

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

July 2nd, 2025

Members Present: Chairman, Doug Crow
Tim Stroth
Norm Merriman

Alternate Member: William Heidt
Ben Garvey

Absent/ Excused: Chris Contento
Chelsea Root
Angela Griffis
Laurie Kutina

Also Present: Liz Cassidy, Code Enforcement Officer
Jennifer Greene, WH Greene & Associates Inc.
Christina Barosz, Silvestri Architects
Jonathon Barniak, Associate, Civil Engineer
Jacob Berger, Stone Ridge Services
Dominic Palmisano, Adelman Palmisano Architects
Twelve members of the public

Chairman, Doug Crow presided over the meeting which began at 7:03 p.m. at the Town Hall, 575 Oakwood Avenue, East Aurora, NY. He led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Chairman, Doug Crow states that all 5 members present at tonight's meeting are voting members.

Chairman, Doug Crow asks for a motion to approve the minutes from June 4th, 2025

Tim Stroth makes a motion to approve the minutes from June 4th, 2025

Seconded by Norm Merriman

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes-0

Motion carried

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

a. South Town Working Group update:

Tim Stroth states there has not been a recent meeting for the South Town Working Group

b. Comprehensive Plan update:

Angela Griffis is absent from today's meeting, therefore no update is available.

c. West Falls Forward Grant Update

Chairman, Doug Crow provides an update regarding the West Falls Forward Grant. The State has come back with their final approvals. They did award the \$4.5 million dollars to various grantees. Included will be The Blueberry Treehouse Farm, West Falls Center for the Arts, the West Falls Train Depot, The Dog Bar, Veteran's Park, the Florence Market, and the extension of the Erie Cattaraugus Trail. The State will meet with the individual grantees to draw up a contract. Details are still being worked out.

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

a. The Building Department has received a Site Plan application for (400) Quaker Road, SBL #175.06-3-8 as submitted by Jennifer Greene, of WH Greene & Associates, Inc.

Christina Barmosz with Silvestri Architects, states, they are proposing to build a ten thousand square foot addition onto the existing office building due to the growing business and need for additional space. It will be behind and to the south of the existing building. It will have the same appearance and esthetics as the current structure.

John Barniak, Project Engineer, states this project will include a parking lot expansion. There are presently 59 spaces. The Site Plan indicates 133, so there will be an increase of spaces. The plan will include a storm water management system designed in accordance with DEC criteria. There is a 2-story barn structure that will remain on site for storage.

Chairman, Doug Crow reconfirms the amount of proposed parking spaces is 133. Also, that there are 2 parcels. One in the town and one in the village. Also, reconfirming the space is owned by the occupant, Jennifer Greene of WH Greene & Associates Inc. He also states, it appears that all aspects of the proposed Site Plan meet the current code, with the exception of the 52% lot coverage. The current Commercial 3 zoning code that requires it to be no more than 50% of the lot area.

Tim Stroth asked if the applicant would need a variance for lot coverage for the town portion of the parcel.

CEO, Liz Cassidy confirmed.

Christina Barmosz states that viewing it as a whole parcel the requirement is met.

Chairman, Doug Crow asks for additional questions

Norm Merriman asks where the new addition will get the source of water, sewer, and electric.

John Barniak states they will all be tied into the existing building.

Chairman, Doug Crow asks once the addition is complete, what will be the total occupancy.

William Heidt states it is required to be 133 or less by code.

Tim Stroth asks Liz about the memo to the Town Board, the application was forwarded to GHD. Were there any comments from them.

Liz Cassidy stated that GHD replied with a couple of points. First there were no comments on the SEQR form. If the Village seeks lead agency the Town will comment on the potential environmental impacts as an involved agency as the Town must issue approval. On the drawings they recommend the Town request the applicant's plan for snow removal to ensure the site has adequate space and the stormwater practices will not be impacted by plows. Also, the bioretention areas appear to include a gravel diaphragm, but no detail was found to provide specifications on size and material.

William Heidt states he did not see photometrics

CEO, Liz Cassidy provided large scale drawing to William Heidt.

Chairman, Doug Crows asks for input regarding the lead agency options.

All members of the board are in favor of the Village taking lead agency.

Multiple members speaking regarding a potential motion.

Tim Stroth made a motion that the Planning Board recommended to the Town Board to defer to the Village for lead agency for SEQR, for the Site Plan application at, Quaker Road SBL # 175.06-3-8. Second, table the application pending two items, including a potential variance and two comments by the Town engineer.

Seconded by William Heidt

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes- 0

Motion carried

- b. The Building Department has received a Site Plan application for 12 Old Glenwood Road SBL #199.1-1-18 as submitted by Jacob Berger DBA Ridge Stone Services

Dominic Palmisano, from Adelman Palmisano Architects representing Jacob Berger, owner of 12 Old Glenwood Road. Prior to the property being purchased, it was rezoned residential.

CEO, Liz Cassidy reconfirms the property is zone R3, multi family.

Dominic Palmisano states we are proposing to make it 5 units in the existing building. The two second floor apartments require a second means of egress. They will each have a exterior wooden deck with an attached stairway.

