICATIONS – None


PLANNING STUDY – Auburn Heights School Neighborhood

Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka welcomed those in attendance. Mr. Cohen reviewed a PowerPoint presentation with possible recommendations to the City Council based on input received at the previous meeting.

Item #1 – No Waukegan By-Pass

Mr. Cohen explained the input received at the neighborhood visioning workshop was not to pursue the Waukegan By-Pass.

**AUBURN HEIGHTS SCHOOL NEIGHBORHOOD
POTENTIAL WAUKEGAN BYPASS**



Road to Auburn not feasible

- ✓ existing development in the way
- ✓ need bridge over river
- ✓ existing private road in bad shape

Recommend to City Council that Waukegan By-Pass NOT be pursued

- By-pass would be expensive to construct. No money budgeted for it
- Neighborhood does not support it – Based on 2001 and 2005 meetings

Mr. Tyson Brown, of Waukegan Road, stated he is not in favor of the by-pass.

Chairman Hurt-Mendyka took a poll of the residents in the audience, eight responded, none were in favor of the Waukegan Road By-Pass.

Mr. Kresnak moved to recommend to City Council that the Waukegan Road By-Pass not be pursued unless requested by petition of the residents of the neighborhood in the future.

Supported by Ms. Doyle.

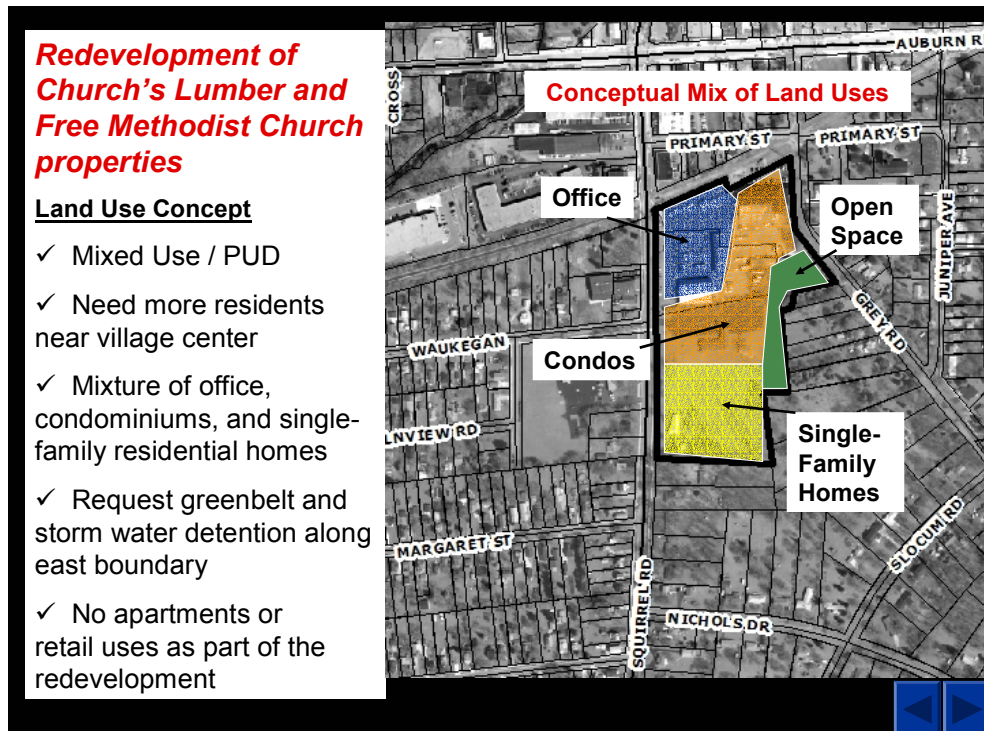
**VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Kresnak, Luenberger, Pierce, Ouellette, Verbeke
No: None**

Motion Carried (8-0)

Item #2 – Future Land Use of Church’s Lumber and Free Methodist Church Properties

Mr. Cohen reviewed the discussion from the workshop:

- Residents requested the City not allow retail uses or rental property (apartments) as part of the redevelopment.
- It was discussed that a “mixed use project” would be appropriate for the redevelopment of these properties due to their location adjacent to the Village Center.
 - Office. Church’s Lumber is master planned to be redeveloped for office buildings.
 - Residential. Discussion on need for “rooftops” or homes to draw people into the Village Center to support businesses like bookstores, restaurants, coffee shops, etc.
 - Suggestion that single-family homes with 50 ft. wide lots would be appropriate for the southern part of the Free Methodist Church property, which would be similar in character to the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood to the west.
 - Further, owner-occupied residential attached units (e.g., town homes, stacked flats, etc.) would be acceptable as a transition between the office buildings and single-family homes.
 - Greenbelt. Residents attending requested that the City work with the future developer(s) to provide a park or greenbelt along the hill on the east side of the Free Methodist Church to maintain a buffer.



