

***ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – JUNE 30, 2020
MINUTES***

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Julie Trude, June 30, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present: Sheri Bukkila, Valerie Holthus, Jamie Barthel, and Ted Butler

Councilmember absent: None

Also present: City Administrator Jim Dickinson
Community Development Director, Joe Janish
Assistant City Engineer, Jason Law
Others

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE DISCUSSION

Mayor Trude introduced the item stating that staff and Council have worked on correcting and updating the Comprehensive Plan over the past six months to meet Met Council's requirements. She stated if Council makes changes to the current draft, staff will need to rewrite several chapters and spend approximately another six months updating the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Dickinson stated staff identified options based on Council feedback from the meeting on June 23, 2020. Mr. Dickinson explained the options as 3.1 and 3.2 which will result in meeting the Met Council's requirements for 363 affordable units and an average density of 3 units per acre. Mr. Dickinson identified the areas of Council's concern: the designated density of the Bunker Lake Boulevard redevelopment area and the Sonstebly property; and the addition of pockets of higher density (4-8 units per acre) throughout single-family developments in the City. Mr. Dickinson explained the core principles staff looked at in bringing forth options to the Council.

Mr. Janish presented Option 3.1 stating staff reduced the Sonstebly property to 8-12 units per acre from the proposed 20-25 units per acre. He stated this reduction effected the mandatory number of affordable units and units per acre which needs to be made up for in other areas of the City.

Mayor Trude asked why Council is looking at reducing density of the Sonstebly properties when the City has a proposal from a broker to place housing at a density of 20-25. Mr. Janish stated the City received a proposal for a development based on 8-12 units per acre.

Mayor Trude stated she felt the Sonstebly property should be commercial but deferred to the Council at the time to make it high density (20-25 unit per acre) so the City would not have all these other issues of density. She recalled it was not feasible to sell the property at 20-25 units per acre. Mr. Janish stated it is not feasible at this time. Mr. Janish stated by reducing the Sonstebly property to 8 units per acre, it would give the developer the green light to go forward with their project. Mr. Janish identified areas where density could be increased to make up for the reduction on the Sonstebly property.

Mr. Janish presented Option 3.2 which reduces the density of the Sonstebly property and the Bunker Lake redevelopment area to 8-12 units per acre. He explained Option 3.2 changes the Andover Station North (ASN) west of the ball fields portion to 12-20 units which results in fewer pockets of higher density (4-8 unit per acre) spread throughout Andover.

Mr. Janish presented Option 3.3 which reduces the density of the Sonstebly and redevelopment area and reduces pockets of higher density (4-8 units per acre) throughout Andover by changing the range of Urban Residential Low from 2.2 to 2.4 units per acre.

Mr. Dickinson summarized that if Council wants to reduce the density on the redevelopment area and the Sonstebly property, the property west of the ball fields at ASN will need to be included to meet the affordability factor requirement.

Mr. Dickinson asked the Council if changing the Sonstebly property to 8-12 units per acre was a goal and desire of Council. Mayor Trude stated it was a low priority for her. Councilmember Barthel stated it was a priority. Councilmember Holthus asked if this rezoning was realistic. Mr. Dickinson stated it is realistic. Councilmember Bukkila stated she pictures units like Arbor Oaks at this location but not in the redevelopment area.

Councilmember Butler stated his goal is to preserve as much land as possible for single-family homes. He wants to choose an option that is feasible. He likes higher density near the major roads but does not support rezoning the church properties as residential. Councilmember Butler stated he is also not in favor of using the ASN property for residential. He favors a market rate complex near major thoroughfares. He said if he were a part of the process from the beginning, he would question the labeling of the density ranges because Andover's high-density definition is not what most people think of as high density.

Mr. Dickinson stated if the Sonstebly property was changed to 12-20 units per acre, the church properties would not need to be used. Councilmember Butler stated he likes townhomes but worries about spreading too many units throughout the City.

Councilmember Bukkila asked what changing Urban Residential Low to 2.4 units per acre would look like. Mr. Janish stated lots may have smaller frontage or not set far as back. Mr. Dickinson said Andover's minimum lot size is 11,400 square feet and many cities are lower than that.

Councilmember Holthus stated she likes Option 3.3 because she is not a fan of spreading out higher

density throughout the City because she feels it would encourage investment properties and more rental units. She asked if using the church properties for residential was feasible. Mr. Dickinson stated it is feasible and churches often use real estate to fund expansion of their church campus. Councilmember Holthus asked if the City presented Option 3.3 to the Met Council, would they respond favorably. Mr. Dickinson stated he thought they would. Mr. Janish stated he thought they would as well.

Mr. Dickinson expressed the Met Council would probably like the Urban Residential Low number at 2.4 the best.

Mayor Trude asked Councilmember Holthus what she thought of the plan for the redevelopment area. Councilmember Holthus responded she thought it could be at a higher density, but her priority is to not spread medium density (4-8 units per acre) around the City.

Mayor Trude stated there has not been any interest from developers on the redevelopment area at a density of 8-12 units per acre so changing that area compromises the plan.