Chairman, Doug Crow makes note of a portion of the building is in the ROW, making sure the property owner was made aware of that at time of purchase.

Jacob Berger confirmed, he is aware.

Norm Merriman acknowledged that Mr. Berger has had a new septic system installed.

Jacob Berger stated it has been inspected and is now waiting for documentation from the Health Department.

Norm Merriman also references the past concerns with parking prior to it being rezoned.

CEO, Liz Cassidy states with the present R3 zoning, with five units, 10 spots will be required.

William Heidt inquires what provisions are being made for egress lighting per code.

There are multiple people discussing the kind and location of lights.

There is a side commentary on lighting code.

Jacob Berger states they will be residential porch lights, not flood lights. They will shine downward.

Dominic Palmisano states they are MRW LED 24watt.

Chairman, Doug Crow made a motion that the Planning Board recommend to the Town Board to approve the Site Plan as proposed to add 2 exterior stairways as proposed on the Site Plan.

Seconded by Tim Stroth

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes- 0

Motion carried

COMMUNICATIONS: none

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Joe Quinn, 1224 East Main St. expresses concern the proposed rezoning of 1196 Big Tree Rd. He has spoken to multiple neighbors, sixty to seventy, from 20A, Reiter Rd., Cook Rd., who are not in favor of the rezoning to commercial. Spot zoning to commercial would be a detriment to the neighborhood. The property could be sold. If rezoned to C2 it opens the possibility to a variety of businesses to be established there. That leaves too much uncertainty and its impact. Traffic is already a concern in that area. If rezoned commercial traffic would be impacted even more in that area.

Tim Stoth advised Chairman, Doug Crow and Norm Merriman, both Planning Board members who were absent at the previous meeting, Mr. Quinn was there and expressed his passionate opposition to the rezoning of 1196 Big Tree Road. The application was tabled, waiting for additional information.

Stephen Denga, 440 Cook Road, does not support the rezoning. The impact of additional traffic is a huge concern. Side conversation regarding yield sign at the Rte. 400 entrance. Vehicles are often seen exiting the Rte. 400, then u-turning to head east. The resident expresses a huge concern for traffic safety presently, which would be impacted even more if rezoned and adding more traffic to the area.

Peter Herman, 1280 East Main St has concerns as well, regarding traffic. He has personally had three vehicle accidents in front of his property. He also is not comfortable with possibility of the slippery slope of rezoning, and its future impact of the area. He did not sign up to live in an area with commercial zoning close by, 17 years ago.

Dennis Garvey, 1270 East Main St. is not in favor of the spot zoning of 1196 Big Tree Rd., and the changes to a long-time residential neighborhood by allowing a Commercial property in the middle of it. He also reiterates the concern of the additional traffic issues that go along with a wedding venue attended by 150-200 guests plus employees, on a blind downhill curve.

He has questions he would like to ask the developers in front of the Planning Board. He also states he does not see how an eight-room hotel and a spa can remotely cover the cost of the 2.5-million-dollar investment. What if the proposed plans for the property fail? What would be the risk if it were sold and what could be developed there when zoned C2?

Jay Chipman, 309 Cook Road, has lived at his residence since 1988, conveying his opposition of the additional traffic, which is already an issue of concern. He feels there is no need for an additional wedding venue. There are multiple in the surrounding area. On any given weekend, presently, between three and 4 o'clock, the traffic coming off Rte. 400 is backed up.

Martha Townson, 1153 Cook Road, the corner of Cook Rd. and Rte. 20A, states this project will affect more than just the immediate neighborhood. It could affect other nearby businesses. The competition for occupancy for the Hampton Inn, Roycroft, as well as others. The personal care businesses, hairdressers, nail salons, massage facilities, and how they would be affected by the proposed spa. Also, she feels over the years developers repeatedly canceling their attendance at scheduled meetings, as some type of strategy. She asks if there is some type of resolution to hinder that behavior.

James Burnett, 28 Cook Road, states he joined the military following high school graduation, and returned after 21 years, mostly because he was hoping to come back to the same sleepy town that he had left. Although quite a lot has changed. However, he believes that the town has had a preeminent focus on small business owned by local residents, which not only contributes to the economic welfare of this town, but the people within it. The location of 1196 Big Tree Road, is already a very busy road. He has strong concerns regarding traffic. Also, following an event at the proposed venue, where will these people go? Bars and restaurants are already quite busy. You will be adding more people drinking and more policing will be needed. His final concern is if the business fails what does that open that property up for?

CEO, Liz Cassidy addresses the public in attendance with the opportunity to leave their names and email addresses. They will be notified by email, the agenda when the applicants are scheduled to return.

CORRESPONDENCE: none

Chairman, Doug Crow asks if there are any other members of the public wishing to comment. With no response, he asked for a motion to adjourn

Tim Stroth makes a motion to adjourn at 8:00 pm

Seconded by: William Heidt

Upon at vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes-zero

Motion carried

THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY AUGUST 6TH, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 575 OAKWOOD AVENUE, EAST AURORA, NEW YORK