

AUBURN CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION: ACADEMIC DETACHED DWELLING UNIT ORDINANCE AND HARPER AVENUE STUDY

Monday, March 25, 2019, City Work Room 122-B Tichenor Avenue

(This report summarized using below YouTube Recording by Councilman Bob Parsons)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HjMZo1Y4eZ0&fbclid=IwAR3bPtgiyPIN1iS14v2viSv7FLvn7XD_pnJxtsbhzWCdrKJYQo4tI3vpKs

Attendance:

1. Councilor, Beth Witten
2. Councilor, Connie Taylor
3. Councilman Tommy Dawson
4. Councilman Kelley Griswold
5. Councilman, Bob Parsons
6. Councilman Steve Dixon
7. Councilman Brett Smith
8. City Manager James Buston
9. Planning Director, Forrest Cotten
10. Principal Planner, Thomas Weintraut, Jr.
11. Planner, Logan Kipp

A. Academic Detached Dwelling Unit (the “ADDU”):

1. **History:** Planning Director introduced the topic and presented a chronology of its development prior to giving a detail description of the proposed ordinance, including differentiating it from “private dormitories.” It is worthy to note that, per Mr. Cotten, several ADD units have been constructed; others are under construction. Currently, the units are being reviewed and approved as single-family detached residential units.
2. **Issues:** Mr. Cotten noted that there appear to be three (3) substantive issues with the proposed regulations as noted by the Development Community: They are as follows:

- a. *Number of Required Parking Spaces:* With regards to the ADDU, the Planning Department had recommended 1.0 parking space per bed; the Planning Commission 1.1 space per bed. The Development Community seeks for the Council to adopt the former, given that several units have already been constructed and others are under construction.

A comment was made that any unit constructed with four (4) to seven (7) bedrooms would require an additional parking space. In the absence of the requirement, parking would likely be via on-street parking, which is not desirable.

- b. *Harper Avenue:* Currently, very little RDD zoning exists in Auburn, and most of that lies in the Harper Avenue area. It's the Planning Department's intent to eliminate that district altogether and replace it with either the Medium Density Residential (the "MDR") or ADDU District zoning classifications. The Development Community seems to be opposed to the change.
 - c. *Neighborhood Redevelopment District (the "NRD"):* Much of the Frazier/Canton area is zoned RDD which the Planning Department intends to replace with the NRD classification, The Development Community wants the ADDU use to be allowed as a Conditional Use, given that a number of units have already been constructed and others that are under construction would be found to be nonconforming. Noteworthy is the fact that, currently, the Corradino property is zoned RDD and allows ADDU uses as a Conditional Use.
 - d. *Adoption Process:* A question arose as to the process for adopting the ordinance with changes. Mr. Cotten commented that one option would be to adopt the proposal followed by a post-adoption advertisement and subsequent adoption to include the desired change(s). Alternatively, Council could simply make the changes prior to adoption following adopted protocol.
3. **General Impact on the Community:** Several Councilors questioned the extent of the RDD zoning classification in Auburn and the potential effect on Auburn's growth of eliminating the classification and replacing it with either MRD, ADDU or other zoning district categories. Mr. Cotten commented that he and the Planning staff solicit Council's guidance on the matter.

B. HARPER AVENUE FOCUS AREA:

Staff made a detailed presentation of their findings, analysis, and recommendations of the Harper Avenue neighborhood study. See the Planning staff for further information.

C. PROTOCOL IN SOLVING RESIDENTS' CONCERNS:

Councilor Kelley Griswold inquired as to the protocol to be followed with respect to the interaction among City staff, residents, and Councilors, this because Councilors were elected to serve as representatives of ward residents and, ultimately, as intermediaries between City staff and concerned citizens in problem resolution. [Note that Councilors do not interact directly with City staff; communications appear to be through the City Manager].

City Manager Buston commented that sometimes it's simply more efficient for residents to interact directly with City staff in resolving a problem(s). Subsequently, if the problem is not addressed to their satisfaction, residents can always call upon their respective Councilor to assist in solving the problem(s). Mr. Buston further commented that since the new administration has taken office, the practice seems to be to go directly to Councilors for

assistance, thus, by-passing the City staff. It seems it takes longer now to address and solve problems. Councilors Griswold and Witten both responded that it is important for Councilors to be “in the loop” with respect to residents’ concerns. A big question is at what level of concern does it become important for Councilors to be integrated into the process. [No definitive conclusion was reached; it appeared from the dialogue between and among Councilors and the City Manager that the “reasonableness” test need be applied to each situation].

Mr. Buston noted that there exist several avenues for residents to contact City staff and report concerns. These include the following: City web-based App for filing concerns; email, in-person meetings, etc., by which residents can contact City department personnel and report concerns.

END OF SECTION