Mr. Dickinson stated if it is on the Comprehensive Plan, it can be changed. The Met Council will generally approve increasing the density but will ask for a revised overall city plan if the area is requesting a lower density.

Councilmember Bukkila stated Council has similar goals but how they get there is different. She would like to start narrowing the options down to get to a decision. She stated she is leaning more towards Option 3.3 and would like to go through it item by item to see if there is Council consensus.

Councilmember Barthel stated the entire Council has a passion for the Comprehensive Plan and will need to compromise in a few areas to make sure this works. He stated he does not approve of high density anywhere in Andover.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she would prefer not to have an apartment building but would consider an apartment building in the right location. She stated she considers a complex like Arbor Oaks a large-scale apartment complex.

Mayor Trude stated there were many residents that jumped at the opportunity to rent a unit at Grey Oaks condos and it proves that a modest apartment building is needed. She stated apartment complexes can be managed well with a single owner and high standards, whereas townhomes could have multiple owners, absentee landlords, and a variety of standards.

Councilmember Bukkila stated she works in 42 cities and they all have apartments and townhomes. She stated the mindset behind apartment buildings is dependent on management and residents. Councilmember Bukkila stated the City has control over the exterior of a building and no control over the inside. She stated that is consequences of who lives there and how it is being managed. She stated neighborhoods with townhomes have neighbors who monitor conditions and activity.

Mr. Dickinson asked Council if they would like to see the Sonstebly property at 8-12 or 12-20 units per acre. Councilmember Bukkila stated she is flexible as long as it gets the Council to the end goal. Councilmember Barthel stated he feels the same way.

Mr. Dickinson asked Council if the land to the west of the ball fields at ASN should be 8-12 or 12-20 units per acre. Councilmember Barthel asked if this area were set at 12-20, would it eliminate the pockets of 4-8 units per acre throughout the City. Mr. Dickinson stated setting the Urban Residential Low at 2.4 relieves the pressure to put 4-8 units per acre parcels throughout the City. Mr. Dickinson stated putting ASN property at 8-12 helps the affordability factor. Mayor Trude stated she would like to reduce the 4-8 units per acre spread out in the single-family areas.

Councilmember Butler stated he is willing to do 12-20 units per acre on the west side of town, but Council needs to be realistic about what they are doing with the church properties.

Mr. Dickinson stated if Council comes to agreement on items, staff will compute the numbers right away, so Council knows where they stand.

Councilmember Bukkila asked staff to compute what changing the Sonstebly property to 12-20 does to the density and affordability factor. Mr. Janish stated Option 3.3 meets the Met Council's standards and increasing the Sonstebly property to 12-20 units per acre would allow Council to reduce density in other areas.

Mr. Dickinson stated if the church properties are removed entirely, the City's number drops below the 3 units per acre required density.

Council came to consensus to set the density of the Sonstebly property to 12-20 units per acre.

Mr. Law stated that by setting the density of the Sonstebly property at 12-20 units per acre, Council can reduce 40 acres from 4-8 units per acre to 2.4-4 units per acre.

Mayor Trude asked if the ASN property was included in this proposal. Mr. Dickinson said it is included at a density of 8-12 units per acre which will translate into townhomes.

Mr. Dickinson summarized what Council has agreed upon thus far: changing Urban Residential Low from 2.2 to 2.4 units per acre; pulling out as much medium density (4-8 units per acre) from single-family neighborhoods as possible; setting the Sonstebly property at 12-20 units per acre; setting the redevelopment area at 8-12 units per acre; and setting the land west of the ASN ball fields at 8-12 units per acre.

Mr. Dickinson asked the Council to provide feedback on the desired density of the church land. Mayor Trude stated 4-8 units per acre seemed logical for the church properties because it is the same density as existing property along Bunker Lake Boulevard. Councilmember Butler agreed to part of the church properties being set at 4-8 units per acre. The rest of Council concurred.

Mayor Trude stated she would like the EDA to discuss the redevelopment area and if they think it is practical to get a project at the 8-12 units per acre. She stated it is important to her to get the area cleaned up with something modern and new. She does not have a negative view of all apartment buildings and does not have an issue with a market rate apartment building in Andover.

The Council recessed at 8:49 p.m. to allow staff to update the density computations.

The Council reconvened at 8:56 p.m.

Mr. Janish explained the impact of the Council's decisions on the numbers for density and affordable housing stating the City came up short 3.5 acres to reach the 3 units per acre minimum density.

Mayor Trude suggested raising the density on some acreage on a property identified as "A". The rest of Council concurred.

Mr. Janish reviewed the approved changes with Council. Staff found an error in their spreadsheet which had the area west of the ball fields at ASN at 12-20 units per acre. Mr. Dickinson stated the EDA would have control over the sale of the area and the development that came in. Council reached consensus to keep the area west of the ASN ball fields at 8-12 units per acre.

Mr. Law stated the City needs an additional 9 acres at 4-8 units per acre to reach the average 3 units per acre required by the Met Council. Mayor Trude suggested adding in some acreage on the church property and some on the property labeled "E".

Mr. Dickinson stated staff will update the numbers and bring a final draft to the Council meeting on Tuesday, July 7, 2020.

OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bukkila, Seconded by Barthel, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary