

Planning Board March 9, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

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

Present: Chairperson Pat Bianconi, Pat Foser, Thea Miller (alternate), Michele Murphy, and Frank Zimdahl

Absent: Pam Sheradin

Others Present

Village Officials: Clerk Ann Balloni, Mayor Bonnie Bennett, Trustees Grace Bates, Matt Bianconi, and Janet Murphy, Attorney Tom Blair, ZBA Members Alexis Boyce and Laura Holland, CPP Chairperson Chris MacCormick, and Historian Dr. Linda Schwab

Inns of Aurora: General Manager Sue Edinger and Attorney Wendy Marsh

LaBella Associates: Kathy Spencer and Lucia Woo

Wells College: Carl Sgrecci

Local Residents: Barb Blom and Sandy Groth

Call to Order: Ms. Bianconi called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

GEIS Draft Scoping Session

Ms. Bianconi gave a brief synopsis of what led to the Generic Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) before turning the meeting over to Ms. Spencer. Ms. Spencer explained that her company LaBella Associates, was hired by the Village as a consultant to help guide the Planning Board through the State Environmental Quality Review process (SEQR).

All projects require SEQR but the Inns of Aurora (IOA) plans for their properties is the first time that the Village Planning Board is considering "adverse impacts", due to the significant amount of IOA property, developed and undeveloped, in and around the village. "Generic" refers to these multiple properties as opposed to an EIS which is done when reviewing one specific project site.

While completing Part 2 of the Full Environmental Assessment Form (FEAF) for the SEQR, the Planning Board determined that the project will have a moderate to large impact (positive declaration) as opposed to little or no environmental impact on the village (negative declaration). One or more moderate to large impacts triggers the GEIS and the Planning Board noted several moderate to large impacts on the FEAF.

The Inns of Aurora submitted their Draft Scope of their project which is basically an outline of their plans for their properties. The Draft Scope is available to the public and open for written comment through March 16, 2020. The Planning Board, along with Ms. Spencer, will review the Draft Scope and make suggestions, as needed, to the IOA and, once the Planning Board declares the Scope complete, they will share the final draft with the public.

The Planning Board and IOA will continue to work through any mitigation and the Planning Board will set thresholds for each property to ensure full compliance with environmental review mandates.

IOA attorney, Wendy Marsh, added that a GEIS is more conceptual with no detailed plans. She explained that the IOA ideas for their properties at the north end of the village are for potential construction/demolition, while most of their previous projects involved strictly renovations of existing buildings.

Ms. Marsh explained that Application #19-36 was submitted to start the GEIS process but they have no plans to construct a maintenance/administration building and are prevented from that plan by the Village Zoning Law, as the property is located in a residential zone.

Public Comment: Village Attorney Tom Blair explained that comment time is limited to three minutes and is specifically regarding the IOA Draft Scope, environmental review.

Jay O’Hearn: see attached comments. Mr. O’Hearn expressed concern over perceived zoning changes to allow commercial businesses in residential zones.

Dr. Linda Schwab: see attached comments. Dr. Schwab corrected information noted on the Part 3 SEQR narrative regarding historic properties. Dr. Schwab further noted that consultation with herself, as Village Historian, is encouraged.

Mayor Bonnie Bennett: Mayor Bennett noted the following issues, both as mayor and as a resident:

- Potential increased pesticide use
- Community character, commercial/residential balance
- Impact on housing due to 12-month season
- Aesthetic vistas, not just lake views, including building to building

Mr. Blair noted that, although the Village Board of Trustees technically had a quorum in attendance, he confirmed with each that they were there as individual residents.

Barb Blom: Ms. Blom complained that she was not informed of the meeting and the lack of publicized notices. Ms. Blom also reiterated that the Village Board should update the Comprehensive Plan.

(Clerk’s note: The meeting notice was sent to the Citizen newspaper, posted on both village bulletin boards, and on three pages of the village website; Home, Boards and the Calendar)

Ms. Marsh noted that the IOA are submitting their project plans, not requesting zoning law changes.

Ms. Spencer explained that the Planning Board and LaBella Associates will discuss the Planning Board response to the Draft Scope, revise, and work towards the final document. A public hearing will be scheduled once the final document is ready for distribution.

Ms. Bianconi reminded those in attendance that the deadline for submitting any additional written comments regarding the IOA Draft Scope is March 16, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Ms. Bianconi added that this is the first time that the Planning Board has issued a positive declaration for a project and that they are grateful for Ms. Spencer’s guidance through the process. Ms. Bianconi then explained in detail the ways the public can find ALL village meeting notices.

Adjournment: On motion by Mr. Zimdahl, seconded by Ms. Foser, the Planning Board voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

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

NAYS: None

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Balloni
Village Clerk