**Planning Board Regular Meeting and Public Hearing Minutes December 30, 2015**

The meeting was held at the Aurora Firehouse Meeting Room at 7:00 pm

**Present:** Chair Pat Bianconi, Pat Foser, Michele Murphy, Pam Sheradin, and Frank Zimdahl

**Others Present:** Mayor Bonnie Bennett,Village Clerk Ann Balloni, ZBA members Laura Holland (alternate) and Ann Tobey, Inns of Aurora representatives Sue Edinger, Ted Kinder, and Rob Seeley, and local resident Melissa Miller

**Call to Order:** Chair Bianconi called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

**Changes to the Agenda:** No changes

**Approval of Minutes:** On motion by Murphy, seconded by Sheradin, the Planning Board voted to approve the October 28, 2015 meeting minutes.

AYES: Bianconi, Foser, Murphy, Sheradin, and Zimdahl

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

**Announcements:** No announcements

**Visitor Welcome:** Chair Bianconi welcomed all visitors and there were no comments.

**Old Business:** No old business was discussed.

**New Business**

**Application #15-42 from the Inns of Aurora/Village of Aurora for renovations and infrastructure upgrades to Lafayette St, Court St, and Cherry Ave.**

Chair Bianconi explained that the Inns of Aurora and the Village Board of Trustees signed a memorandum of understanding whereby the Inns of Aurora pay for renovations of Lafayette St to enable increased parking on Lafayette St and Court St, for the new Wallcourt hotel, as well as implement traffic calming techniques on Lafayette and Cherry Ave where they intersect with State Route 90 (Main St).

Inns of Aurora General Manager, Sue Edinger, described the initial parking plan for Wallcourt which included a parking lot on Sherwood Road whereby guests would be shuttled to and from the hotel. In discussions with the Village Board of Trustees, the renovation of Lafayette St was determined to be a more logical solution than the Sherwood Road parking plan.

Inns of Aurora Project Manager, Ted Kinder, described the following renovations:

* 12 parking spaces on Lafayette and 4 additional spaces on Court St
* New piping and catch basins
* New crosswalks
* 3” curbs
* Shifting Lafayette St 4’ to the north (requires demolition of Shakelton’s Funeral Home south boundary stone wall)
* Improve drainage by replacing an 18” pipe with a 36” pipe and repair the catch basin on the SE corner of Lafayette St and Main St
* Neckdowns placed on west end of Lafayette, as well as Cherry Ave, to enhance traffic calming effects along Main St

Mr. Zimdahl questioned if the new drainage and catch basins would relieve the overflow which occurs at Lafayette St and Main St during heavy rain. Mr. Kinder replied that it would not.

Mr. Zimdahl then questioned if the neckdowns would result in a narrowing of the streets making it difficult for 2 cars to pass through easily. Mr. Kinder replied that they would not. The neckdowns make the street look more narrow with the anticipated result being that drivers automatically slow down. Mr. Kinder also refuted the rumor that the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) would no longer plow State Rte 90 in the village (Main St) due to the neckdowns. NYSDOT will continue to plow as they always have.

Ms. Foser questioned if there was a plan for the stone wall on the west boundary of Shakelton’s Funeral Home. Ms. Edinger explained that stone from the demolition of the south wall will be used to make repairs to the west wall.

**SEQR**

The Planning Board reviewed part 1 of the full Environmental Assessment Form (attached) completed by the applicant and had the following comments:

* Page 1 under Brief Description of Proposed Action, change “2016” to “2015”
* Page 6 under section D.2. Project Operations, letter “e” was answered “no” so delete the answers to e.*i.* and e.*iii.*
* Page 9 under section E.1 Land uses on and surrounding the project site, letter b. for the acreage of the lawn after project completion, change “.01” to “0.00” and +/- change in acres from “0.00” to “0.01”
* Page 13 under E.3. Designated Public Resources On or Near Project Site, letter “i” was answered “no” so delete the answer to i.*ii*

Chair Bianconi then read a letter from Village Code Enforcement Officer, Patrick Doyle, (attached) declaring Application #15-42 as complete and recommending that the application move forward with the coordinated SEQR designating the Village Planning Board as the lead agency.