Mr. Doug Manix of Campbell-Manix, explained to the Planning Commission that his company was in the process of purchasing both Church’s Lumber and Auburn Heights Free Methodist Church with the intent of developing a condominium project.

Mr. Manix explained that since the purchase offer was new, no market studies have been done. He pledged to work with the residents and that suggestions would be welcomed. The size and design of the buildings have not been determined. Approximate total acreage is around 14 acres. The egress and ingress would be off of Squirrel Road. Access would not be proposed to Grey Road unless requested by the City.

Some of the ideas brought forth for this project by the Planning Commission were the following:

- Office and retail such as a pharmacy or coffee shop at the north end of the site
- Affordable housing for families
- High-end single family homes
- Senior housing with independent care
- Low-density residential
- Condominiums

Mr. Tyson Brown, of Waukegan Road, stated he is in favor of single family one story homes to mirror the homes in the neighborhood.

Bonnie McDonald, of Grey Road, stated if single family lots are constructed the developer should consider wider lots, with less depth.

Mr. Kozlowski, of Squirrel Road, is concerned about the increase in traffic on Squirrel Road and asked for a traffic light at Squirrel and Waukegan Roads.

Mr. Delacruz, of Caroline Road, liked the idea of condominiums. He feels that more shops and activities are needed in the Village Center.

Mr. Cohen did advise the Planning Commission that Church's Lumber site might have some contamination which could make "brownfield funding" an option.

Ms. Doyle moved to advise the City Council that the Planning Commission is open to all the comments raised through the neighborhood planning process and recommended to the developer that he direct his team to be very creative and reflect the unique qualities of the surrounding area in any plans that they bring back to the Commission for consideration as a PUD/mixed use development

Supported by Mr. Ouellette

VOTE: Yes: Doyle, Hitchcock, Hurt-Mendyka, Kresnak, Luenberger, Pierce, Ouellette, Verbeke
No: None

Motion Carried (8-0)

Item #3 – Update regarding other issues raised at the workshop

Police Issues

- **Enforcement of illegal use of Clinton River Trail**
 - The request for more patrol of the Clinton River Trail has been placed on the Police Department's Daily Patrol Sheet (all 3 shifts).
 - Park rules signs are posted - "no motorized vehicles"
- **Boys and Girls Club – Address kids leaving facility unsupervised**
 - Jeff Walker from the Police Department has spoken to the Club.
- **Concern over vehicle speed in the area**
 - Directed Patrol Unit has been assigned to spend some time in the Auburn, South Squirrel, and Waukegan areas.
- **Traffic light at Waukegan and Squirrel**
 - An informal traffic study was conducted recently. The data and information collected did not meet the "warrants" for a traffic signal.
 - Redevelopment of Church's Lumber site may cause need for traffic light

Other issues

- **Code Enforcement Issues**
 - Problems with rental units
 - Problems with property maintenance
 - City has been addressing problem areas.
- **DPW**
 - Look at possible locations for street lights
 - If desired, neighborhood could be surveyed for locations
 - Snow on sidewalks at intersections
 - Vegetation overgrowth on sidewalks

The Planning Commission advised those in attendance that all these items will be presented to the City Council at their meeting on Monday, September 19, 2005.

**CITY OF AUBURN HILLS
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

August 4, 2005

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present. Doyle, Hurt-Mendyka, Hitchcock, Kresnak, Luenberger, Ouellette, Pierce, Verbeke
Absent. Beidoun
Also Present. City Planner Cohen, Deputy Police Chief Mynsberge, Engineering Consultant Stevens, Planning Intern Tanury
Council Members McDonald and Newkirk
Guests 42

LOCATION: Avondale Administration Building, 260 S. Squirrel Road, Auburn Hills MI 48326

Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Visioning Workshop

Mr. Cohen and Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka welcomed those in attendance to the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Visioning Workshop. Mr. Cohen introduced the Planning Commissioners and the City Council members who were present.

Mr. Cohen explained that the City's neighborhood planning process has been done quite successfully within six (6) other neighborhoods in the community and that the City was addressing planning issues one neighborhood at a time. He explained the meeting was a brainstorming session designed to identify issues in the neighborhood.

To start discussion, the following topics were discussed in depth with all those attending:

- By-pass road and dead-end of Waukegan to address school traffic concerns originally proposed in January 2001.
- Future development of Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Gateway Free Methodist Church properties.
- Code enforcement and problems with rental properties.

