

**MEETING MINUTES OF
ST. ALBANS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
5:30 PM MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2017
*Approved February 27, 2017***

Planning Commission Members Present

David Barber, Chair
Michael Gawne
Stan Bradeen
Amy Paradis, Alt.

Planning Commission Members Absent

Jackie DesLauriers, V.Chair

Staff Present

Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning & Development
Therese Carlisle, Minute Taker

Public Present

Matt Allen

1. Open Meeting. Called to order by David Barber, Chair at 5:35 pm.

a. Discuss additions or deletions to agenda. D.Barber very pleased to see that last month's meeting seemed to run very well in his absence; he would also like to share that Allen Robtoy, Manager of Public Works has received an award from the Rotary club. **No other discussion.**

2. Approval of Minutes. A.Paradis makes motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2016, S.Bradeen seconds the motion, minutes are approved with all in favor and 1 abstained: D.Barber was not present at the Dec. meeting.

3. City Plan discussion.

a. Public Comment. **None at this time.**

b. Review Maps C.Sawyer begins the review of maps provided.

Existing Land Use- Like items are grouped together for ease of understanding the map; if every entity had its own color the map would be unreadable.

Proposed Land Use- S.Bradeen- should we have a natural proposed land use, C.Sawyer-it's in the memo; we will get to exactly that topic.

Development Areas & Designations – This map shows the immediate surrounding areas of the City. S.Bradeen would like to know what can be done to better align the uses between theirs and ours. C.Sawyer will add to the Plan to have a discussion for better lineation between City and Town. C.Sawyer states that the purpose of this map is that we need to demonstrate and show the City Growth Center and we benefit from also representing the TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District.

Elevation, Soils & Geology- Question from D.Barber regarding safety when building and if the soils are taken into consideration when building in terms of earthquakes and certain soils not being as stable. C.Sawyer will gather more information about this topic.

Facilities- C.Sawyer states that this map is representing major facilities and one potential change. D.Barber would like to see the Library in addition to the Facilities Map. S.Bradeen recommends adding the boundaries of the Aldis Hill Trust area, for a full view of the hill, including what is not controlled by the City. D.Barber brings up the topic of the town Cemeteries and they will be added. M.Gawne questions pond ownership. C.Sawyer responds that the Ponds are owned by GMP.

Transportation- Shows the use type of the street and the class. Identifies two planning items, the connector and the area we continue to expand our street scape. Discussion ensues about North Main and Lower Newton connection, the congested traffic and brainstorming about what could work. The abandoned railroad siding does not seem to be an option for development. S.Bradeen recommends addition of the City's interest of this siding into the Plan. M.Gawne mentions that Market St. is not a city St., C.Sawyer notes that that will be marked for intended purchase. D.Barber points out that Farrar St. lacks a label.

Water Resources- S.Bradeen is concerned that the variation of colors is difficult to see clearly. M.Gawne asks for clarification about a 50 ft. variance? C.Sawyer clarifies that that is the recommendation but we may go to 30ft. D.Barber points out the Rugg Brook Diversion Channel; label added.

C.Sawyer refers to a larger scale of the Existing Land Use map. S.Bradeen makes recommendation to change the background of this photo to black and white, in hopes to enhance to ability to clearly read the other colors that are present.

C.Sawyer refers to a larger scale of the Proposed Land Use C.Sawyer recommends adding an educational zoning. S.Bradeen asks if Aldis Hill would be included with the same classification as the schools. D.Barber recommends a Recreational Conservation Location. Discussion ensues regarding the classification of Sawyer St. M.Gawne asks if under the state statute that says if specific dimensions are met; you can use the lot if it meets other uses and if this could be a loop whole into multi-family

