

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

September 3rd, 2025

Members Present: Chairman, Doug Crow
Tim Stroth
Laurie Kutina
Angela Griffis

Alternate Member: Ben Garvey

Absent/ Excused: Norm Merriman
Chris Contento
William Heidt
Chelsea Root

Also Present: Rich Miga, Code Enforcement Officer
Ken Cox, Project Mgr. West Falls Church
Tom Stynes, Contractor for West Falls Church
Paul Spahn II, owner of 761 Quaker Rd.
1 member of the public

Chairman, Doug Crow presided over the meeting which began at 7:02 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 August 6th, 2025

Tim Stroth makes a motion to approve the minutes from August 6th, 2025

Second by Ben Garvey

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes-0

Motion carried

ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

- a. South Town Working Group update:

Tim Stroth states the next scheduled meeting is October 27th. He hopes to have an agenda available for the next Planning Board meeting for review, in hopes other members would like to join him on October 27th.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. The Building Department has received a Site Plan application for 35 West Falls Road, SBL: 186.04-1-21, by Thomas Stynes, representing St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

Chairman, Doug Crow invites the parties to come forward and introduce themselves, and explain the details of their proposed SOW.

Ken Cox is Vice President at the church and has been a member of the congregation for 25 years. He is the project manager.

Thomas Stynes, also a church member, is the contractor for the proposed project.

Ken Cox reconfirms the existing small vestibule on the south side of the building. It is approximately 10 x 14 foot. The door faces east and has a flat roof that sheds all the water from the upper roof. Built up ice also creates a problem. The entire roof is deteriorated due to age. There is a step up from the sidewalk. The intention is to remove the step and existing vestibule and add a 16 x 14-foot addition on, with a pitched roof. The roof will pitch back into the church roof with two valleys. A new door would be facing south with a handicap exit which will be at parking lot level. It will be ADA compliant.

Chairman, Doug Crow reconfirms the door will have an automatic button to open the door.

Angela Griffis reconfirms that it is in the same location with a slightly larger footprint.

Chairman, Doug Crow asks where the wheelchairs enter presently.

Ken Cox states, presently they must enter through a gym door and walk through the gym, and through another set of doors. It is not easy access.

Chairman, Doug Crow asks for any other questions. With no response, asks for a motion.

Angela Griffis makes a motion to the Planning Board, to recommend to the Town Board, to approve the Site Plan as proposed, for St. Paul's Lutheran Church, at 35 West Falls Road.

Second by: Chairman, Doug Crow

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes- 0

Motion carried.

Following the vote, questions were asked regarding timeline to start the project by Ken Cox.

CEO, Rich Miga states the application will go to the Town Board to be scheduled for a public hearing. A decision is not made at that meeting. It will most likely be approximately six weeks before a decision is rendered.

Laurie Kutina asks why a Site Plan was required.

CEO, Rich Miga states that it is because it is within 500 feet of residential adjoining properties.

Multiple people talking.

Chairman, Doug Crow states due to the delayed arrival of the second applicant, we will move forward to the discussion of the Comprehensive Plan.

Chairman, Doug Crow states there is some concern from the Town Board being not ready to go public with the proposed plan.

Angela Griffis provides information regarding the proposed Comprehensive Plan. Following Labella's recent meetings with the Town Board and Erie County, it was agreed the timeline for completing the Comprehensive Plan may be extended until the end of this year. Some Town officials have concerns that some of the proposed changes in the FLU map may be cost prohibitive to implement. Labella is revising the FLU map to target adjustments that will build from the existing zoning. The Town Board is reviewing the recommendations and prioritizing between the immediate priorities vs. The long-term goals, to be pursued in the future, based on the right partners and funding. Due to the revision process, the previously scheduled public workshop will be postponed, hoping to be rescheduled for mid/late October. The workshop will focus on gathering community feedback on the revised FLU map and recommendations. In addition to the workshop, the Steering Committee is anticipating another meeting in late September, or early October. This meeting will provide the committee an opportunity to review the revised FLU map and recommendations prior to the material being shared with the public. (See attach. 1) for email from Josh Greene, Labella Associate, to Steering Committee.

Chairman, Doug Crow states it was brought up by Town Board that this a Type 1 Action through SEQR

CEO, Rich Miga reconfirms it to be a Type 1 action for SEQR and a 30 day process which would have to be a process undertaking with the grant timeline, or extension of time by the county. There is a lot of uncertainty of how that will work into the schedule for October 27th.

Angela Griffis states that the previously scheduled community workshop with be moved to sometime in late October.

Multiple people talking

Chairman, Doug Crow asks for other members personal thoughts. Forward it to Angela, and she can take it back to the next steering committee meeting. (See attach. 2) for Doug's personal thoughts and ideas.

Laurie Kutina asks what are the costs associated with changing the zoning?

Chairman, Doug Crow stated he did not hear anything regarding cost concerns relating to zoning specifically. Only cost concerns relating to the goals.

Angela Griffis states the committee is happy where they are presently, and not wanting to make huge adjustments. They're just adding new categories.

Tim Stroth states that it sounds similar to the West Falls overlay.

Laurie Kutina states that her observation is the need of having professionals in place, having a lot of community effort and focus on simplification.

Multiple people talking

Chairman, Doug Crow wraps up this discussion and moves to the next item on the agenda.

- b. Chairman, Doug Crow asks Paul Spahn II come forward and explain his ODA application.

Paul Spahn II states several years ago a garage 22' x 32' on his property, was damaged by a large tree. At that time, he lacked the resources to rebuild. It was necessary to tear it down approximately three years ago. His goal now is to replace it in the same footprint but make it 2' larger, going further into his property. That was recommended by his builder due to materials making it easier to work with in 24' lengths.

Chairman, Doug Crow states that because the structure was not rebuilt within one year it required a setback variance, which was why it was necessary to go to the Zoning Board. At that time there was a need for a side yard setback of the detached garage and multiple existing lot variances for the existing, nonconforming, ODA. All of which were approved by the Zoning Board.

CEO, Rich Miga reconfirms. The nonconforming aspect of the garage went away when the garage was demolished over a year ago. That is why it was necessary to go through this process for the lot as a part of the garage request. But specifically because of the way the lot is and the aspects of it fit the criteria for an ODA application. Also, for the future and whatever happens to the property down the line such as, if the house were to get removed, with the intention of moving more to the rear of the property. It speaks more of the ODA aspects.

Laurie Kutina questions if there are concerns for emergency fire vehicle access to the back of the property.

CEO, Rich Miga states there is no concern. The property depth is well within range, and they would have the ability to chain hoses and reach the structure without having to enter the driveway and having to maneuver a three-point turn to exit the property.

Angela Griffis asks what the feelings are of the neighbors.

Paul Spahn II states his neighbor at 765 Quaker, Janet Ferber provided a letter to the ZBA, stating she has no opposition to the structure. He has not had a conversation with the neighbor to the east, at 757 Quaker, Justin Smith. He was not present a ZBA meeting either. Mr. Spahn does not feel there will be a problem with him.

Angela Griffis asks if there are any drainage concerns.

Paul Spahn II states the property is relatively flat. There is a ditch that runs along the east property line that runs into the culvert.

Chairman, Doug Crows states with no further questions he will make a motion.

Chairman, Doug Crow makes a motion to the Planning Board to recommend to the Town Board, to approve the ODA application for an existing nonconforming ODA at 761 Quaker Road, owned by Paul Spahn II.

Second by: Laurie Kutina

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes-5

Noes-0

Motion carried

Chairman, Doug Crow states the last topic for discussion was brought to our attention by an email from Supervisor, Chuck Snyder. The subject of memorials was brought up at a Town Board meeting. Over the many years there have been various efforts to create memorials. However, there is a lack of structure in the process. There is no criteria set on who and what is allowable. Who pays for it? Who maintains it? With some good guidelines set, there is no need for a committee.

Angela Griffis states that the Tree Board has built guidelines and a process for tree memorials and plaques. She has provided copy of the policy to provide some ideas. (See attach. 3)

Members have an informal discussion pertaining to things like sponsorship and price tag to cover long-term maintenance, and the menu of specific items with set prices, sizes, etc.

Chairman, Doug Crow reminds the board this topic was just for brainstorming and totally informal. Our thoughts will be conveyed back to Supervisor Snyder.

CORRESPONDENCES: none

PUBLIC COMMENTS: none

Tim Stroth makes a motion to adjourn at 7:53 pm

Seconded by: Ben Garvey

Upon a vote being taken:

Ayes- 5

Noes-zero

Motion carried

THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING WILL BE WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 3RD, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE TOWN HALL, 575 OAKWOOD AVENUE, EAST AURORA, NEW YORK