Recap of the Discussion

West Side of Squirrel Road

- The *2001 Waukegan Road By-Pass Proposal* along Clinton River Trail was discussed in depth. It was determined that the by-pass had benefits, but it was not supported by the majority of residents present at the meeting who reside on Waukegan. Residents who live on the north side of Waukegan explained that they did not want the traffic in their backyards.
 - Other related issues
 - A road connection from Avondale High School to Auburn Road would not be feasible due to existing development and the expense of building a bridge over the Clinton River.
 - Forcing traffic onto South Boulevard and closing Waukegan was not possible because the City needs the road connection to Squirrel Road for emergency response.
 - Need to investigate need for traffic light at Waukegan and Squirrel intersection.
- Request to improve Police enforcement of vehicle speed on Waukegan and illegal Clinton River Trail use by dirt bikes, snow mobiles, etc.
- Suggestion to work with residents to find appropriate locations to add street lights along Margaret, Caroline, Bessie, and Henrydale.
- Ask DPW not to dump snow on sidewalks at road intersections. DPW does great job with snow removal in general.
- Request for Police to talk with Boys and Girls Club regarding kids leaving the facility without proper supervision.

East Side of Squirrel Road

(Church's Lumber and Auburn Heights Gateway Free Methodist Church properties)

- Redevelopment of the Church's Lumber and Free Methodist Church properties was discussed in depth. Pastor Kim Martin explained the Free Methodist Church planned to sell its property and relocate.
- Residents requested the City not allow retail uses or rental property (apartments) as part of the redevelopment.
- It was discussed that a "mixed use project" would be appropriate for the redevelopment of these properties due to their location adjacent to the Village Center.
 - Office. Church's Lumber is master planned to be redeveloped for office buildings.
 - Residential. Discussion on need for "rooftops" or homes to draw people into the Village Center to support service business like bookstores, restaurants, coffee shops, etc.
 - Suggestion that single-family homes with 50 ft. wide lots would be appropriate for the southern part of the Free Methodist Church property, which would be similar in character to the Auburn Heights School Neighborhood to the west.
 - Further, owner-occupied residential attached units (e.g., town homes, stacked flats, etc.) would be acceptable as a transition between the office buildings and single-family homes.
 - Greenbelt. Residents attending requested that the City work with the future developer(s) to provide a park or greenbelt along the hill on the east side of the Free Methodist Church to maintain a buffer.
- The idea of the City buying these properties for parkland was discussed, but determined to not be financially feasible. It was also noted that three (3) municipal parks are located within close proximity of the neighborhood.

Ideas for Improving the Village Center

- Need anchor in the Village Center, like grocery store or movie theatre.
- Add family and chain restaurants.
- Add coffee shop / more small shops / bookstore.
- Add business services / copying center.
- Work to help existing heavy industrial businesses relocate out of the Village Center.
- Request additional Police enforcement of speed limit on Squirrel Road and Auburn Road to help improve pedestrian and bike safety.

Code Enforcement

- Need to improve rental standards and find way to better monitor minimum housing standards.
- Problem with single-family homes being converted into multiple-family units.
- No consensus on limiting number and location of cars and RV's (e.g., campers, trailers, boats, etc.).
- No consensus on limiting parking on the lawn.
- Work on flyers and personal contact to educate residents where RV's are supposed to be parked on residential property.
- Number and behavior of pets was a concern.
- Request that the City help provide financial assistance for fixed income homeowners to facilitate repairs.
- Work to maintain architectural compatibility with new homes.
- Address vegetation in right-of-way and overgrowth on sidewalks.

Chairperson Hurt-Mendyka and the Planning Commission thanked those attending the meeting and announced the next meeting will be in two weeks at the Auburn Hills City Hall Council Chambers.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING – The next regularly scheduled meeting is August 18, 2005 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objections the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Steven J. Cohen, AICP, PCP
City Planner

Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Visioning Workshop

Date: Thursday, August 4, 2005

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Place: Avondale School
District Administration
Building
260 S. Squirrel Road
(Waukegan Entrance)

Refreshments will be provided

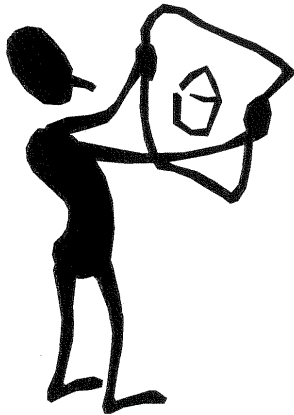
Purpose of the Meeting

- This workshop is your opportunity to discuss any and all matters relating to the study area.
- You are invited to attend and contribute your ideas in regard to redevelopment, neighborhood character, traffic, blight and code enforcement, police and fire protection, parks and recreation, and other topics.
- The workshop is being hosted by the Auburn Hills Planning Commission.



Study Area

Auburn Heights School Neighborhood Study Follow-Up Meeting



Date: Thursday, August 18, 2005

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Auburn Hills City Hall - Council Chambers
1827 N. Squirrel Road

Purpose of the Meeting

- Review 8-04-05 workshop results.
- Planning Commission discussion regarding possible recommendations to the City Council based on the input obtained at the workshop.

