

**CITY OF AURORA
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 17, 2021**

The Aurora Planning Commission met in a scheduled meeting on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, facilitated by the internet application Zoom. Kathi Grandillo called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Jeff Austin
Laura Duguay
Sarah Gilmore
Kathi Grandillo
Jim Maulis

Also Present: Denise Januska, Director, Planning, Zoning & Building Division
Dean DePiero, Law Director (linked in at 6:37p.m.)
Justin Czekaj, City Engineer
Marie Lawrie, Clerk

Ms. Grandillo swore in those in attendance who wished to speak.

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

MOTION: To add City of Aurora, 264 N Chillicothe Rd – Central WWTP Improvements (2102003) to the agenda

Mr. Maulis moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. Maulis, Ms. Duguay, Mr. Austin, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

SUBMISSION OF SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

MOTION: To accept the site plan and narrative for the Central WWTP Improvements for consideration

Ms. Gilmore moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Mr. Austin, Ms. Grandillo, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: To adopt the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting, as submitted

Mr. Maulis moved; Ms. Gilmore seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Mr. Maulis, Ms. Gilmore, Mr. Austin, Ms. Duguay, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

AGENDA ITEMS

Renaissance Park Subdivision, N. Aurora/Treat/Squires Rds - EAST Tree Clearing Plan - (2102001)

Jim O'Connor, Director, of Planning for Pulte Group along with Brian Uhlenbrock, of Neff and Associates were linked into the meeting to give the presentation. They were seeking approval to clear the trees on the EAST portion of the Renaissance Park Subdivision. Mr. O'Connor explained that in order to prepare for the development season, trees need to be cleared. He said all permits are in place, including NPDES, and wetland permits. He stated that they would not disturb the soil. He further stated that the area where the trees would be cleared was considered secondary growth of trees. Ms. Grandillo asked for an explanation of that term. Mr. O'Connor explained that the

mature forested area will be preserved and the secondary growth which has been growing in the campground area will be dropped.

Ms. Grandillo asked the members for their questions or comments. Mr. Maulis asked for an explanation of the exception that could be approved for the tree clearing. Ms. Januska explained that normally no development or tree clearing is permitted until the project is approved through the Engineering Department. However, to keep the project moving forward and comply with the rules and regulations of the Army Corps of Engineers, she recommended the commission allow the trees to be dropped. She stated that no grading or stump grinding would be permitted.

Ms. Gilmore asked if a precedence would be set should the commission allow this exception. Mr. DePiero stated that each request would be considered separately based on various factors. He explained some of the factors, including how far along the applicant is in the Planning Commission process, how much confidence the city and the Engineering Department has in the contractor and developer, and the dialogue that has taken place between them. Mr. DePiero stated that it is definitely a case by case basis and not a rubber-stamped approval.

Ms. Gilmore also asked if Mr. O'Connor could confirm that the only tree clearing to be done is in Phase 1 of the East development. Mr. O'Connor said that it is for Phase 1a, however, the lines of disturbance include the entire outline of Phase 1.

Ms. Duguay asked if signage was put in place in the past to let residents know that the tree clearing they are seeing has been approved. She was concerned about the excessive phone calls the city might endure when residents see the tree clearing begin. Ms. Januska stated that signage was not installed on prior sites. Mr. O'Connor volunteered to install signage on the site with whatever verbiage the city preferred. Ms. Grandillo stated that Ken Lahmer was linked into the meeting and she hoped he would put that information in the local newspaper also.

Ms. Grandillo opened the floor for public comment. Deb Conti, 234 S Chillicothe Road was linked into the meeting and had her hand raised. Ms. Conti expressed concern for the birds and bats in the area. She also asked for further explanation of the tree clearing limits. Mr. O'Connor explained that trees need to be taken down now as part of the seasonal clearing restrictions that relate to the bat habitat. He said that trees cannot be dropped after March 15th as the bats will be nesting by that date. He answered her second question by stating that Phase 1a has a perimeter that is slightly larger than the area of lots to accommodate utilities and storm detention ponds.

MOTION: To allow the exception for Renaissance Park Subdivision, N. Aurora/Treat/Squires Roads – Tree Clearing Plan EAST (2102001) with the condition that trees can be dropped and no grading or stump grinding will be permitted on the site until final approval

Ms. Duguay moved; Mr. Maulis seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Duguay, Mr. Maulis, Mr. Austin, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

City of Aurora - Central WWTP, 264 N Chillicothe Rd - WWTP Improvement (2102003)

Mr. Justin Czekaj, City Engineer explained the upcoming improvements to the Central Waste Water Treatment Plant. He stated that the current holding tank at the facility is at the end of its useful life. He explained the location on the site plan for the new holding tank. He further stated that the project would include two new buildings and a generator. He said that the end of the treatment process produces sludge. He said that currently the sludge is trucked to Westerly WWTP for processing before heading to the landfill. Mr. Czekaj explained that with this improvement, sludge can be processed at both facilities, which will resolve any issues with spills and will provide a

back-up system if one plant goes offline. He called this Phase 1 of the improvements that are planned to keep the waste water treatment plants running in the best possible way.

Ms. Grandillo asked for questions or comments from members. Mr. Maulis asked how long the project was expected to take. The answer was 18 months.

Ms. Gilmore asked where Central WWTP was located. The answer was that the driveway to Central is located just to the north of Christ Community Chapel on State Route 306 and Westerly is located near the Twinsburg line on State Route 82.

Ms. Gilmore asked what the life expectancy of the Westerly WWTP would be. Mr. Czekaj explained that an optimization plan was conducted and is available to anyone interested in seeing that study. He said that the plants are made up of many different parts and are built in such a way that they are not in danger of being overloaded. He explained that pieces and parts can be upgraded and/or improved. The optimization plan gives recommendations for improvements and when to consider those upgrades. He stated that the current plants have plenty of capacity and are not in eminent danger. He explained that major upgrades will be coming. Ms. Gilmore stated that she was glad this was being taken care of.

Ms. Grandillo stated that the Mayor and her administration have been working on this project. She also stated that council has been budgeting for this \$9 million dollar project. Mr. Czekaj stated that a loan application is being processed, as well as other funding sources.

Mr. Maulis asked what type of approval was being sought at this meeting. Mr. Czekaj stated that he was asking the commission to accept the plans for study. He stated that he would be back on the agenda for the next meeting and answer any further questions that may arise.

Ms. Grandillo opened the floor for public comment. Deb Conti, 234 S Chillicothe Road had two questions. She asked what the size of the new tank would be. She questioned whether it would be delivered on a truck for oversized loads. She also asked how old the existing tank was. Mr. Czekaj stated that the new tank would be massive and assembled on site. He did not know the exact size of that tank or the exact age of the current tank and would get that information for the next meeting.

Holly Harris Bane, Economic Director asked by the chat mode if there would be strong smells coming from the waste water treatment site. Mr. Czekaj stated the smells would be no stronger than the current odors.

MOTION: To accept for study, City of Aurora – Central WWTP, 264 N Chillicothe Road – WWTP Improvements (2102003)

Ms. Gilmore moved; Ms. Duguay seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Duguay, Mr. Austin, Ms. Grandillo, Mr. Maulis

Nays: None

MISCELLANEOUS

None

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Ms. Duguay moved; Mr. Maulis seconded, and the motion carried 5-0 on a roll call vote.

Yeas: Ms. Duguay, Mr. Maulis, Mr. Austin, Ms. Gilmore, Ms. Grandillo

Nays: None

Kathi Grandillo-Chairman

Marie Lawrie - Clerk