

MINUTES
ST. ALBANS CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
ST. ALBANS CITY HALL, 100 NORTH MAIN STREET
5:30 PM MONDAY, JUNE 20, 2022

Approved July 18, 2022

Commission Members Present: Lauren Dees-Erickson-Vice Chair, Michael Gawne, Zachary Nuse, Carl Watkins, Alternate, Courtney Seales, Alternate

Commission Members Absent: Denise Smith Chair, Amy Burleson

City Staff Present: Chip Sawyer, Director of Planning and Development; Arleigh Young, Minute Taker.

Members of the Public Present: Jay Mitguy

1. Open Meeting –Lauren Dees-Erickson, Vice Chair opened the meeting at 5:31 PM.

- a. Introduction of attendees - introductions were made.
- b. Public Comment on issues not on agenda - None
- c. Discuss additions or deletions to agenda - None
- d. Assignment Of Alternates- Courtney Seale, first alternate & Carl Watkins, second alternate

2. General Business.

- a. Request concerning properties at Main and Lo. Newton. Discussion was moved to the start of the meeting per L. Dees-Erickson

Jay M. would like to discuss the northwest corner Lower Newton and North main St, this includes 5 buildings and 15 dwelling units. He and his partner would like to redevelop the area with more density. They are at the meeting hoping to discuss possibilities of this and/or gaining a variance for this project.

C. Sawyer discussing background of the current land dev rules and PUD rules. Currently outside of the B1 district the Land Development Regulations state 1 dwelling unit per 5000 sft of land. Under the PUD rules the only density bonus is given for 1 bedroom units only, and that would give a 25% bonus. Past requests have been adjacent to the B1 district, but this property is not close enough to that district. The PC can opt to have staff put together some proposals for the site with the Land Regulations in mind, but allowing for some options with adjusted rules. The PC could also look at changing the density rules for the B2 district overall or for this section only. Lastly the PC could create a new zone for this proposed property.

J. Mitguy was asked by Z. Nuse to describe the proposed project for the site if they could do whatever they wanted. J. Mitguy explains they would demolish the current 3 duplexes, and build to fit 15-20 unit range apartment building.

L. Dees-Erickson asked for more about adjacent properties. J. Mitguy confirms that there are multi-unit dwellings nearby on North Main Street. There are also 2 buildings behind on Lower Newton before the Fonda site, 1 single Family and 1 duplex.

L. Dees-Erickson opens the discussion to the PC for comments. She expresses that in prior meeting the PC has tried not to do one off decisions for specific locations.

M. Gawne feels this project discussion of making changes is premature. He wants to be considerate to the uses of properties nearby and how this would impact them. For clarification of how many units and buildings. J. Mitguy responds ideally one building with 15-20 units within, willing to discuss style and look. M. Gawne also would like to consider the historic value in some of the nearby homes.

C. Sawyer shares that if the PC opts to make changes that this would be a fundamental change, and would have major impacts on the DRB hearings and rulings moving forward. C. Sawyer inquires to J. Mitguy of all the properties you own how many units would you like to see? J. Mitguy answers 29 units on the 5 parcels, doubling density on the site.

M. Gawne: should or do we consider this? L. Dees-Erickson states it should be considered, but with thought, and with the inclusion of thoughts from nearby homeowners. Neighbor's thoughts are important. C. Seale states that she lives nearby and she would have some issue with the proposed project.

Z. Nuse wants to discuss the alternate options in the district and what could be done to bring the project into closer compliance to the rules of the B2 district. C. Sawyer suggests the Planning and Development staff to come up with a density analysis for the area, and proposals to show if there is there a way to make changes to rules in the current zone, zones nearby, and if a special zone was created.

L. Dees-Erickson agrees with C. Sawyer's idea allowing for further discussion and hearing from nearby property owners. M. Gawne would also like to walk the area and areas nearby. C. Seale comes back to say this could improve the area as long as parking and traffic are a big part of the planning. M. Gawne is also concerned for traffic and parking.

L. Dees-Erickson would like to move ahead with C. Sawyers plan. M. Gawne would like to make the motion to have staff create a packet of information to be

provided at the next meeting, C. Watkins seconds. Motion Passes without opposition.

3. Warned Amendments to Land Development Regulations Amendments.

a. Rename Residential Districts

i. Presentation of proposal

C. Sawyer states that a renaming of the districts, example: LDR to R95 (Residential 9500) relating to the square feet allowed for the district. HDR= R75 (R7500). Basically allowing that if any districts need to be changes the new name would relate to the square feet required for a single family home.

ii. Public Hearing- No public comment

iii. PC Discussion and revisions

No discussion or revisions

iv. Consider approval and referral to the City Council

Motion by M.Gawne to approve the renaming of LDR and HDR districts as outlined, Courtney Seales seconds the motion. Motion is passed and moves forward to the City Council for the July meeting.

b. Dwelling Unit Definitions and associated amendments.

i. Presentation of proposal.

C. Sawyer opens with a memo about the change the definition of family or removal of family from the definition of dwelling. Sharing the definition of dwelling unit definitions as stated in current Land Regulations. There are 3 options: Update definition of family, remove family from the terms like single family unit and multi-family unit, or using the word household in place of family.

C. Sawyer shares updated verbiage including all 3 options. C. Sawyer recommends option 1 to redefine Family to be as inclusive as possible.

ii. Public Hearing.

iii. PC discussion and revisions.

M. Gawne likes option 1's definition of Family, but use household as the word. This might have to include some exclusions like congregant housing, B&B's, Inns, halfway homes, community care housing, lodging houses

Z. Nuse does not believe that by changing the word does not mean that folks will try to take advantage. What are we solving, and why? Wants more info, public thoughts, and city interest?