**PB Resolution #15-04: For Continuing Review of application #15-42 from the Inns of Aurora for the Lafayette St Project**

**WHEREAS:** The Village of Aurora Planning Board (Planning Board) deems Application #15-42 from the Inns of Aurora to be complete, as of this date, and schedules a Public Hearing, to include the Community Preservation Panel, at their Regular Meeting on January 27, 2016 at approximately 7:00 pm; and

**WHEREAS:** The Planning Board declares itself Lead Agency for the coordinated review (including SEQR, Site Plan review, and Special Use Permit for excavation and demolition); and

**WHEREAS:** The Planning Board instructs the Village Clerk to notify all involved and interested agencies for the Coordinated Review; and

**WHEREAS:** The application will be referred to the Cayuga County Planning Board for mandated GML 239 review;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** that the Planning Board deem Application #15-42 complete, declare itself Lead Agency for coordinated review, schedule a Public Hearing for January 27, 2016, notify all involved and interested agencies, and refer Application #15-42 to Cayuga County Planning Board for GML 239 review.

FIRST: Foser

SECOND: Zimdahl

AYES: Bianconi, Foser, Murphy, Sheradin, and Zimdahl

NAYS: None

Carried unanimously

**Spa Concept Idea from the Inns of Aurora**

Chair Bianconi noted that herself, Ms. Murphy, and Ms. Sheradin attended a site visit of the proposed location at 457 and 459 Main St on December 19, 2015 along with members of the Community Preservation Panel. Ms. Edinger and Mr. Kinder invited Ms. Foser and Mr. Zimdahl to schedule a site visit as well.

Ms. Edinger presented a concept of establishing a small scale spa facility (5000-7500 square feet) to help increase revenue for the Inns of Aurora during the off season (October-March). Ideally, to set the Inns of Aurora apart from area competitors, the spa would be located on the lake, north of Rowland House on two pieces of property purchased by Pleasant Rowland. The buildings on the properties, two houses and a garage, would require demolition for this project. The spa would be built into the western slope of the property to optimize lake views and might not be visible from Main Street.

Ms. Edinger further explained that a spa, as well as a planned event center, would ensure sustainability for the Inns of Aurora by creating a reason for tourists to stay in the area year round. Currently, the Inns of Aurora run at approximately 85%-90% occupancy from April-September and 20% occupancy during the off season. Ms. Edinger is hopeful that the off season reservations would increase to over 50%.

Ms. Edinger also indicated that locating the spa and the event center away from the village center could help alleviate some of the parking problems or, at the very least, not add to them. Further positive goals per Ms. Edinger include:

* Keeping Inns of Aurora staff employed year round
* Increase in tax and water/sewer fees for the village
* Public lake access
* More varied business in the village

Chair Bianconi questioned if the spa would strictly be marketed to high end customers. Ms. Edinger replied that high end hotels, like the Inns of Aurora, are expected to offer premium spa services but, during the off season, special rates and day passes would be offered at a more affordable price.

Ms. Foser remarked that demolishing two houses to build a spa on the lake was not in keeping with the Village Comprehensive Plan and also questioned if a spa aligned with the permitted uses in the residential zone per the Village Zoning Law.

Chair Bianconi then asked for a straw poll of the Planning Board for their opinion on the concept plan:

Pat Bianconi: Yay

Pat Foser: Nay

Michele Murphy: Yay

Pam Sheradin: Yay

Frank Zimdahl: Yay

Discussion then ensued on the future direction of the village and the role of the Inns of Aurora and the community members.

**Adjournment:** On motion by Sheradin, seconded by Murphy, the Planning Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 pm.

AYES: Bianconi, Foser, Murphy, Sheradin, and Zimdahl

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Balloni

Village Clerk