

CITY OF LEWISTON
PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP MINUTES
July 27, 2009– Page 1 of 2

I. ROLL CALL: This workshop was held in the City Council Chambers on the First Floor of City Hall, and was called to order at 5:30 p.m., by Chairperson Steve Morgan.

Members in Attendance: Chairperson Steve Morgan, Vice Chairperson Lucy Bisson, Secretary Denis Fortier, Bruce Damon, and associate members Trinh Burpee and Eric Potvin.

Absent: Paul Robinson, David Vincent and Roger Philippon.

Staff Present: City Planner David Hediger, and Director of Planning and Code Enforcement Gil Arsenault.

II. ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA: None

III. CORRESPONDENCE: None

IV. Open Space Workshop: Steve Morgan addressed the Board and the citizens by explaining that the purpose of the workshop is to receive an open space presentation from Planner Consultant Robert Faunce and to discuss the merits of amendments to the zoning and land use code relative to opens space and related provisions. He explained that no decisions have been made regarding this topic and that the Board would hold at least one more workshop at some future date.

Robert Faunce addressed the Board and the citizens in attendance at the workshop and he began his power point presentation by focusing on the rural agricultural (RA) district. He then reviewed the history of development in the current RA district with a number of maps. In 1906 there were a total of 136 principal structures in the RA, there were 190 in 1939, 295 in 1956, 564 in 1975, 964 in 1997, and 1164 in 2006. He stated that at the current rate of growth, there could be an additional 610 principal structures located in the RA in the year 2037. The message is that Lewiston's rural character is changing and, although we cannot stop the growth, the growth could be managed in such a way to preserve open space for future generations. Bob then discussed the planning practice of open space subdivisions as it might apply to the RA district. He then presented a slide depicting that the current RA district could be changed to a RA1 district and a RA2 district, and that the open space subdivision rules would be limited to these "new" districts. The current minimum lot size for single family homes in the RA district is 60,000 square feet. The RA1 district could have a minimum single family lot size of three acres and the RA2 a minimum single family lot size of five acres. An open space subdivision is a negotiated process between the planning board and the developer provided that the developer can meet the intent and rules associated with an open space subdivision. Lots in an open space subdivision can be reduced to 30,000 square feet; however, the difference between the 30,000 square feet and the required three acres in the RA1 or, the five acres in the RA2 represents the land area on a per lot basis that would be established as open space. The required open space may be provided in some other location in the RA2. Frontage for some lots within a development could be reduced to zero with access to some lots provided by private driveways. The goal of an open space development is to provide an incentive to the developer so that development costs of roads and related improvements are reduced in exchange for the creation of open space that will work to preserve the rural character of the City of Lewiston.

Upon the completion of Robert Faunce's presentation, Steve Morgan asked for Board comments and hearing none, he then opened the workshop for public comment.

Robert Foss of 2175 Riverside Drive, Auburn asked what open space related changes are being contemplated for other districts. David Hediger briefly reviewed possible changes to the low density residential, suburban residential, medium density residential and the neighborhood conservation "A" district (NCA). Mr. Foss was of the opinion that open space should not be required in the NCA district if the "proposed" lots exceed minimum standards.

Harry Milliken, 6 Judith Street, Lewiston presented three pages of comments that he prepared for the Board's consideration. He expressed reservations as to his thought that no one will take care of the required open space and that open space land will be taken off the tax roles. He also expressed concern that open space located two miles distant from an open space subdivision will not provide protection for the subdivision or for the surrounding properties. He was concerned the new standards may increase density in the rural areas.

Mike Gotto, Stoneybrook Consultants, Turner stated that he was confused by the proposed open space subdivision standards. He also reminded the Board of the large lot inventory that he conducted for the City in 2003 and stated that some of the areas that are RA could be re-zoned for business as the City has a shortage of land for industry. The purpose for the inventory was to identify areas that may be suitable for industry. David Hediger indicated that the large lot inventory would be reviewed to identify conflicts with the proposed provisions.

Councilor Betty Dube stated that open space needs to have value and should be kept in a natural state; it does not need to be maintained space. She said that the open space located behind the condominiums on Macadamia Lane is a very poor example of open space.

Jim Welleham, Auburn stated that it is more costly to have people located in the rural areas especially in view of the fact that the population of the City has shrunk over time.

Ian Houseal, City of Lewiston Energy Czar, suggested the Board consider the future of these rural areas and asked whether a future land use map for the city exists or was considered.

Robert Faunce mentioned that the State's new comprehensive plan standards require a community to preserve rural areas. These proposed standards work toward that end versus the current cluster provisions.

Mike Gotto mentioned that changing the lot area to three or five acres will be an issue for many of his clients.

Steve Morgan mentioned that there will be another workshop on open space; however, it has not been scheduled and he thanked people for attending the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT: The following motion was made to adjourn.

MOTION: by *Lucy Bisson* that the Planning Board adjourns this meeting at 6:53 p.m.
Second by *Denis Fortier*.

VOTED: 6-0 (Passed).

Respectfully submitted,

Denis Fortier B

Denis Fortier, Planning Board Secretary