C. Sawyer states that the current definition isn't broken, but a change in the definition would allow for more discussion rather than just closing a project. This is not currently an issue.

M. Gawne shares that perhaps this could just be left until it really becomes an issue.

L. Dees-Erickson states that she is all about inclusion, but if this is not an issue it should be left. She would like this discussion to be on the record, but not to make changes yet.

C. Watkins agrees. He was at the prior meeting and agrees that this can be left for the time being.

Z. Nuse agrees. Locality does not demand this change.

L. Dees-Erickson calls for a motion to leave the definition as is. M. Gawne confirms language would be the same. He would like to see the definition should get more pointed. L. Dees-Erickson would like to see either leaving it as is, or totally go for a change of definition. Z. Nuse agrees.

C. Watkins motions to continue the proposed amendment change for dwelling unit's definition without changing the definition of family as proposed and written by staff. Z. Nuse seconds, Motion Passes with all in favor, except for M.Gawne Abstaining.

M. Gawne makes a motion to make minor definition adjustments including a capitol B for Building and capitol F for Family. C. Seales seconds. Motion Passes with all in favor.

Motion by M. Gawne to include the dwelling unit abbreviations (SFD, TFD and MFD) in Defined Terms and to alphabetize the dwelling unit definitions in the Defined Terms as Multi-Family Dwelling, Single-Family Dwelling, and Two-Family Dwelling. C. Watkins seconds, Motion Passes with all in favor.

iv. Consider approval and referral to City Council. – No motion.

3. Other possible amendment proposals.

a. Presentations and discussion.

C. Sawyer discusses the top of list items to be discussed in upcoming meetings.

- i. Changes in Article 3, eliminate the large table and instead do a district by district explanation with each part of the uses regulations.
- ii. Provide definition for all permitted and conditional use
- iii. Modernize parking requirements.
- iv. Statutory changes to when permits and approvals expire.
- v. Next month neighborhood walking tour of residential professional district.

C. Sawyer would like to start the discussion about Article 3, allowing for the table to be removed and for each district to have its own subsection including definitions and allowed uses, dimensional requirements, and conditional uses. This topic has not been warned, therefor this will just be a discussion as to if it

gets warned and brought forth in the next meeting.

Z. Nuse recalls that this was discussed in a past meeting and they felt that if the information couldn't fit on the chart that there is too much information for the general public to digest, if nothing else the chart should remain. M. Gawne states that the chart is a "cheat sheet" and should only be used by staff and if included there should be a notation that the chart is not the full regulations. It is best to have all the language in the regulations. C. Sawyer likes the idea of taking the chart out of the regulations, and updating the regulation is more difficult with both the verbiage and the chart because of continual updating.

C. Watkins feels that having the change and removing the chart is more what he has seen in other places. C. Sawyer interjects that if the board likes things the way they are they do not need to make any changes. L. Dees-Erickson feels that leaving the regulations as they are might be more transparent especially when changes need to be made. C. Sawyer impresses upon the board the amount of redundancy with the language and chart included. Z. Nuse what's the regulations to be easy for the end users, and the feedback he is getting is the chart is necessary.

b. Consider warning hearing(s).

C. Watkins motions to warn the change as proposed by C. Sawyer for Article 3 (pages 2-17 of the packet) for an official hearing in July. C. Seale seconds. Motion by Z. Nuse to amend C. Watkins' motion to include the existing Section 304 table of uses in the proposed regulatory amendment. M. Gawne seconds. Discussion: C. Watkins was not including the chart because he had not viewed the chart.

Amendment passed with all in favor.

Amended motion approved with all in favor.

4. Added Item #24- Compliance with S.226

Regulation to comply with new state ruling and compliance with permit expirations lasting 2 years. Validity of permits and how it reflects against the state statute. Correction of errors that go out for warnings. The proposal is to bring our regulations into compliance with state regulations.

L. Dees-Erickson opens the discussion. M. Gawne would like to see S.226, and perhaps just make it an agenda item for the next meeting. L. Dees-Erickson would like to see this move to the next meeting and be warned. C. Watkins agrees. C. Sawyer clarifies that the states regulations supersede the City's. L. Dees-Erickson would be open to a motion to warn this at the next meeting. M. Gawne states that he would like time to look at the statute before moving the process to warning.

C. Watkins makes a motion to warn the updates to comply with the State's S.226 at the next meeting, C. Seale seconds. Approved with M. Gawne and Z. Nuse opposed and all others in favor.

C. Sawyer states he will get materials out to the board 2 weeks before the meeting. M. Gawne wants to be sure that there is enough time to fully digest all aspects. Z. Nuse agrees. C. Watkins interjects that the board will still have the option to vote or to continue the discussion at the next meeting, this warning does not mean a vote must be made.

5. Amendment Proposal Document: Returning to definitions discussion C. Sawyer shows a new table that includes residential uses. This table would clarify the definition of types of dwellings types and what they are. The highlighted sections are proposed by M. Gawne and non-highlighted have had changes made. C. Sawyer suggests that the board reads over this document and he would prepare historical context of proposed changes. M. Gawne furthers that his changes aren't exactly shown and that he could provide documentation showing red lines and his reasoning. C. Watkins agrees that this would be helpful. It does not have to be written note, that this could just be a debate. L. Dees-Erickson likes the idea of reading it ahead. M. Gawne states he can make it happen, and C. Sawyer agrees.
6. Approval of Minutes.
Item tabled. No Minutes approved.
7. General Business.
 - a. Request concerning properties at Main and Lo. Newton. Discussion was moved to the start of the meeting per L. Dees-Erickson
 - b. Review next meeting date and format.
 - c. Other.
8. Adjourn.

Motion to adjourn by M. Gawne at 7:30 pm, L. Dees-Erickson seconds the motion, all members agree, and the motion passes