dwelling. This discussion is tabled until more information is available. M.Gawne questions land of St. Mary's is business 2 or should actually be business 1, D.Barber clarifies space on the map. M.Gawne questions Business-Neighborhood Transition groups, if the current sections are similar or very different and should more space in the City be classified in this group. C.Sawyer replies that the spaces do qualify to be classified in this group; he goes on to provide more information about classifications. S.Bradeen stated his concerns and strong feelings opposing strip zoning. M.Gawne: is Business 1 Zoning completely filled with businesses. If a relatively large retail business would like to come to the City, where have we left room for them to develop? C.Sawyer replies that we are looking more at re-development. **C.Sawyer reads the list that he has to be added to the Plan.** D.Barber brings up the redevelopment of Hoyt and Hudson St. Discussion carries on regarding selective demolition and reconstruction as well as brainstorming more spaces for development. C.Sawyer provides clarification of B1 vs. B2. **Assessing the Zoning on Federal St. will be added to the City Plan.** M.Gawne would like to know what is going on in the Town with various junctures, when crossing over, should there be some sort of crossover zoning. C.Sawyer would professionally recommend that there should not be and the Board agrees. S.Bradeen brings up his concerns regarding the format of this map, the jagged formatting of parcel based lines; conversation carries on clarifying what his concerns are. This conversation carries on to the Proposed Design Review District Map.

Proposed Design Review Districts- C.Sawyer presents a difficult situation of the East side of Federal St. being required to comply with DRB while the other side of the street does not. Possibility of adding lower Lake St., the other side of Federal St. and Fairfield St. being introduced as gateway entrances into the City and would also need DRB review for approval.

S.Bradeen questions why is Aldis Hill included in the map as a City Growth Center? C.Sawyer reflected and explained.

Community member Matt Allen, asks about development of Aldis Hill, Hard'ack? C.Sawyer responds that Hard'ack is not part of the City.

Follow up question by M.Allen regarding the development of a Community Center. C.Sawyer requested further details regarding what M.Allen's vision is of a Community Center. M.Allen would like to see an indoor recreation place for young children. He has moved from Colorado where these types of Community Centers were present with basketball courts, swimming pools, climbing walls. S.Bradeen comments as a member of Rotary and a greater conversation ensues. **C.Sawyer added into the Plan.** By adding this into the plan it will be easier to get a grant written.

C.Sawyer has mark ups from Michael and Stan and will compile these for next time.

c. Review draft plan text/goals/policies. This Plan will not be in by the time that the previous plan expires; it is not the end of the world. The hold-up is in the warning to the public and the approval process. There is further discussion regarding approval process and a timeline of what will work. C.Sawyer urges members to airing on the side of inclusion and not exclusion. If it is in the Plan it can be worked on but is not required to be, if it is not in the Plan then it will not be worked on. Conversation

flows into more details regard what is expected of the members of this board, in terms of being informed about details of this Plan.

4. Other Business.

a. Reminder of 2/27 meeting date.

b. Stebbins-Catherine Planning Project Update. January 27th C.Sawyer and Gretta Brunswick will be set up with pictures and information about the Stebbins & Catherine St. Project; for the community to view as they are entering the In Good Taste event. Public meeting for Stebbins St. and Catherine St. will be held on January 31st at 6:00, City Hall.

c. Update on board appointments D.Barber and M.Gawne were extended on an emergency basis until February. There are currently three vacant seats, four applicants to fill them.

d. Planning & Development Update **None**

e. Other.

M.Gawne requests clarification from C.Sawyer regarding the number of applicants to the Planning Commission position. There are 4 applicants.

M.Gawne comments to the recent article in the St. Albans Messenger, receiving some not favorable comments regarding the term Snout House. C.Sawyer replies that there has been a valuable lesson learned; avoid labeling. S.Bradeen states that the contractor did a nice job and we can move on from here.

S.Bradeen requested more information regarding the Aldis Hill Trail plan, parking, signage and maps. This leads to more conversation regarding these Trails.

5. Public Comment. **No other public comment**

6. Meeting Adjourn. **Motion by M.Gawne and seconded by A.Paradis, all approved, adjourned at 7:49 pm.**

Submitted respectfully

Therese Carlisle; Minute Taker